

Paul's Epistle to the Romans

LESSON XXV: THE GRACE OF GOD AND THE DISOBEDIENCE OF THE JEWS — CHAP 9:30–10:21

OVERVIEW — *“The key word in this passage is ‘righteousness,’ which occurs ten (or eleven) times. Throughout this passage, Paul returns to the forensic meaning of righteousness that he established in chaps. 1-4: the ‘right’ standing with God that is the product of God’s justifying work in Christ. Earlier in the letter Paul devoted considerable time to showing that a person could experience this right standing with God only through faith (1:17; 3:21-4:25). He now uses this cardinal gospel truth to explain why so many Gentiles, previously excluded from God’s covenant concern, are being saved, while most Jews, the recipients of God’s blessings and promises, find themselves estranged from God. Paul uses three roughly parallel contrasts between two kinds of righteousness to make his point:*

- (1) ‘the righteousness based on faith’ verse ‘the law of righteousness’ (9:30-31);*
- (2) ‘the righteousness of God’ verses ‘their own righteousness’ (10:3);*
- (3) ‘the righteousness based on the law’ versus ‘the righteousness based on faith’ (10:5-6).*

Gentiles are being included in God’s true spiritual people because they are experiencing the former, positive, kind of righteousness that is now available to anyone who believes (10:4b, 11-13). Most Jews, on the other hand, are finding themselves outside this true people of God because they are wrongly preoccupied with the other, false, kind of righteousness. They have persisted in seeking to work out their relationship with God through the law (9:31; 10:3, 5) and the works it demands (9:32a; 10:5). They have therefore missed the climax of salvation history, ‘stumbling’ over Jesus Christ (9:32b-33), the embodiment of God’s righteousness (10:3), climax of the law (10:4), and focus of God’s word of grace in the new age of redemptive history (10:6-8).

The threefold contrast between two kinds of righteousness stands at the heart of each paragraph in this section: 9:30-33; 10:1-4; 10:5-13. The integrity of this section is further marked by an inclusio: Paul both begins (9:30) and ends (10:11-13) with teaching about the inclusion of Gentiles. Note also the quotation of Isa. 28:16 in both 9:33 and 10:12.” [Moo, *Romans*, pg 618ff]

EXCURSUS: JEWISH REJECTION OF THE GOSPEL — “The rhetorical question ‘What then shall we say?’ signifies that 9:30-10:21 (like 9:14-23) takes up an issue raised by the main line of Paul’s teaching in 9:6-13, 24-29. *As 9:30b-31 reveal, this issue is the surprising turn of salvation history Paul has sketched in 9:24-29: Gentiles, once ‘not a people,’ are now entering into the people of God; Israel, blessed and given so many privileges, is failing to act on her privileges and experience salvation in Christ.* As Paul has already explained, this situation is due to the sovereign determination of God. But in 9:30-10:21, he argues that it is also the result of human response. The manifestation of God’s eschatological righteousness in Christ has been met by Gentiles with faith, by Israel (generally) with disobedience and unbelief. But Gentile inclusion continues (as in 9:6-29) to be the subordinate note, as Paul continues to explore the problem of Israel’s exclusion.

“This new section, 9:30-10:21, is therefore something of an excursus from Paul’s main argument in chaps. 9-11. That argument, as we have seen, seeks to reconcile the privileges granted to Israel in the OT with the plight of Israel that has resulted from her (general) refusal to believe the gospel. In 9:30-10:21, Paul pauses in his argument to explore the latter point: Israel’s plight as a result of the gospel. He shows (1) that Israel’s situation is the result of her failure to recognize in the gospel and in the Jesus proclaimed in the gospel the culmination of salvation history (9:30-10:13); and (2) that Israel’s failure to recognize this is inexcusable, because the OT itself points to this culmination (10:14-21 especially).

*“Paul signifies the first of these concerns by reverting in these verses to the language of the gospel that dominated 1:16-17; 3:21-4:25. Every component of Paul’s ‘definition’ of the gospel in the theme of the letter (1:16-17) is taken up in 9:30-10:21: ‘gospel’ (see 10:15, 16); ‘salvation’ / ‘save’ (see 10:1, 9, 10, 13); ‘all’ (10:4, 11, 12, 13); ‘Jew and Greek’ (10:12); ‘faith’ (passim); and ‘the righteousness of God’ (10:3). Matching and often related to Paul’s gospel language are quotations of the OT (11 in 25 verses). In this is found Paul’s second key concern: to show that the gospel, as outlined in 1:8-4:25, is in continuity with the OT. Paul shows that the law (10:6-8, 19), the prophets (9:32b-33; 10:15-16, 20-21), and the writings (10:18) all bear witness to ‘the message of faith,’ the gospel that Paul is preaching. Israel is zealous but ignorant: she has not understood that the gospel of Christ brings salvation history to its climax. And she should have understood, for the OT witnesses clearly to the gospel. Paul neatly summarizes this theme in his conflated quotation from Isaiah in 9:33: Israel has stumbled over the stone that God himself has ‘set in Zion.’” [Moo, *Romans*, pg 617f]*

THE JEWS’ TWO-FOLD ERROR: (1) END OF AN ERA, (2) SALVATION BY WORKS — “In this passage, Paul’s criticism of the Jews with respect to the law is mainly salvation-historical: they have failed to see that its era has come to an end (contrast Paul’s earlier treatment of the Jews [2:1-3:20], which focuses on their inability to fulfill the law because he is there looking at the situation before Christ). But this is not Paul’s only basis for criticism of the Jews in these verses. Paul also makes clear that Israel’s failure to perceive the shift of salvation history in Christ is bound up with her myopic preoccupation with the law and its works. Criticism of the Jews for ‘legalism,’ the attempt to secure a relationship with God through doing the law, is part and parcel of this text.” [Moo, *Romans*, pg 619]

THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD (chap. 9) / RESPONSIBILITY OF MAN (chap. 10) IN BALANCE — Again, I sing the praises of Douglas Moo’s commentary on Romans. Of all the resources I am using, I am most impressed and in most agreement

with his comments and the balance he attempts to make in all of his comments. I am extremely thankful for what I am learning from this man. As a further example of the balance Moo strives to maintain, here are his comments on the relationship between chapters 9 and 10: *“Scholars debate the theological ramifications of the emphases in these two sections. Some argue that Paul in 9:30-10:21 explains the basis on which God makes his decision about human beings: those who believe he calls to salvation; those who reject the gospel he ‘hardens.’ Others, however, claim that human response (9:30-10:21) is simply the result of God’s prior decision. As I have argued in assessing the implications of 9:16, I believe the latter is closer to the truth. Nevertheless, Paul is content here to set the two down side-by-side without attempting a reconciliation.”* [Moo, *Romans*, pg 617]

CHAPTER DIVISIONS — While not very high in the matter of importance, there is some disagreement concerning where to divide Paul’s discussion. The older commentaries I referenced followed our chapter division (9:1-33 / 10:1-21; see, e.g., Hodge, Haldane) while several of the newer commentators make a division near the end of chapter 9 (9:1-29 / 9:30-10:21; see, e.g., Moo, Cranfield, Dunn). For better or worse, I will follow Moo’s division of thought. “At first glance it seems natural to follow the chapter divisions in isolating the next major stage of Paul’s argument. With 11:1, Paul certainly moves on to a new topic. And the same would seem to be true in 10:1, with its direct address to the readers — ‘brothers and sisters’ — and its expression of concern for Israel, reminding us of the beginning of chap. 9. *But our first glance is in this case misleading; a more fundamental break comes at 9:30.* (1) The question ‘What then shall we say?’ often marks a new argument in Romans (see 4:1; 6:1; 7:7; 8:31; 9:14). (2) Paul signals a shift in focus by a shift in vocabulary. The words ‘righteousness’ and ‘faith’ / ‘believe’ are central to the argument of 9:30-10:21 — yet they are almost entirely missing from 9:1-29 and 11:1-36. (3) The integrity of 9:30 – 10:21 is further seen in the similarity of its beginning and ending. In both 9:30-32 and 10:20-21 Paul contrasts the surprising inclusion of Gentiles in the people of God with the exclusion of Israel.” [Moo, *Romans*, pg 616f]

