



Jewish Believers and Christians working together for Israel's salvation since 1963



Kevin Geoffrey
President, MJMI

Shalom my friend! This month we continue our look at Romans 9, 10 and 11. Last month, in Romans 10:14-17, we met Paul's alter ego, an imaginary opponent invented by Paul to object to his points concerning Israel's salvation. By employing this literary tactic, Paul was able to immediately dispense with any anticipated objections by his readers, so that he could continue to further his case unhindered. In that passage, we saw Paul's opponent attempt to lay out a reasoned objection for why Israel bears no responsibility for failing to believe that Yeshua is the Messiah. Paul's response then exposed his opponent's faulty premise, revealing that it is God Himself who sends those to proclaim Yeshua—a proclamation by which one hears and subsequently believes. God, therefore, is not to blame for Israel's failure in faith, as Paul's adversary appears to suggest; rather, any unbelief is no fault but their own.

Update from Israel

In a previous letter, I mentioned that Baruch, one of our ministry friends in the Land, recently finished multiple years of study and training in order to earn his license as a tour guide in Israel. He has been very eager to use his new credentials to further the Kingdom, and not long ago, he sent me a note sharing how that work has already begun! He wrote, "This was quite interesting month, filled with many good events. I began working with foreign groups of Christians, and with mixed groups of believers and non-believers. It finally gave me opportunity to fulfill my dream and preach the Good News as a tour guide. People usually listen to and believe guides, probably thanks to their deep knowledge and the state

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Did They Not Hear?

Paul then continues his argument with the voice in his head in Romans 10:18-21, concluding the chapter.

But I say, "Did they not hear?" Yes, indeed, "their voice went forth to all the earth, and their spoken words to the ends of the habitable world." But I say, "Did יִשְׂרָאֵל, Yis'rael not understand?" First, מוֹשֶׁה, Mosheh says, "I will provoke you to jealousy by *THAT WHICH IS* not a people; by an uncomprehending גּוֹי, Goy I will anger you"; and יֵשׁוּעַהוּ, Y'sha'yahu is very bold, and says, "I was found by those not looking for Me; I became brought out by the light to those not asking about Me." But to יִשְׂרָאֵל, Yis'rael He says, "All the day I stretched out My hands to a people unbelieving and contradictory."

The opponent's objection leading up to this passage was that Israel did not believe in Yeshua because, allegedly, no one had been sent to proclaim Yeshua to them. Once Paul shot down that challenge—demonstrating that it was God Himself who indeed sent the proclaimers—the opponent then began making excuses.

"But I say, 'Did they not hear?'" The opponent momentarily grants that proclaimers had been sent; nevertheless, Israel was still not to blame—they were simply *unhearing*. Weak as this rationalization may be, Paul counters back, "Yes, indeed," they most certainly did hear the Good News proclaimed to them, because the "voice [of the proclaimers] went forth to all the earth, and their spoken words to the ends of the habitable world" (Psalm 19:4).

Did They Not Understand?

His efforts blocked, the opponent takes another tack—*maybe you're right, Paul, Israel did hear*. "But I say, 'Did יִשְׂרָאֵל, Yis'rael not understand?'" Israel's lack of belief is

licenses. I did my first trip for a mixed group from Lithuania, sharing the Good News together with their leaders. As a result of our joint work, eight people dedicated their lives to Yeshua and were baptized!"

As you may know, your generosity allows MJMI to provide support to our ministry friends, helping to supplement their income so that they are able to dedicate more of their time to spreading the Good News of Yeshua. Not only is Baruch proclaiming Yeshua through his new work as a tour guide, but he is also spending time offering practical and spiritual help to Jewish people in need. He wrote, "I continue to meet and serve people from our city by taking part in outreach events and projects. I feel special



honor each time when I deliver food packages to those who cannot come by themselves because of sicknesses or age. I am glad to be the light that they see in their lives!"



not her fault—the opponent suggests—she just didn't understand what she heard! And this is where Paul lays into his adversary, offering up a volley of Scriptural proofs to demolish this last, feeble justification.

"First, מֹשֶׁה, Mosheh says, 'I will provoke you to jealousy by THAT WHICH IS not a people; by an uncomprehending גוי, Goy I will anger you.'" Citing Deuteronomy, Paul points out that Israel has always been made to understand God's love and devotion by making them jealous of how He demonstrates love toward other peoples. This is the first evidence for understanding.

And "יְשׁוּעָה, Y'sha'yahu is very bold, and says, 'I was found by those not looking for Me; I became brought out by the light to those not asking about Me.'" So easily understood is God's greatness and love that even those who have no idea who He is can still discover Him. This is the second evidence.

But the Good News is that even in the event that Israel somehow manages to ignore the obvious evidence before them—which they have indeed ignored all too often—"to

יִשְׂרָאֵל, Yis'rael He says, 'All the day I stretched out My hands to a people unbelieving and contradictory'" (Isaiah 65:2). Despite God's clear presentation of Himself to Israel and to all the peoples of the world, Israel remains an unbelieving and contradictory people; and yet, God never retracts His hands from reaching out to them for their salvation. Nothing but Israel herself is capable of obstructing her receipt of the Good News of Yeshua.

Ignorance without Excuse

Israel's failure to hear, understand, and believe the Good News is no excuse, for God has been proclaiming salvation from the beginning; and, according to this passage from Paul, only Israel's stubbornness continues to keep them at arm's length from their Messiah. Today, even the non-Jewish misrepresentation of Yeshua in Christianity is still no excuse—though it remains a contribut-

ing factor—since ignorance of the truth will last only as long as one fails to pursue it in the pages of God's Word. Our job, then, as disciples of Messiah, is to continue to be proclaimers of the faith, and to facilitate the hearing and understanding of God like Paul did: through His perfect Word, the Scriptures.

My friend, if you feel the call to be a part of reaching the "unbelieving and contradictory" hearts of Jewish people, I invite you to partner with and support our work here at MJMI. We greatly need not only your prayers, but also your financial assistance, so that we can continue this critical work. Your donation of **\$10, \$25, \$100 or more** will help us accomplish our mission and vision to see all Israel come to know their Messiah. You can use the enclosed card and envelope, or visit www.mjmi.org to send your much-needed donation today. And if you aren't already, please consider becoming a ministry partner, so that I will know we can count on your support each month.

As we continue working toward Israel's salvation, I look forward to starting our look at Romans 11 next month!

For the sake of the Messiah,

Kevin Geoffrey, President, MJMI