

**Tuesday Evening Bible Study at Tokyo Baptist Church**  
**Paul's Letter to the Romans – Chapter 10, Verses 14-21**  
**Notes from Tuesday February 15, 2011**  
**Last Revised on February 21, 2011**

**Songs**

**Opening Prayer**

**Introduction**

This evening we continue our study of the Letter of Paul to the Romans.

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Last week we continued studying Chapter 10, covering up to Verse 13

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Tonight we will finish Chapter 10

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But first let's review a little.

**Review**

As we have repeatedly reminded ourselves,

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the **overall** theme of Paul's letter to the Romans is ... the **gospel**,

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(which is also the overall them of the entire **Bible**, Old Testament and New).

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What the gospel is, is explained in the first **four chapters** of this letter.

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Then in **Chapters 5-8** Paul goes on to discuss the happy situation of those who are being saved by it.

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In **Chapter 9-11** Paul turns to examines the sad situation of the Jews who have rejected the gospel.

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This is the section of Paul's letter which we are reading presently.

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Once again, very briefly, let me remind us of what Paul wrote in **Chapter 9**:

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Paul **begins** Chapter 9 (Verses 1-5) by speaking of his deep **sadness** for his fellow Jews.

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But Paul goes on to point out that, just because most of the Jews are presently cut off,

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this does **not** mean that God's word has failed.

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God has always preserved his relationship with Israel through a small **remnant**.

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In Paul's day, this remnant manifestly included a small number (perhaps a few thousand) Jews who had accepted Jesus as the Messiah of Israel and Lord of the Church.

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And to this Jewish remnant had recently been in-grafted a significant number of **Gentiles**,

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It is important to remember at the **end of Chapter 9**, and always far too easy to forget,

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that neither the small group of **Jews** who had accepted Christ in Paul's day,

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nor the **gentiles** who had by then come to join them, in the early Christian church,

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nor any of **us** who have since come to saving faith in Christ and joined the church in later years,

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... **none** of us have been saved because of any merit or accomplishment on our part.

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Be we Jew or Gentile, we have **all** been saved **solely** by the grace of God, through faith.

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This means that we are no better **in any respect** than those who have **not** been saved.

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Jews and Christians then and now find this almost impossible to remember and truly believe!

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We repeatedly stumble over the same stumbling stone,

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which is the law **apart** from Christ....that is **self**-righteousness

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Paul **begins Chapter 10** by referring to such "zeal for God which is not according to knowledge,"

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against which all Jews and Christians (then and now) must be repeatedly cautioned.

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**"For Christ,"** we read in Verse 4, **"is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes."**

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The **goal** and **purpose** of the law was and **is** to bring the Jews to **Christ** for righteousness,

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and then to bring all **Christians** back and back an back again to Christ for righteousness,

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since we can **never** find righteousness in the law **apart** from Christ

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but neither shall we **ever** find our righteousness in Christ to be in **opposition** to the law!

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Christ and the law belong **together**.

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Christ is (in some sense I think) the law **incarnate**.

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It is only **after** we come to faith in **Christ**, and his Spirit comes to live in **us**,

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that we can even **begin** to obey the law

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and so finally enter into that salvation, goodness, and eternal life of which **Moses** spoke in Israel.

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Grace **is** obedience.

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Jesus has **eternally** accomplished **everything** that is required to make this **possible** for man,

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and everyone who (truly) calls on his name (in faith) will be saved.

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This is, I think, a fair summary of **the first 13 verses of Chapter 10**.

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Which is where our reading and discussion ended last week.

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Does anyone have questions or comments before we read on?

### **Paul's Letter to the Romans, Chapter 10, Verses 14-17**

Will someone please read Romans, Chapter 10, Verses 14-17 in Japanese.

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Thank you. Now will someone please read those some verses in English.

**14 How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching?**

**15 And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!"**

**16 But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us?"**

**17 So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.**

Thank you.

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You will remember that **Verse 13**, the last verse from last week's study,

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reads: "*For 'everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.'*"

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This is a quote from **Joel 2:32**.

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Joel is speaking of the restoration of Israel in the **last days**, but he is also speaking of this as a time when God's spirit will be poured out on "all flesh" (Joel 2:28)

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In Acts 2:17 the Apostle Peter quotes precisely this same passage to explain the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost.