The Righteousness of God and the ‘Law of Righteousness’ (9:30-33)

What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith. But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumblingstone; as it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and rock of offense: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. (Rom 9:30-33 KJV)

What then shall we say? That the Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, have obtained it, a righteousness that is by faith; but Israel, who pursued a law of righteousness, has not attained it. Why not? Because they pursued it not by faith but as if it were by works. They stumbled over the “stumbling stone.” As 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.” (Rom 9:30-33 NIV)

What, then, shall we say? that nations who are not pursuing righteousness did attain to righteousness, and righteousness that [is] of faith, and Israel, pursuing a law of righteousness, at a law of righteousness did not arrive; wherefore? because — not by faith, but as by works of law; for they did stumble at the stone of stumbling, according as it hath been written, ‘Lo, I place in Sion a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence; and every one who is believing thereon shall not be ashamed.’ (Rom 9:30-33 Young’s Literal Translation)

v 30 — RHETORICAL QUESTION — “The question ‘What then shall we say?’ need not suggest that Paul is responding to the objection of an opponent. Rather, Paul uses it as a rhetorical device to introduce an implication of his teaching in 9:6b-29 (and esp. vv. 24-29): *‘Therefore, in light of God’s calling of Gentiles and of only some Jews, what do we find now to be the case?’ Verses 30-32a give the answer to this question, which is then expanded in 9:32b-10:21. Paul’s response comes in two coordinate and parallel clauses, the first focusing on Gentiles (v. 30b) and the second on Israel (v. 31).*” [Moo, *Romans*, pg 621]

THE GENTILES WERE NOT SEEKING THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD FOUND IN CHRIST — “Paul describes Gentiles, as a class [note the lack of the definite article, not “*the* Gentiles” but “Gentiles,” emphasizing not the number of Gentiles but their identity as Gentiles in opposition to Israel], as ‘not seeking righteousness.’ The fact — as Paul well knows — that many Gentiles in his day were earnest and diligent in their pursuit of moral ‘uprightness’ is one indication that *the ‘righteousness’ Paul speaks of here is not moral righteousness but forensic righteousness: a right standing before God.*” [Moo, *Romans*, pg 621]

“[I]t is clear that in both those other occurrences of the word [‘righteousness’ in this same verse that] the reference must be not to moral righteousness but to righteous status in God’s sight. *So we take Paul’s intention to be not to deny that in their former pagan life the Gentile Christians had sought after moral righteousness (some of them no doubt had desired moral righteousness more or less seriously), but to deny that they had truly and seriously sought after righteous status in the sight of the one and only true God. In spite of the fact that they were not seeking it, these Gentiles have obtained a status of righteousness before God.*” [Cranfield, *Romans 9-16*, pg 506f]

HOW DID THE ‘NOT-SEEKING’ GENTILES FIND RIGHTEOUSNESS? — “How have Gentiles attained this status when they were not even seeking it? First, as Paul explains in an appositive phrase, the righteousness that Gentiles have attained is a righteousness ‘that comes by faith.’ And faith, as Paul has made clear earlier in the letter (1:16; 3:28-29) and will emphasize again

(10:11-13), is a response that any person, Jew or Gentile, can make. But, second, *Paul undoubtedly wants us to see the Gentiles' attainment of a righteous status with God without their having sought it as a specific and important example of the principle that he has enunciated in his previous argument: belonging to the people of God 'is not a matter of the person who wills or that person who runs, but of the God who shows mercy.'* (9:16)." [Moo, *Romans*, pg 621f]

"The inference is, that what to all human probability was the most unlikely to occur, has actually taken place. The Gentiles, sunk in carelessness and sin, have attained the favor of God, while the Jews, to whom religion was a business, have utterly failed. Why is this? The reason is given in ver. 32; it was because the Jews would not submit to be saved on the terms which God proposed, but insisted on reaching heaven in their own way." [Hodge, *Romans*]

"Whatever objection might be made to the doctrine the Apostle was here inculcating, a clear proof was offered in the case of the Gentiles which he had adduced, of the truth he had advanced and illustrated by the examples of Jacob and Esau, namely, that the purpose of God, according to election, is unchangeable, and that salvation is not of works, but of Him that calleth. And here was a wonderful instance of Divine sovereignty. The nation of Israel were following after righteousness, yet God, instead of giving it to them, bestowed it on those who were not even looking for it. How different is this from the ways of men! How does the proud heart of the self-righteous legalist revolt at such a view of the Divine conduct! Man's wisdom cannot endure that God should in this sovereign way bestow His favors. But this is God's way, and whoever will not submit to it, resists the will of God. Nay, whoever finds fault with it, attempts to dethrone the Almighty, and to undeify God. The whole plan of salvation is so ordered, 'that no flesh should glory in His presence, but that, according as it is written, he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord,' 1 Corinthians 1:31." [Haldane, *Romans*]

To follow after righteousness — to press forward towards it as towards the prize in a race, Philippians 3:14.

v 31, 32a — ISRAEL PURSUED RIGHTEOUSNESS BY WORKS OF THE LAW — "The situation of Israel, Paul emphasizes, exhibits a complete contrast to that of the Gentiles he has described in v. 30. The Gentiles, who were 'not pursuing,' have 'attained'; Israel, which was 'pursuing,' has not 'arrived at its goal.' The deliberate parallelism between the verses would lead us to expect that Paul would make 'righteousness' the goal of Israel's pursuit. Instead, however, we find in v. 31 the phrase 'law of righteousness.' ... [P]aul uses *nomos* here in his usual sense, 'law of Moses,' the commands that God gave to the people of Israel through Moses at Sinai. ... Paul connects righteousness language and the word [law] absolutely in only two other verses in Romans: 2:13 and 10:5. In both, Paul pictures righteousness as that which could be gained from the law through 'doing.' These parallels suggest that *we should understand the phrase to mean 'the law whose object is righteousness': the law 'promises' righteousness when its demands are met.* It is this 'law that promises righteousness' that must then be carried over as the object of 'attain' at the end of v. 31 and of the implied verb 'pursue' in v. 32a. 'Law,' therefore, remains the topic of Paul's teaching throughout this verse and a half, but law conceived as a means to righteousness." ... *Paul therefore explains in v. 32a why Israel's pursuit of this 'law for righteousness' failed: because she sought to 'fulfill' that law by works rather than by faith.*" [Moo, *Romans*, pg 622ff] "Error is often a greater obstacle to the salvation of men than carelessness or vice. Christ said that publicans and harlots would enter the kingdom of God before the Pharisees. In like manner the thoughtless and sensual Gentiles were more susceptible of impression from the Gospel, and were more frequently converted to Christ, than the Jews, who were wedded to erroneous views of the plan of salvation." [Hodge, *Romans*]

"SEEKING THE LAW" WAS NOT WRONG, IT WAS HOW THE JEWS WERE SEEKING THE LAW — *"It is of the greatest importance to recognize something which is often completely ignored, namely, that there is not the slightest suggestion here that to pursue the law was wrong or useless. It is not for its pursuit of the law, not on account of the fact that it had pursued, and was still pursuing, the law, that Israel is condemned, but for the way in which it had pursued the law. The implication is that, had Israel pursued the law [in faith], it would indeed truly have come to grips with it, and that his desire for Israel was not that it should henceforward not pursue the law, but that it should cease to pursue it [out of works] and henceforward pursue it [out of faith]."* [Cranfield, *Romans 9-16*, pg 509f]

"Now Paul has nothing in principle against Israel's seeking to do the law; he elsewhere makes clear that the law legitimately demands works [contra: modern revisionists who separate obedience from faith in Christ]. Why then does he appear to condemn it here? For two reasons.

