



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



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Shalom my friend! This month we continue our look at Romans 9, 10 and 11. Last month, we looked at length at just two verses, Romans 10:12-13, in order to consider one of the most powerful *and often misunderstood* concepts from Paul's writings: how there can be "no difference between יהודי, Y'hudiy [Jew] and Greek". We

learned that, with this statement, Paul is not addressing the subject of equality in ethnic identity—where one group takes an identity that is not theirs, while another group loses their own—but about *equality in salvation*, and how this equality ought to inspire Christians to be *at least* as concerned with the salvation of Jews as they are of other Gentiles. But an even greater point is that—despite the Gentiles holding no covenantal rights—through the Messiah, *everyone* who calls upon the Name of ADONAI will be saved. Paul's temporary detour from his larger discussion of Israel to talk about Gentile salvation-equality is strategic, foreshadowing what is to come in Romans 11. But almost immediately, he returns to where he left off, addressing potential objections to his argument. He begins answering those objections in Romans 10:14-17.

Flaws in the Argument?

How, then, may they call upon *HIM* in whom they did not believe? and how may they believe *ON HIM* of whom they did not hear? and how may they hear apart from one proclaiming? and how may they proclaim, if they are not sent? As it has been written, "How beautiful *are* the feet of those proclaiming Good News of the good things!" But they were not all obedient to the Good News. For ישעיהו, Y'sha'yahu says, "ADONAI, who gave credence to the report *heard* from us?" So then, the faith *is* by *hearing* a

report, and the report *is heard* through a spoken word of Messiah. (MJLT)

According to Messianic Jewish theologian David Stern in his *Jewish New Testament Commentary*, Paul now "introduces an imaginary opponent to make objections... looking for flaws in [Paul's] argument," to which Paul is then able to respond. While the imaginary opponent's presence becomes a bit more obvious in later verses, here, it is somewhat shrouded. However, it becomes clearer the closer we examine the passage.

Answering the Opponent

Essentially, the imaginary opponent objects to Paul citing Joel in verse 13 ("Everyone—whoever will call upon the Name of ADONAI, he will be saved.") as a proof text to support his assertion in verse 12 that "the same Master of all is rich to all those calling upon Him." In the imaginary opponent's view, no one can be held responsible for failing to call upon the Master's Name. The thinking goes as follows: we can't call upon Him if we don't believe, and we can't believe if we do not hear a reason to, and we can't hear such a reason unless someone proclaims it to us, and no one can proclaim it unless he is sent with that express purpose. In other words, the imaginary opponent—

presumably a non-Messianic Jew—is trying to shift the blame for unbelief from himself. And based on the fact that he is quoting Isaiah 52:7 as *his* proof text ("How beautiful *are* the feet of those proclaiming Good News of the good things!"), he appears to instead be blaming *God!* According to Stern, the imaginary opponent is claiming, "If God had sent someone announcing good news about good things, we would have welcomed him, we would have thrilled to [hear] the sound of his feet."

This objection, however, is easy for Paul to defeat, as he responds with his own citation from just a few verses later in Isaiah 53:1. Who is the one who sends the proclaimers so



Update from Israel

Shortly after Passover, I received an update from our ministry friend Aviel, who is proclaiming the Good News of Yeshua in the Land of Israel. He said, "I wanted to tell you about 'The Exodus-Passover' of God for one woman named Raya! I met Raya in Rishon Letzion, when I was street evangelizing (top photo). She was in a horrifying condition—she had argued with the wife of her son and was kicked out of her home. Raya was looking for a new place to live in; she was confused and did not know where to go. She told us that she made Aliya not too long ago from Ukraine, that she went to a congregation there and believed in Yeshua the Messiah, but in Israel she became confused. She didn't know where there were congregations with actual believers, and then she turned away from God, and everything went upside down ever since.

"We told her the Gospel and prayed for her, and she gave us her details. After that, she attended Bible lessons for a couple of months and recovered spiritually. She received details about a local congregation, and this month she began visiting there (second photo, above). Praise the Lord!

"Sometimes we forget about the Lord and His sacrifice—we forget how much He loves us, and that He gave His life for each one of us. We become confused and get into troubles, and we start to drown in sin. It seems like it's the end, but then Yeshua stretches His hand and gets us out of the sin and destruction—like He did with Peter, who was drowning in the Galilean Sea due to his lack of faith. God sent me to Raya, to get her out of her lack of faith that brought her to a total destruction. Yeshua is the winner and holds everything in His hands!

"I am conducting surveys on the streets that end with the gospel (photos above). Many people have heard the gospel and received Bibles. Please pray for three women named Irina, Natalya and Julia. They were very open on survey and ordered Bibles, and two of them already began reading them!"



that Israel might hear and believe? "ADONAI, who gave credence to *the report heard from us?*" ADONAI is the one who sends forth the message of salvation! Indeed, in the immediate context of Paul's hypothetical sparring match is the remainder of Isaiah 53, which speaks in vivid detail about the Good News of the Messiah. "And he is pierced for our transgressions, Bruised for our iniquities, The chastisement of our peace is on him, And by his bruise there is healing to us" (Isaiah 53:5). If Israel does not hear and believe, it is certainly

not God's fault. On the contrary, despite the word of salvation being clearly proclaimed to them by Isaiah (and throughout Scripture), "they were not all obedient to the Good News.... So then, the faith is by *hearing* a report, and the report is *heard* through a spoken word of Messiah."

Proclaimed by the Scriptures

Stern again points out, "A similar objection is heard today when it is claimed that the [Bible] does not contain Messianic prophecies fulfilled by Yeshua... so that Jews cannot be blamed for not receiving the Messiah." But as Paul himself shows us, the Scriptures themselves proclaim the Messiah, and any unbelief is no fault but our own. While the proclamation of the Good News is cemented into the foundation of Scripture, we as disciples of Messiah nevertheless have the responsibility of making that report heard through a spoken word of Messiah.

My friend, when you partner with MJMI, you help us do the work of overcoming objections to the proclamation of the Good News to Jewish people, and making that good report heard! 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.

Let us continue to pray for the Jewish people, that their hearts will be opened to the proclamation of Messiah that is always available to them!

For the sake of the Messiah,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kevin".

Kevin Geoffrey, President, MJMI