

What then shall we say? That the Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, have obtained it, a righteousness that is by faith; ³¹but Israel, who pursued a law of righteousness, has not attained it. ³²Why not? Because they pursued it not by faith but as if it were by works. They stumbled over the "stumbling stone." ³³As it is written: "See, I lay in Zion a stone that causes men to stumble and a rock that makes them fall, and the one who trusts in him will never be put to shame." - **Romans 9:30-33**

Brothers, my heart's desire and prayer to God for the Israelites is that they may be saved. ²For I can testify about them that they are zealous for God, but their zeal is not based on knowledge. ³Since they did not know the righteousness that comes from God and sought to establish their own, they did not submit to God's righteousness. ⁴Christ is the end of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes. - **Romans 10:1-4**

That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved. ¹¹As the Scripture says, "Anyone who trusts in him will never be put to shame." ¹²For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile—the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him, ¹³for, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."¹⁴How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? ¹⁵And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!" - **Romans 10:9-15**

I do not want you to be ignorant of this mystery, brothers, so that you may not be conceited: Israel has experienced a hardening in part until the full number of the Gentiles has come in. ²⁶And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: "The deliverer will come from Zion; he will turn godlessness away from Jacob. ²⁷And this is my covenant with them when I take away their sins." - **Romans 11:25-27**

I speak the truth in Christ—I am not lying, my conscience confirms it in the Holy Spirit — ²I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart. ³For I could wish that I myself were cursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers, those of my own race, ⁴the people of Israel. Theirs is the adoption as sons; theirs the divine glory, the covenants, the receiving of the law, the temple worship and the promises. ⁵Theirs are the patriarchs, and from them is traced the human ancestry of Christ, who is God over all, forever praised! Amen. - **Romans 9:1-5**

God used Israel in a great way and divinely chose them to work out His plan of salvation.

Paul's concern for Israel was that they tried to pursue God's righteousness by works and not by faith.

The hardest people to win for the Lord are the ones who think they are good and have no need for salvation.

No one could be righteous by obeying the law: "The dos and don'ts."

Christ brought the law to completion perfectly its demands.

God's ultimate plan was to form His church from both Jews and Gentiles.

even us, whom he also called, not only from the Jews but also from the Gentiles? ²⁵As he says in Hosea: "I will call them 'my people' who are not my people; and I will call her 'my loved one' who is not my loved one,"²⁶and, "It will happen that in the very place where it was said to them, 'You are not my people,' they will be called 'sons of the living God.'" - **Romans 9:24-26**

Today we are all grafted into Christ and we are one.

What keeps people from receiving God's gift of salvation?

- 1) They do not see their need for salvation.
 - Excuses: I can do it on my own and I am better than other people.
- 2) They depend on their good works.
 - Excuse: My good works will get me into heaven.
- 3) They replace a relationship with God with religion.

It's only by God's grace that one can be saved.

God's plan of salvation has everything to do with grace.

Two examples of God's saving grace:

1. Parable of the prodigal son.

"The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him. ²⁹But he answered his father, 'Look! All these years I've been slaving for you and never disobeyed your orders. Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends. ³⁰But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!' ³¹" 'My son,' the father said, 'you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. ³²But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.'" - **Luke 15:28-32**

2. Thief on the cross.

But the other criminal rebuked him. "Don't you fear God," he said, "since you are under the same sentence? ⁴¹We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong." ⁴²Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." ⁴³Jesus answered him, "I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise." - **Luke 23:40-43**

Pastor Barden Gerace, Jr.

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In both cases their slate was wiped clean:

Only God's grace can do that!