- **Israel's goal for pursuing the law was wrong** — The first and probably primary reason why Paul condemns Israel's pursuit of 'the law of righteousness' becomes clear when we take into account the christological emphasis of vv. 32b-33: Israel's failure came because she 'stumbled over' Christ, refusing to put faith in him. Here Paul suggests that it was not only the manner of Israel's pursuit of 'the law of righteousness' that was misguided; her very choice of a goal was wrong also: '[The Jews] not only deceive themselves as to the goal, but on the pathway on which they set out they come to a fall.' *Israel has chosen to keep her focus on the law, seeking to find righteousness through it, when Christ, the culmination of that law and the only source of righteousness, has already come. For it is only in Christ that the demand of the law is fully met; and only, therefore, by accepting him in faith that a person can find the righteousness that the law promises* (Rom 3:31; 8:4).

- **Israel's manner of pursuing the law was wrong** — Second, as we have seen, Paul's point is not simply that Israel was pursuing the law; she was pursuing the law in terms of its promise of righteousness. Yet Paul has been at pains earlier

in the letter to demonstrate that the law's promise of righteousness (2:13) could never be activated in practice (3:20) because of human sin (3:9). Surely, although Paul does not here make it explicit, we must fill out Paul's logic with this earlier clear and sustained argument. *Israel has failed to achieve a law that could confer righteousness because she could not produce those works that would be necessary to meet the law's demands and so secure the righteousness it promises.*" [Moo, *Romans*, pg 626f]

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO PURSUE THE LAW ON THE BASIS OF FAITH? — *"What then is this pursuit of the law [out of faith]? The answer must be, surely, that it is to respond to the claim to faith which God makes through the law, and must include accepting, without evasion or resentment, the law's criticism of one's life, recognizing that one can never so adequately fulfil its righteous requirements as to put God in one's debt, accepting God's proffered mercy and forgiveness and in return giving oneself to Him in love and gratitude and so beginning to be released from one's self-centredness and turned in the direction of a humble obedience that is free from self-righteousness; that it is to allow oneself to be turned again and again by the forgiving mercy of God in the direction of loving Him with all one's heart and soul and mind and strength and of loving one's neighbor as oneself. The tragedy of Israel was that, instead of thus responding to the law of God with faith and pursuing it on the basis of faith, they had sought to come to terms with it [out of works], that is, on the basis of their works, their deserving, cherishing the illusion that they could so fulfil its demands as to put God under an obligation to themselves. Such an illusionary quest could only result in failure — in imprisonment in one's own self-centredness, and so in failure really to get to grips with the law, failure to comprehend its true meaning.*" [Cranfield, *Romans 9-16*, pg 510]

v 32b, 33 — ISRAEL'S STUMBLING OVER THE STONE — *"The exclusivity of Christ is the premise of Paul's next point. For Christ is that 'stone' which God has placed in Zion: the foundation for the new people of God; the keystone in the plan of salvation. Yet rather than building on that stone, putting their faith in it, Israel has stumbled over it.* Paul does not explicitly connect his assertion that Israel has 'stumbled over the stone of stumbling' in v. 32b, with its scriptural support in v. 33, to vv. 31-32a. It is clear, nevertheless, that they are related; but how: Has Israel's inappropriate focus on the law led her to stumble over Christ, the stone God has placed in Zion? Or has Israel's failure to place her faith in Christ led her to focus too exclusively on the law? At the risk of being accused of 'having one's cake and eating it too,' I answer: both. On the one hand, Paul argues that Israel has missed Christ, the culmination of the plan of God, because she has focused too narrowly on the law. Israel is like a person walking a path, whose eyes are so narrowly focused downward on the path itself that she trips over a stone in the middle of that path. On the other hand, Israel's failure to perceive in Christ the end and goal of the path she has been walking leads her to continue on that path after it had served its purpose." [Moo, *Romans*, pg 628]

"Israel has failed to recognize Him who is the meaning and the goal of the law, and has rejected Him. How could it really come to grips with the law, if it was not ready to believe in Him who is the law's innermost meaning? But how could it believe in Him, if it was determined to rely on its own works? So they have stumbled over Christ. He who was given for their salvation has thus, because of their perverseness, actually proved to be the occasion of their fall." [Cranfield, *Romans 9-16*, pg 510f]

THE 'STONE PLACED IN ZION' QUOTE — "Paul's quotation is a conflation of two texts that both speak about a 'stone' : Isa. 28:16 and 8:14. The former text reads: *'Therefore thus says the Lord GOD, See, I am laying in Zion a foundation stone, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation: One who trusts will not panic'* (NRSV). It is unclear what we should identify as the 'stone' that Isaiah prophesies will be the foundation for Israel's hopes; but some Jews before Paul's day were already apparently identifying the stone with the Messiah. Isa. 8:14, on the other hand, is a prediction of judgment on Israel, warning that they would stumble and fall over the Lord himself: *'He [the LORD of hosts; cf. v. 13] will become a sanctuary, a stone one strikes against; for both houses of Israel he will become a rock one stumbles over — a trap and a snare for the inhabitants of Jerusalem'* (NRSV). Since these same passages are quoted in 1 Pet. 2:6-8, it is likely that early Christians before Paul's time had already combined them in a 'stone *testimonium*.' However, the particular way they are conflated here is probably Paul's own work. *By replacing the middle of Isa. 28:16 with a phrase from Isa. 8:14, he brings out the negative point about Israel's fall that is his main point in this context. At the same time, by including the reference to Isa. 28:16, he lays the foundation for the positive exposition of Christ as a 'stone' that he will develop in chap. 10 (see esp. v. 11). The quotation concluding chap. [9], therefore, provides a significant christological basis for Paul's continuing discussion of Israel's failure and the Gentiles' inclusion in chap. 10. At the same time, it contributes significantly to Paul's concern to demonstrate that Israel's exclusion from God's people as a result of the gospel does not constitute a departure from the OT. Quite the contrary, Paul here implies: Israel's stumbling over Christ was predicted in the OT."* [Moo, *Romans*, pg 628ff] "In 1 Peter 2:8 we have the same use of these Scriptures about Christ. Either Peter had read Romans or both Paul and Peter had a copy of Christian *Testimonia* like Cyprian's letter." [Robertson, *Word Pictures*] "The original meaning of the verse seems to have been that, in contrast with the false security which the rulers of Jerusalem had thought to establish for themselves, God was establishing true and lasting security for those who trusted in Him. But the passage came to be understood in Judaism messianically.... In Isa 8:14 it is God Himself who will be 'for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offense to both the houses of Israel' (RV). The fact that the same two Isaiah texts are also combined in 1 Pet 2.6-8 (together with Ps 118.22) and the fact that the form of the text used there shows agreements with that used by Paul over against both the MT and LXX have been seen as supporting the view that a collection of 'stone' testimonies was part of the early tradition of the Church." [Cranfield, *Romans 9-16*, pg 511f]