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I therefore personally read the "*everyone*" in that passage to mean literally "everyone,"

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both Jews and gentiles, without any certain emphasis on one or the other.

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(However some do find one or the other emphasis -- i.e. a focus on Jews or Gentiles -- here.)

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In any case, flowing out from this quotation from Joel in Verse 13,

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in Verses 14 and 15

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we have a connected series of **four** "how" questions,

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which examine how it is,

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that certain persons are saved,

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by calling on the name of the Lord.

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I was at first tempted to call this the "process" of salvation,

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but I don't think that would be the right way of looking at this.

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The **first** sentence in Verse 14 reads:

**(Verse 14a)**

### **How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed?**

The answer to this question is anticipated by the **grammar** of the question,

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and is also given by the teaching of the **preceding paragraph** (i.e. vv 5-13)

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“**They**” can only be **saved** by calling on him in whom they **have believed**.

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Those who call on the Lord from an unbelieving heart are **not** saved thereby.

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Again, I am reading “they” in a general way

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and not as referring predominately to either gentiles or Jews.

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The **second** sentence of Verse 14 reads:

#### **(Verse 14b)**

### **And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard?**

It is necessary to **believe** in the one on whom they call,

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which means they must somehow **know** the one on whom they call.

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How we most commonly come to know the Lord, is through **words**:

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words spoken **by** him

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words spoken **about** him,

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The grammar here allows for both readings (by or about) but probably favors the **former**

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That is, “they” believe in him because they have effectively heard **him** speak,

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yet few have **literally** heard the Lord speaking

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I am not certain that **I** ever have. Have **you**?

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This leads to the **third** questions in Verse 14:

#### **(Verse 14c)**

### **And how are they to hear without someone preaching?**

We normally hear the Lord speaking

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and the Lord truly spoken of

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by his prophets and apostles

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and evangelists and pastors and others who are called and sent, by God,

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and inspired by the Holy Spirit,

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to preach God's word.

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And none may truly preach God's word except by being called and sent.

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Which is the point of Verse 15.

**(Verse 15)**

**And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!"**

The gospel reaches no nation or person except by God's command,

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which means that no preacher is ever heard effectively speaking the the Word of God,

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except for those who have been sent by God to speak his word.

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Therefore those who effectively are heard preaching the gospel, represent the coming of God's salvation.

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They represent the very coming of God, unto his people.

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This a point which Paul underscores by quoting Isaiah 52:7

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Let's read more of the passage from which Paul cites.

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Please turn with me to Isaiah, Chapter 52, Verses 5-10

**(Isaiah 52:5-10)**

*Now therefore what have I here," declares the LORD, "seeing that my people are taken away for nothing? Their rulers wail," declares the LORD, "and continually all the day*

*my name is despised. Therefore my people shall know my name. Therefore in that day they shall know that it is I who speak; here am I." How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news, who publishes peace, who brings good news of happiness, who publishes salvation, who says to Zion, "Your God reigns." The voice of your watchmen---they lift up their voice; together they sing for joy; for eye to eye they see the return of the LORD to Zion. Break forth together into singing, you waste places of Jerusalem, for the LORD has comforted his people; he has redeemed Jerusalem. The LORD has bared his holy arm before the eyes of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.*

By quoting this particular passage,

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I believe that Paul means to say that Jesus is the Messiah of which Isaiah prophesied,

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and that all preaching concerning Jesus is also in fulfillment of this same prophesy,

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and therefore that God's people really have heard (about) the one who can save them,

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first from the patriarchs, Moses, and the later prophets such as Isaiah,

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and most recently and ultimately from Christ and his apostles,

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who really have been called and sent by God,

---

whose gospel finally has been shown before the eyes of all the nations,

---

and shall again be shown.

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Verse 16 continue:

**(Verse 16)**

**But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us?"**

Clearly not all who have heard the gospel of God have believed it.

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This is the consistent testimony of Biblical history.

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It is the subject of immediate concern to Paul in this section of Romans.

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And it is all just as the prophet Isaiah foresaw and proclaimed that it would be

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Here Paul cites Isaiah 53:1 which follows just a few verses after the passage we just read from Isaiah 52, which speaks of the beauty of the feet of him who brings the good news.