ISRAEL'S PROBLEM CENTERS ON THE PERSON OF CHRIST — *"What vv. 32b and 33 have done is to add an explicitly Christological dimension to the definition of the disobedience of Israel and of the obedience of some Gentiles which*

has already been given in vv. 30-32a. That disobedience and that obedience are essentially a matter of relationship to Christ. Israel's pursuit of the law [on the basis of works] was blindness to the law's witness to Christ. Its legalistic misunderstanding and perversion of the law and its rejection of Him were inextricably intertwined. Its determination to establish its own righteousness by its works naturally made it blind to the righteousness which God was making available in Christ as a free gift, while its failure to recognize Christ as the true innermost substance of the law could only drive it deeper into legalistic misunderstanding and perversion of the law. And the faith which is the basis of the righteous status now possessed by some Gentiles according to v. 30 is, of course, faith in Christ — that faith which bears the promise, 'he who believes on him shall not be put to shame.'" [Cranfield, Romans 9-16, pg 512]

The Righteousness of God and the 'Their Own Righteousness' (10:1-4)

Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. (Rom 10:1-4 KJV)

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

Brethren, the pleasure indeed of my heart, and my supplication that [is] to God for Israel, is — for salvation; for I bear them testimony that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge, for not knowing the righteousness of God, and their own righteousness seeking to establish, to the righteousness of God they did not submit. For Christ is an end of law for righteousness to every one who is believing, (Rom 10:1-4 Young's Literal Translation)

"This paragraph unfolds in a series of logical steps, each related to the former with the conjunction 'for.' Paul begins by reasserting his deep concern for the salvation of his 'kindred according to the flesh' (cf. 9:1-3). Assumed in this expression of concern is, of course, the fact that most of his fellow Jews are not finding salvation. It is this assumption that is the basis for v. 2, as Paul explains why Jews have not found salvation: their commendable zeal for the Lord has not been matched by a comparable degree of knowledge. What have the Jews not understood? In a word, righteousness. As Paul shows in v. 3, the Jews have not recognized the manifestation of God's righteousness in Christ and have sought rather to establish their own, based on the doing of the law (cf. 9:32 and 10:5). That this is truly a serious misunderstanding is demonstrated in v. 4: Christ has brought the law to its culmination; it is in him that righteousness is now available, for anyone who believes.

Verse 4 is justly famous as one of the most succinct yet significant theological assertions in all of the Pauline letters. Yet v. 3, with its explanation of Israel's failure in terms of a contrast between two kinds of righteousness, is the conceptual center of the paragraph. It therefore matches the similar contrast Paul features in 9:30-31 and 10:5-6." [Moo, Romans, pg 630f]

V 1 — A BURDEN FOR SOULS IN THE LIGHT OF ELECTION — "Paul has given a brief explanation of Israel's failure to find inclusion in the eschatological people of God; now he will expand further on this explanation. At the same time, Paul's direct address of his mainly Gentile Christian readers serve to underline his sincerity and the importance of what he says in v. 1. He wants his predominantly Gentile Christian readers to know that he takes no delight or satisfaction from Israel's fall. Quite the contrary, on his part, Paul remains passionately committed to the salvation of the Jews. His commitment rests in the desire, or will, of his most inmost person, the heart; and it comes to expression in his prayer of petition on behalf of Israel, that they might experience the salvation that has been made available in the gospel. As Murray points out, *the juxtaposition of this heartfelt prayer for Israel's salvation almost immediately after Paul's teaching about the ultimate determinancy of the will of God in salvation (9:6b-29) carries an important reminder: 'We violate the order of human thought and trespass the boundary between God's prerogative and man's when the truth of God's sovereign control constrains despair or abandonment of concern for the eternal interests of men.'*" [Moo, Romans, pg 630f]

"We should never cease to pray for, and to use all proper means for the conversion of, those who either oppose the Gospel with violence, or from some preconceived opinion. Secret things belong to God, and none can tell whether or not they are among the number of the elect. No one among the Jews was more opposed to the Gospel than Paul himself had been; and every Christian who knows his own heart, and who recollects the state of his mind before his conversion, should consider the repugnance he once felt to the doctrine of grace. We ought not, indeed, to treat those as Christians who do not appear to be such. This would be directly opposed to the dictates of charity, and would tend to lull them into a false security. But assuredly none can have such powerful inducements to exercise patience towards any who reject the Gospel, as they who know who it is that has made them to differ from others, and that by the grace of God they are what they are. These considerations have a direct tendency to make them humble and gentle. Those who are elected shall indeed be finally saved, but this will-take place through the means which God has appointed. It is on this ground that Paul says, 'Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sake, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.'" [Haldane, Romans]

ISRAEL UNDER CONDEMNATION — "[T]his verse is one of the clearest indicators that Paul does indeed treat Israel as a whole in these chapters as separate from God and his people, under condemnation." [Moo, Romans, pg 632] "The fact that Paul

continued to pray for the unbelieving Jews, who had ‘stumbled against the stone of stumbling,’ is clear proof that he did not think of their present rejection as final and closed.” [Cranfield, *Romans 9-16*, pg 513]

V 2 — IMPROPERLY GUIDED ZEAL FOR GOD — “‘Zeal’ emerged as an especially commendable characteristic in the intertestamental period, when the very existence of the Jewish faith was threatened by foreign enemies and internal unconcern [see especially the famous words of Mattathias, calling his fellow Jews to rebellion against the edict of Antiochus against the Jewish faith: ‘Let every one who is zealous for the law and supports the covenant come out with me!’ (1 Macc. 2:27, RSV); that this zeal has a nationalistic element in the intertestamental period is, of course, clear]. It is also uniformly praised in the NT [cf. John 2:17; Acts 22:3; 2 Cor 11:2; Phil 3:6]. *Paul’s ‘testimony’ about Israel begins, then, on a positive note: they have a praiseworthy devotion to God. The problem with Israel and the reason why Paul must continue to pray for their salvation is that, like the pre-Christian Paul (see Acts 22:3; Phil 3:6), their zeal is not driven by ‘knowledge.’ As v. 3 makes clear, what is involved is a discernment of the plan of God that enables one to recognize what God is doing in the world and to respond accordingly.*” [Moo, *Romans*, pg 632]

“Such zeal for God is the hall-mark of orthodox Judaism in every century. ‘Every page of Rabbinic literature ... reminds one of this word of the apostle.’ Both [zeal] and [God] are emphatic and important here. Their zeal is zeal for God. It is no heathen fanaticism of an empty ideology, but zeal for the true God. Israel is absolutely right in the object of its zeal. And it is undoubtedly zeal — fervent, strenuous, tenacious, concentrated zeal.... Indeed, orthodox Judaism puts much that passes for Christianity, and even much true Christianity, to shame both in respect of the seriousness of its zeal and by the fact that its zeal is really zeal for God.... *In spite of the earnestness of their zeal, in spite of the fact that it is truly zeal for the true God, there is a disastrous flaw in it — it is not according to knowledge. Paul certainly does not mean to deny that they know God (v. 19). They do indeed know God, and yet they will not know Him as He really is. There is a lack of comprehension at the most vital point. It is a matter of seeing indeed but not perceiving, of hearing indeed but not understanding (cf. Mk 4.12). There is a perverse and obstinate ignorance at the very heart of their knowledge of God, and in the centre of their dedicated and meticulous obedience an obstinate disobedience.*” [Cranfield, *Romans 9-16*, pg 514]

“No practical mistake is more common or more dangerous than to suppose that all zeal about God and religion is necessarily a godly zeal. Some of the very worst forms of human character have been exhibited by men zealous for God and his service; as, for example, the persecutors both in the Jewish and Christian churches. Zeal should be according to knowledge, *i.e.* directed towards proper objects. Its true character is easily ascertained by noticing its effects, whether it produces self-righteousness or humility, censoriousness or charity; whether it leads to self-denial or self-gratulation and praise; and whether it manifests itself in prayer and effort, or in loud talking and boasting.” [Hodge, *Romans*]

TESTIFY — “μαρτυρεῖν [marturein] properly denotes a public, responsible and solemn action. Paul solemnly testifies to his fellow-countrymen’s zeal for God.” [Cranfield, *Romans 9-16*, pg 513]

V 3 — THE JEWS WERE IGNORANT OF GOD’S MANNER OF BRINGING PEOPLE TO HIMSELF — “God’s plan has reached its climax in the gospel of Jesus Christ (1:2-4). And at the heart of the gospel Paul has placed the revelation of the righteousness of God (see 1:16-17). It is natural, therefore, for Paul to characterize the Jews’ lack of understanding (v. 2b) as consisting in their ignorance of ‘the righteousness of God.’ This does not mean that the Jews did not understand that God was a righteous God. For, as the parallel phrases in 9:31 and 10:6 suggest, ‘the righteousness of God’ here denotes the dynamic activity of God whereby he brings people into relationship with himself. This ‘justifying’ activity of God is manifested in Christ (3:21) and proclaimed in the gospel (1:17). *The Jews’ ignorance, therefore, involves their failing to understand that God has fulfilled his promise to reveal his saving activity in Jesus Christ.*” [Moo, *Romans*, pg 632f] “*And — though Paul does not make this absolutely explicit until vv. 4ff — it was in Jesus Christ that God’s gift of righteousness was offered, and Israel’s ignorance of God’s righteousness was identical with its failure to recognize Jesus Christ.... The ignorance of the unbelieving Jews consists in their failure to comprehend and to acknowledge the righteousness of God, that is, God’s proffered gift of a status of righteousness in His eyes, and — what is but the other side, the reverse, of this failure — their stubborn determination to establish their own righteousness, that is, a righteous status of their own earning. It is indeed an ignorance of God’s own character, a failure to know Him as He really is, and as He has revealed Himself, as the merciful God. And the act of disobedience resulting from this ignorance is their refusal to submit to God’s righteousness, that is, their refusal to humble themselves to accept it as an undeserved gift. It is the refusal to let grace be grace, the refusal to give God alone the glory.*” [Cranfield, *Romans 9-16*, pg 515]

THE ‘RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD’ = BOTH GOD’S ‘ACTIVITY OF DECLARING RIGHT’ AND ‘THE STATUS OF BEING RIGHT’ WITH GOD — “‘The righteousness of God,’ in this sense ... embraces on one side God’s activity of ‘declaring right’ and on the other the status of ‘being right’ with God that people receive when they respond in faith to that activity. Paul’s language in this verse implies the presence of both these concepts. The nuance of divine activity is evident in the language of the last clause of the verse: the Jews ‘have not submitted to the righteousness of God.’ ... But the second participial clause in the verse — ‘seeking to establish their own righteousness’ — suggests that ‘righteousness of God’ includes also the nuance of ‘righteous status.’” [Moo, *Romans*, pg 633f]

THEIR OWN (SELF-)RIGHTEOUSNESS — Although this could be taken in a corporate sense (“Israel’s own righteousness” =

Israel having a national righteousness to the detriment of other nations), it probably has an individual sense: “each individual Jew attempting to establish a relationship with God through his own efforts, a self-righteousness.” “The Jews failed to ‘submit’ to God’s righteousness not only because they did not recognize God’s righteousness when it arrived but also because they were too narrowly focused on seeking a righteousness in connection with their obedience to the law.” [Moo, *Romans*, pg 636]

SUBMIT — ὑποστάσσω [hupostassō] “Paul’s use of the verb ‘submit’ shows that the righteousness of God is an active force to which one must humbly and obediently subordinate oneself. Another way to put the matter would be to say that the Jews have not responded to God’s righteousness in faith. So close a relationship does Paul establish between the righteousness of God and faith that one cannot mention the former without thinking of the latter. And that Israel’s ‘not submitting’ is equivalent to their not having faith is evident from the parallel texts in this passage (9:32a; cf. v. 33b; 10:5-6).... A few scholars have argued that the aorist ὑπετάγησαν [hupetagēsan, ‘submitted’] makes reference specifically to Israel’s historical rejection of the Messiah. But Paul probably has in mind rather the continual rejection of Christ on the part of the Jews.” [Moo, *Romans*, pg 633f]

v 4 — PAUL’S REASON FOR STATING THE JEWS HAD ZEAL WITHOUT KNOWLEDGE — “This verse, containing one of the most famous of all of Paul’s theological ‘slogans,’ grounds (cf. ‘for’) what Paul has said about the Jews in v. 3. Specifically, he shows that the Jews’ pursuit of a righteousness of their own, based on the law, is wrong because Christ has brought the law to its culmination and thereby made righteousness available to everyone who believes.” [Moo, *Romans*, pg 636]

THE LAW — There are four different manners by which we could understand the ‘law’: the law generally, in whatever form; the OT revelation broadly; legalism; or the Mosaic law. Moo argues for the understanding Paul is referring to the Mosaic law: “With the great majority of scholars, therefore, I conclude that *nomos* [‘law’] refers in this verse, as usually with Paul, to the Mosaic law.” [Moo, *Romans*, pg 636]

THE “END” OF THE LAW — The Greek word for “end” here is the common word τέλος [telos]. There are several different manners by which this might be understood:

- **termination** as in the sentence “*The end of the class finally came!*”
- **goal** as in the sentence “*The end of bible study is Christian growth and maturity.*”
- **result** as in the sentence “*She did not foresee the end of her actions.*”

Each of these meanings are possible for the Greek word and each is used by Paul in their respective senses:

- **termination:** ‘*Then shall come the telos, when he shall hand over the kingdom to God the Father,*’ 1 Cor 15:24
- **goal:** ‘*The telos of the commandment is love from a pure heart,*’ 1 Tim 1:5
- **result:** ‘*The telos of these things [sinful actions] is death,*’ Rom 6:21

“If we accept the first meaning, Paul’s point will be a purely temporal one: the coming of Christ means that, in some manner, the period of the law’s significance and / or authority is at an end. If we choose either the second or third meaning, however, Paul will be presenting the law and Christ in a dynamic relationship, with the law in some sense directed toward, or pointing forward, to Christ.” [Moo, *Romans*, pg 638] Moo then goes into great detail as to word usage, context, related texts and the like. He then summarizes by accepting both a temporal sense as well as using “end” in the sense of “goal”: “*These considerations require that telos have a temporal nuance: with the coming of Christ the authority of the law of Moses is, in some basic sense, at an end. At the same time, a teleological nuance is also present. This is suggested not only by the contextual factors ... but also by the fact that similar NT uses of telos generally preserve some sense of direction or goal. In other words, the ‘end’ that telos usually denotes is an end that is the natural or inevitable result of something else. The analogy of a race course (which many scholars think telos is meant to convey) is helpful: the finish line is both the ‘termination’ of the race (the race is over when it is reached) and the ‘goal’ of the race (the race is run for the sake of reaching the finish line). Likewise, we suggest, Paul is implying that Christ is the ‘end’ of the law (he brings its era to a close) and its ‘goal’ (he is what the law anticipated and pointed toward). The English word ‘end’ perfectly captures this nuance; but, if it is thought that it implies too temporal a meaning, we might also use the words ‘culmination,’ ‘consummation,’ or ‘climax.’ ... [I] am not arguing for a ‘double meaning’ for the word; I am arguing that the single meaning of the Greek word here combines nuances of the English words ‘end’ and ‘goal.’*” [Moo, *Romans*, pg 641] “For Christ is the culmination of the law, so that there might be righteousness for everyone who believes.” [Moo’s translation] It should be noted that Cranfield believes it exclusively means Christ is the ‘goal’ of the law.