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Please turn with me to Isaiah 53, and follow along with me as I read all of it:

**(Isaiah 53)**

*Who has believed what he has heard from us? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed? For he grew up before him like a young plant, and like a root out of dry ground; he had no form or majesty that we should look at him, and no beauty that we should desire him. He was despised and rejected by men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and as one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned--every one---to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth. By oppression and judgment he was taken away; and as for his generation, who considered that he was cut off out of the land of the living, stricken for the transgression of my people? And they made his grave with the wicked and with a rich man in his death, although he had done no violence, and there was no deceit in his mouth. Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush him; he has put him to grief; when his soul makes an offering for guilt, he shall see his offspring; he shall prolong his days; the will of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied; by his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant, make many to be accounted righteous, and he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore I will divide him a portion with the many, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he poured out his soul to death and was numbered with the transgressors; yet he bore the sin of many, and makes intercession for the transgressors.*

With most Christians I read this (Isaiah 53) as Isaiah foreseeing the coming of Christ,

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and the rejection of Christ when he would come,

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but also Isaiah's reflection on how his prophecies were rejected by his contemporaries,

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and how the gospel of Christ following his earthly ministry would be rejected by many.

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The fact is that the rejection of the gospel is **proof** of its validity,

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Just as the rejection of **Christ** was confirmation of his identity,



---  
and not a reason to doubt it.

---  
Paul also uses this citation from Isaiah to underscore something he has previously implied by his questions in Verses 14 and 15:

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namely that faith comes from **hearing** the preaching of the word of Christ.

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Verse 17 reads:

**(Verse 17)**

**So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.**

I take this to be a clear implication of what Isaiah said at the beginning in the passage just quoted.

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i.e. Isaiah asks God, "**Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us?**"

---  
He asks this question because clearly Isaiah understood that faith in the Living God would come from hearing the gospel which he proclaimed,

---  
and because Isaiah could neither see nor foresee who would hear and believe this gospel when it was preached

---  
and because he foresaw that Christ **himself**, come among men, would be rejected by those whom he came to save.

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Isaiah's questions and concerns and Paul's are the same!

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Which is not surprising since they are moved by the same Spirit.

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They both speak of the salvation of God's people,

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and of the revealing of God's arm to all the nations

---  
and of salvation to all the ends of the earth!

---  
Let's read on.

**Paul's Letter to the Romans, Chapter 10, Verses 18-21**

Will someone please read Romans, Chapter 10, Verses 18-21 in Japanese.

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Thank you. Now will someone please read those some verses in English.

**18 But I ask, have they not heard? Indeed they have, for "Their voice has gone out to all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world."**

**19 But I ask, did Israel not understand? First Moses says, "I will make you jealous of those who are not a nation; with a foolish nation I will make you angry."**

**20 Then Isaiah is so bold as to say, "I have been found by those who did not seek me; I have shown myself to those who did not ask for me."**

**21 But of Israel he says, "All day long I have held out my hands to a disobedient and contrary people."**

Thank you.

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Let's recall that this all began back in Verse 13, the last verse from last week's reading,

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quoting from Joel 2:23,

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which reads: "*For 'everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.'*"

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Then in Verses 14-17, which we read and discussed today for the first time,

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Paul reminds us that faith comes from hearing Christ speak to us,

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which is ordinarily mediated by preaching,

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as indeed has been the case in Israel,

---

yet not all obey what they hear.

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Verse 18 reads:

**(Verse 18)**

**But I ask, have they not heard? Indeed they have, for "Their voice has gone out to all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world."**

Q. Who are "*they*?"

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A1 Many read this as referring to the Jews --- have the Jews not heard the gospel?

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If this is the question then “*indeed they have.*”

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The gospel is proclaimed throughout the holy scripture of Israel,

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and Christ himself came from among them,

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and first to them.

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They have all heard the gospel spoken for longer and more clearly than any other nation.

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But how, then, shall we understand the scriptural citation which follows from Psalm 19:4?