CHRIST AS THE CONSUMMATION OF AN AGE — “As Christ consummates one era of salvation history, so he inaugurates a new one. In this new era, God’s eschatological righteousness is available to those who believe; and it is available to everyone who believes. Both emphases are important and reflect one of the most basic themes of the letter (cf. 1:16; 3:22, 28-30; 4:16-17). Because the Jews have not understood that Christ has brought the law to its culmination, they have not responded in faith to Christ; and they have therefore missed the righteousness of God, available only in Christ on the basis of faith. At the same time, Christ, by ending the era of the law, during which God was dealing mainly with Israel, has

made righteousness more readily available for Gentiles. Verse 4 is, then, the hinge on which the entire section 9:30-10:13 turns. It justifies Paul's claim that the Jews, by their preoccupation with the law, have missed God's righteousness (9:30-10:3): for righteousness is now found only in Christ and only through faith in Christ, the one who has brought the law to its climax and thereby ended its reign. It also announced the theme that Paul will expound in 10:5-13: righteousness by faith in Christ for all who believe." [Moo, *Romans*, pg 641f]

TWO CONSIDERATIONS ON WHAT "CHRIST BEING THE END OF THE LAW" MEANS AND WHAT IT DOES NOT MEAN — *"Two theological reflections on this much quoted verse are in order before we leave it. First, while I have argued that Paul is teaching that Christ brought an 'end' to the law, it is important to clarify what this means and, perhaps, more important, what it does not mean. Paul is thinking in this verse in his usual category of salvation history. He is picturing the Mosaic law as the center of an epoch in God's dealings with human beings that has now come to an end. The believer's relationship to God is mediated in and through Christ, and the Mosaic law is no longer basic to that relationship. But Paul is not saying that Christ has ended all 'law'; the believer remains bound to God's law as it now is mediated in and through Christ (see Gal. 6:2; 1 Cor. 9:19-21). Nor is he saying that the Mosaic law is no longer part of God's revelation or of no more use to the believer. The Mosaic law, like all of Scripture, is 'profitable' for the believer (2 Tim. 3:16) and must continue to be read, pondered, and responded to by the faithful believer.*

"Second, we find in Paul's teaching about Christ as the culmination of the law another evidence of the beautiful unity of the NT message. For what Paul says here is almost exactly what Jesus claims in one of his most famous theological pronouncements: 'Do not think that I have come to abolish the law and the prophets. I have not come to abolish them, but to fulfill them' (Matt. 5:17). Each text pictures Christ as the promised culmination of the OT law. And together they sound a note of balance in the Christian's approach to the OT and its law that is vital to maintain. On the one hand, both Jesus and Paul warn us about undervaluing the degree to which Christ now embodies and mediates to us what the OT law was teaching and doing. Our relationship with God is now found in Christ, not through the law; and our day-to-day behavior is to be guided primarily by the teaching of Christ and his apostles rather than by the law. On the other hand, Jesus and Paul also caution us against severing Christ from the law. For he is its fulfillment and consummation and he cannot be understood or appreciated unless he is seen in light of the preparatory period of which the law was the center." [Moo, *Romans*, pg 642f]

RIGHTEOUSNESS — The word "righteousness" (part of a prepositional phrase in this sentence) might be construed in several different manners. It should probably be understood as a purpose or result clause: *Christ is the "end" of the law with the result that there is (or with the purpose that there might be) righteousness for everyone who believes.* Most of our modern translations have taken the phrase in this sense as is evidenced by the NIV.

The Righteousness of God 'Based on Faith' (10:5-13)

For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them. But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above:) or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.) But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. (Rom 10:5-13 KJV)

Moses describes in this way the righteousness that is by the law: "The man who does these things will live by them." But the righteousness that is by faith says: "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?'" (that is, to bring Christ down) "or 'Who will descend into the deep?'" (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). But what does it say? "The word is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart," that is, the word of faith we are proclaiming: 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. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved. As the Scripture says, "Anyone who trusts in him will never be put to shame." For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile — the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him, for, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." (Rom 10:5-13 NIV)

for Moses doth describe the righteousness that [is] of the law, that, 'The man who did them shall live in them,' and the righteousness of faith doth thus speak: 'Thou mayest not say in thine heart, Who shall go up to the heaven,' that is, Christ to bring down? or, 'Who shall go down to the abyss,' that is, Christ out of the dead to bring up. 10:8 But what doth it say? 'Nigh thee is the saying — in thy mouth, and in thy heart:' that is, the saying of the faith, that we preach; that if thou mayest confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and mayest believe in thy heart that God did raise him out of the dead, thou shalt be saved, for with the heart doth [one] believe to righteousness, and with the mouth is confession made to salvation; for the Writing saith, 'Every one who is believing on him shall not be ashamed,' for there is no difference between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord of all [is] rich to all those calling upon Him, for every one — whoever shall call upon the name of the Lord, he shall be saved.' (Rom 10:5-13 Young's Literal Translation)

“Central to the Reformers’ teaching about salvation was their distinction between ‘law’ and ‘gospel.’ ‘Law’ is whatever God commands us to do; ‘gospel’ is what God in his grace gives to us. ***The Reformers uniformly insisted that human depravity made it impossible for a person to be saved by doing what God commands; only by humbly accepting, in faith, the ‘good news’ of God’s work on our behalf could a person be saved.*** This theological ‘law’ / ‘gospel’ antithesis is at the heart of this paragraph, as Paul contrasts the righteousness that is based on ‘doing’ the law (v. 5) with the righteousness that is based on faith (vv. 6-13). ***Significantly, Paul finds this distinction in the OT itself, manifesting his concern to prove that the gospel that has proved a stumbling block for so many Jews and a foundation stone for so many Gentiles is in continuity with the OT.*** In the earlier two paragraphs (9:30-33; 10:1-4) where Paul contrasted two kinds of righteousness, he was especially interested in explaining the plight of unbelieving Jews. The Gentiles’ involvement was mentioned only briefly (9:30) or allusively (10:4b: *‘for all who believe’*). In 10:5-13, however, Paul’s focus shifts and he now gives special attention to the way in which the revelation of God’s righteousness, the righteousness that is based on faith, opens the door wide to the inclusion of Gentiles. This focus becomes especially evident at the end of this paragraph (vv. 11-13). Paul thereby creates an *inclusio*, with concern for the Gentiles’ acceptance both at the beginning (9:30) and ending this section.

“Verses 5-13 exposit the final words of v. 4: *‘so that there might be righteousness for everyone who believes.’* Paul begins by anchoring the connection between righteousness and faith in Scripture (vv. 5-8). His appeal to Scripture here suggests that, for all his interest in the Gentiles, he still has Israel very much in mind. ***For it is particularly the Jews who need to understand that the righteousness of the law that they are seeking is a righteousness based on ‘doing’ (v. 5, quoting Lev. 18:5). Such a righteousness, as Paul has already shown (9:31-32a; 10:3), is a phantom righteousness, for it cannot bring a person into relationship with a holy God. If the Jews would only see the message of the OT as Paul sees it, they would recognize that the OT itself proclaims the indispensability of faith — the very message that Paul and the other apostles are preaching (vv. 6-8, quoting Deut. 9:4 and 30:12-14). Verses 9-10 are transitional. They highlight the point that Paul has discovered in Deut. 30: a person experiences righteousness and salvation simply by believing the message. Since salvation is therefore not bound to the law but to faith, ‘anyone’ can believe and be saved (vv. 11-13, quoting Isa. 28:16 and Joel 2:32). Thus the way is opened for Gentiles. At the same time, we should not diminish the genuine ‘universalism’ Paul teaches here: if the way is opened for Gentiles, it is certainly not closed to Jews. They, especially, should recognize from their own Scriptures the importance of submitting to God’s new work in Christ in humble faith.*** [Moo, *Romans*, pg 644f]

V 5 — The ‘for’ at the beginning of this verse connects v. 5, or vv. 5ff, to v. 4.

THE RIGHTEOUSNESS BASED ON THE LAW — Paul sets up a contrast in these verses between the *“righteousness based on the law”* (v. 5) and the *“righteousness based on faith”* (v. 6). Some expositors interpret these as complementary which is unlikely. Twice already Paul has contrasted righteousness: *“the righteousness based on faith”* with *“the law of righteousness”* (9:30-31) and *“the righteousness of God”* with *“their own righteousness”* (10:3). We are led to expect the two righteousnesses of vv. 5 and 6 will likewise be contrasts. ***“The righteousness based on the law,’ then, is a negative conception, in direct contrast to ‘the righteousness based on faith’ (v. 6) [this is the view of the majority of scholars]. It is that ‘right standing with God,’ bound up with the law and one’s own works, that Israel had pursued but not attained (cf. 9:31-32a; 10:3) and which Paul discarded in favor of the ‘righteousness from God’ (Phil. 3:9).”*** [Moo, *Romans*, pg 647]

PAUL’S QUOTE IN CONTEXT — Paul’s words *“the person who does these things will live in them”* is a quote from Lev. 18:5. “Lev. 18:1-30 is a unit. It begins with a general exhortation to the Israelites to follow the statutes and ordinances of the law of God rather than the customs and practices of Egypt from which they came or of Canaan to which they are going (vv. 1-5). There follows a series of specific aspects of that law of God (vv. 6-23), and the section concludes with a further exhortation to obedience and a warning of judgment should they fail (vv. 24-30). In this context, Lev. 18:5 must be saying more than that a man who does the commandments will live ‘in’ them; e.g., live out his life in the sphere of the law. The context points rather to ‘life’ being the reward of obedience: it is the opposite of the expulsion from the land on the part of the nation and the expulsion from Israel on the part of the individual that the end of the chapter warns will be the judgment for disobedience. Elsewhere in the Pentateuch also, ‘life’ denotes the reward God gives to his people for obedience of the law (e.g., Deut. 30:15, 19). This life consists in material prosperity, deliverance from enemies, and peace and longevity in the land that the Lord is giving the people (Lev. 26:3-13; Deut. 28:1-14). Lev. 18:5 is warning that the continuance of this ‘life’ that God has already initiated for the people depends on their faithful observance of the law (this is a repeated refrain in Deuteronomy; cf. 4:1-2, 40; 5:33; 6:1-3; 7:12-16; 8:1)... In its context, Lev. 18:5 summons Israel to obedience to the commandments of the Lord as a means of prolonging her enjoyment of the blessings of God in the promised land. This verse is not speaking about the attainment of eternal life; and Paul clearly does not believe that the OT teaches that righteousness is based on law. Paul is not, therefore, claiming that Christ has replaced the old way of salvation — by obedience to the law — with a new one — by faith in Christ. But Paul does think that the law embodies, in its very nature, the principle that perfect obedience to it would confer eternal life (see 2:13 and 7:10). It may be this principle that Paul intends to enunciate here via the words of Lev. 18:5. However, we think that Paul’s point is a more nuanced one. ***His purpose in quoting Lev. 18:5 is succinctly to summarize what for him is the essence of the law: blessing is contingent on obedience.*** ... This appears to be Paul’s point in quoting Lev. 18:5 in Gal. 3:12 also. Paul has predecessors in using Lev. 18:5 as a ‘slogan,’ for the text appears to be quoted frequently in Jewish literature.” [Moo, *Romans*, pg 647ff]

REJECTING CHRIST CONDEMNS ONE TO A LIFE OF “DOING” THE WORKS OF THE LAW — “The emphasis lies

on the word ‘doing’ and not on the promise of ‘life.’ Paul states this principle here as a warning. *The Jew who refuses to submit to the righteousness of God in Christ, ignoring the fact that the law has come to its culmination in Christ and seeking to establish a relationship with God through the law, must be content in seeking that relationship through ‘doing.’ Yet human doing, imperfect as even the most sincere striving must be, is always inadequate to bring a person into relationship with God — as Paul has shown in Rom. 1:18-3:20. Throughout salvation history, faith and doing, ‘gospel’ and ‘law’ have run along side-by-side. Each is important in our relationship with God. But, as it is fatal to ignore one or the other, it is equally fatal to mix them or to use them for the wrong ends.* The OT Israelite who sought to base his or her relationship with God on the law rather than on God’s gracious election in and through the Abrahamic promise arrangement made this mistake. Similarly, Paul suggests, many Jews in his day are making the same mistake: concentrating on the law to the exclusion of God’s gracious provision in Christ, the ‘climax’ of the law, for their relationship with the Lord.” [Moo, *Romans*, pg 649f]

v 6, 7 — BUT ... — “Verse 6 is connected to v. 5 with the Greek word *de*. Our interpretation of v. 5 requires that we give the word an adversative meaning: ‘Moses writes about the righteousness based on the law (v. 5) ... *but* the righteousness based on faith speaks in this manner ...’” [Moo, *Romans*, pg 650]

DO NOT SAY IN YOUR HEART — “Paul relates what this righteousness based on faith ‘says’ in vv. 6b-8, using language drawn from Deuteronomy. The introductory warning, ‘Do not say in your heart,’ is taken from Deut. 9:4. *Paul’s quotation of this clause is not haphazard; he wants his readers to associate these words with the context from which they are drawn. For in Deut. 9:4-6 Moses warns the people of Israel that when they have taken possession of the land God is bringing them to, they must not think that they have earned it because of ‘their own righteousness.’ Paul therefore adds implicit biblical support to his criticism of the Israel of his day for its pursuit of their own righteousness.*” [Moo, *Romans*, pg 650f] Cranfield notes the quote is taken from the opening words of two verses from Deuteronomy, 8:17 and 9:4. **“It is significant that both these verses are warnings against a self-complacent, presumptuous boasting in one’s own merit.”** [Cranfield, *Romans 9-16*, pg 523]

PAUL’S QUOTE FROM DEUT. 30:11-14: JEWS AND GENTILES WITHOUT EXCUSE — “After this fragment of Deut. 9:4, Paul then adds directly to it a clause from Deut. 30:12: ‘Who will ascend into heaven?’ He then adds an explanatory phrase, claiming that the object of this ascent into heaven is ‘to bring Christ down.’ If Paul’s attribution of Deut. 9:4 to the righteousness based on faith is particularly apropos, the same cannot be said about his use of this clause from Deut. 30:11-14. For Deut. 30:11-14 is about God’s law:

Surely, this commandment [i.e., the law as a whole] that I am commanding you today is not too hard for you, nor is it too far away. It is not in heaven, that you should say, ‘Who will go up to heaven for us, and get it for us so that we may hear it and observe it?’ Neither is it beyond the sea, that you should say, ‘Who will cross to the other side of the sea for us, and get it for us so that we may hear it and observe it?’ No, the word is very near to you; it is in your mouth and in your heart for you to observe. (NRSV; the fragments Paul quotes are in bold type)

Moses’ purpose is to prevent the Israelites from evading responsibility for doing the will of God by pleading that they do not know it. In God’s laws, mediated through Moses and set forth in Deuteronomy, God has made his will for his people known to them. How, then, can Paul take a passage that is about the law of God and find in it the voice of righteousness by faith? And how, in his explanatory comments, can he claim that what the text is talking about is not the commandment but Christ? ... The best explanation for Paul’s use of the Deut. 30 text is to think that he finds in this passage an expression of the grace of God in establishing a relationship with his people. As God brought his word near to Israel so they might know and obey him, so God now brings his word ‘near’ to both Jews and Gentiles that they might know him through his Son Jesus Christ and respond in faith and obedience. Because Christ, rather than the law, is now the focus of God’s revelatory word (see 10:4), Paul can ‘replace’ the commandment of Deut. 30:11-14 with Christ. Paul’s application of Deut. 30:12-14, then, is of course not a straightforward exegesis of the passage. But it is a valid application of the principle of that passage in the context of the development of salvation history. *The grace of God that underlies the Mosaic covenant is operative now in the New Covenant; and, just as Israel could not plead the excuse that she did not know God’s will, so now, Paul says, neither Jew nor Gentile can plead ignorance of God’s revelation in Christ.*” [Moo, *Romans*, pg 651, 653]