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Please turn with me to Psalm 19, which reads:

**(Psalm 19)**

*The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork. Day to day pours out speech, and night to night reveals knowledge. There is no speech, nor are there words, whose voice is not heard. Their voice goes out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them he has set a tent for the sun, which comes out like a bridegroom leaving his chamber, and, like a strong man, runs its course with joy. Its rising is from the end of the heavens, and its circuit to the end of them, and there is nothing hidden from its heat. The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul; the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple; the precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes; the fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever; the rules of the LORD are true, and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, even much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and drippings of the honeycomb. Moreover, by them is your servant warned; in keeping them there is great reward. Who can discern his errors? Declare me innocent from hidden faults. Keep back your servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me! Then I shall be blameless, and innocent of great transgression. Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight, O LORD, my rock and my redeemer.*

A2. Especially in view of this citation from Psalm 19, many have read Romans 10:18 as referring primarily to the Gentiles --- have the gentiles heard the gospel?

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On this view, the answer, “indeed they have,” is supported by idea found in Psalm 19 that “*the heavens declare the glory of the Lord.*”

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God’s ability to speak to the gentiles is not restricted by the fact that he has chosen to have a

different kind of relationship with Israel, one in which he also speaks in words.

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He can speak to Gentiles as well as he wishes through nature, and in other ways. He is God!

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Furthermore the words which God has spoken in Israel have been a witness to the nations.

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And in the time of Paul, news of the Christ, who is the goal and purpose of the words spoken to Israel is being proclaimed throughout the world.

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So the Gentiles were almost as guilty as the Jews for the disobedient way in which they lived.

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A3. The third possible answer, of course, to the question of who are “they” in Verse 18,

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is that “*they*” are “everyone” (i.e. both Jews and Gentiles).

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Everyone has, in some sense, heard the gospel and is therefore without excuse, (c.f. Rom. 1:18f)

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but not all have obeyed it. (c.f. Verse 16)

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Yet the gospel has been pronounced most clearly in Israel’

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First through the fathers, then through the prophets, as recorded in holy Scripture

---

and finally through the very Son of God,

---

whom they crucified.

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Did they just not understand?!

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This is a hard question, to which Paul turns in Verse 19

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Verse 19 reads:

**(Verse 19)**

**But I ask, did Israel not understand? First Moses says, "I will make you jealous of those who are not a nation; with a foolish nation I will make you angry."**

The fact is that most of Israel did not understand the words God had spoken to them.

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More precisely they understood the words God had spoken in the wrong way.

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They were zealous for God, and for God's words, but not according to knowledge.

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They thought that they found in God's words a basis for their own righteousness.

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They failed to understand, most of them did, that only God is righteous.

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That our salvation depends entirely on God's grace.

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This is the danger of being the bearer of God's word!!

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The danger of being a Jew.

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The danger of being a Christian.

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The danger of being a churchman.

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When Christ came, he came to the church of God, and was crucified by them!

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We are constantly in danger of doing the same thing.

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What happened to Israel (back to Verse 19) was just what Moses foresaw:

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The foolish gentiles, who are, compared to Israel, no nation at all,

---

will be made to hear and understand the gospel of God and be saved by it.

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So that Israel can understand that she is saved by grace alone.

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This is a quote from Deuteronomy 32.21,

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where God speaks of how he will punish Israel for not having been properly mindful of Him,

---

despite all that he had specially done for them and revealed to them.

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We find something similar, it seems to me, in the words of Christ,

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when he says that we must become as little children if we would enter the kingdom,

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meaning that we must become humble and trusting and never "self-righteous"

**(Verse 20)**

**Then Isaiah is so bold as to say, "I have been found by those who did not seek me; I**

**have shown myself to those who did not ask for me."**

This quote from Isaiah 65:1 is the voice of God saying that he is open to the Gentiles,

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even those who are not seeking him and have not asked for him,

---

precisely because the Jews have heard him so clearly and repeatedly rejected him.

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Our salvation as gentiles is, certainly not anything to do with our goodness.

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Just as the Promised Land was not opened to Israel because of their might or goodness.

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Our salvation comes because of the stubbornness of the Jews,

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and even this is intended primarily for **their** salvation,

---

and only secondarily for ours.

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Chapter 10 ends on what I consider a hopeful note.

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Verse 21 reads:

**(Verse 21)**

**But of Israel he says, "All day long I have held out my hands to a disobedient and contrary people."**

This demonstrated the Character of God,

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his faithfulness, his long-suffering, his mercy, and his grace

---

which was ultimately revealed in the person of Christ on the cross of Calvary.

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There is hardly anything God will not do to redeem his people.

**Closing Prayer**