“WHO WILL ASCEND INTO HEAVEN? (TO BRING CHRIST DOWN)” — “In the OT, the language of ‘ascending into heaven’ becomes almost proverbial for a task impossible for human beings to perform (see Isa. 14:13; Amos 9:2; Ps. 139:8; Prov. 30:4). In Deut. 30, this impossible task is the bringing of God’s commandment to his people. Paul, however, eliminates any reference to the commandment and applies the language to Christ.... [P]aul uses these explanatory comments to suggest a contemporary application of the significance of the Deuteronomy text in the light of the movement of salvation history. *Viewed in the light of what God has done in and through his Son, ‘going into heaven’ takes on a new and more literal significance. As the Israelites did not need to ‘ascend into heaven’ to find God’s commandment, so, Paul suggests, there is no need to ascend into heaven to ‘bring down Christ.’ For in the incarnation, the Messiah, God’s Son, has been truly ‘brought down’ already. God, from his side, has acted to make himself and his will for his people known; his people now have no excuse for not responding.*” [Moo, *Romans*, pg 654]

“WHO WILL DESCEND INTO THE ABYSS?” (TO BRING CHRIST UP) — “In this second quotation of language from Deut. 30 we find a significant difference between Paul’s wording and the original: for Deuteronomy’s ‘Who will go across the

sea?’ Paul has ‘Who will descend into the abyss?’ This difference has led some scholars to think that Paul may here be quoting Ps. 107:26 rather than Deut. 30:13. But this is unlikely since Paul’s language is generally parallel to that of Deuteronomy and since it is sandwiched between two other references to Deut. 30. In fact, the ‘sea’ and the ‘abyss’ were somewhat interchangeable concepts in the OT and in Judaism; and some Aramaic paraphrases of the Deut. 30:13 used the language of the abyss. Therefore, Paul could very easily change the horizontal imagery of the crossing of the sea in Deut. 30:13 to the conceptually similar vertical imagery of descent into the underworld. His purpose for making such a change was to facilitate his christological application. *As he could use the fact of the incarnation to suggest the foolishness of ‘going into heaven’ to bring Christ down, so now he can use the fact of the resurrection to deny any need to ‘go down to the abyss’ to bring Christ up from ‘the realm of the dead.’*” [Moo, *Romans*, pg 655f]

ABYSS — “The word ἄβυσσος [abussos] occurs in the LXX upwards of thirty times, nearly always representing [the Hebrew word *tehôm*]. It usually denotes the depths of waters. So it is used of ‘the deep’ of Gen 1.2. Elsewhere it is used of the depths of the sea (e.g. Ps 107.26). Twice in Deuteronomy (8.7 and 33.13) it denotes subterranean waters. But in Ps 71.20 it is used of the depths of the earth as the place of the dead, i.e. Sheol, and it is clearly in this sense that Paul uses it here.” [Cranfield, *Romans* 9-16, pg 525]

V 8 — WE’VE SEEN WHAT “RIGHTEOUSNESS BASED ON FAITH” DOES NOT SAY, NOW WHAT DOES IT SAY? — “The introductory formula ‘But what does it say?’ reiterates the initial introduction of the series of quotations from Deut. 30 in v. 6a — the subject of the verb being, then, ‘the righteousness based on faith.’ Paul uses the adversative ‘but’ because he now tells us what the righteousness based on faith *does* say, in contrast to what it warns us not to say (vv. 6-7). This positive assertion about the nature of the righteousness based on faith is therefore the key point that Paul wants to get across through his use of Deut. 30. What is this point? *That the message about the righteousness of faith, preached by Paul and the other apostles, is, like the law of God, accessible and understandable: ‘the word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart.’ ... In Christ, the culmination of the law, God’s word is near in a way that it has never been before. And all that is now required of human beings is the response of faith. For the gospel is ‘the word of faith’: a message that calls for faith.*” [Moo, *Romans*, pg 656f]

V 9 — THE “NEARNESS” OF THE GOSPEL: “BECAUSE” IF YOU CONFESS ... — “The word that connects v. 9 to v. 8 (*hoti*) could be translated either ‘that’ or ‘because.’ If we translate it with ‘that,’ v. 9 would specify the content of ‘the word of faith’ that Paul and the other apostles are preaching [so the NIV: *The word is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart, that is, the word of faith we are proclaiming: That if you confess...*]. If, however, we translate it ‘because,’ v. 9 would explain how it is that ‘the word is near you’ [so the NRSV: *The word is near you, on your lips and in your heart’ (that is, the word of faith that we proclaim); because if you confess...*]. The latter alternative should probably be adopted because it would be awkward to have two ‘content’ clauses in a row (e.g., ‘that is the word of faith ...’, ‘that if you confess...’). *Paul is therefore explaining the ‘nearness’ of the word of faith, the gospel, by emphasizing that it demands only a simple response and that, when responded to, it mediates God’s salvation.*” [Moo, *Romans*, pg 657]

THE PROPER RESPONSE TO THE GOSPEL — “*This simple response, surprisingly in light of Paul’s stress on faith in this context, is a twofold one: ‘if you confess with your mouth’ and ‘if you believe in your heart.’ Both the presence of these two conditions and the order in which they occur are due to Paul’s desire to show how his ‘word of faith’ precisely matches the description of the word in Deut. 30:14, as being ‘in your mouth’ and ‘in your heart.’ Paul’s rhetorical purpose at this point should make us cautious about finding great significance in the reference to confession here, as if Paul were making oral confession a second requirement for salvation. Belief in the heart is clearly the crucial requirement, as Paul makes clear even in this context (9:30; 10:4, 11). Confession is the outward manifestation of this critical inner response.*” [Moo, *Romans*, pg 657]

JESUS IS LORD = STATEMENT OF DEITY — “The content of what we are to confess and to believe reflects the basic early Christian proclamation. *The acclamation of Jesus as Lord is a very early and very central element of Christian confession; as is the conviction that God raised Jesus from the dead.* Paul’s focus here on Christ’s resurrection is not, of course, intended to detract from his death or from other aspects of his work; as Calvin explains, *the resurrection alone is ‘often set before us as the assurance of our salvation, not to draw away our attention from his death, but because it bears witness to the efficacy and fruit of his death.’* Paul may also focus on our belief in the resurrection as a final answer to the question ‘Who will descend into the abyss? (That is, to bring Christ up)’ in v. 7. *The gospel, then, is ‘near’ to us because it requires only what our own hearts and mouths can do; and when we respond, it brings near to us God’s salvation.*” [Moo, *Romans*, pg 658]

“What then did the confession ‘Jesus is Lord’ mean for Paul? The use of κύριος [kurios, ‘lord’] more than six thousand times in the LXX to represent the Tetragrammaton [YHWH] must surely be regarded as of decisive importance here. In support of this view the following points may be made:

- (i) Paul applies to Christ, without — apparently — the lease sense of inappropriateness, the [lord] of LXX passages in which it is perfectly clear that the [lord] referred to is God Himself (e.g. 10.13; 1 Th 5.2; 2 Th 2.2).
- (ii) In Phil 2.9 he describes the [lord] as [the name above all names], which can hardly mean anything else than the peculiar name of God Himself.

(iii) He apparently sees nothing objectionable in the invocation of Christ in prayer; but, for a Jew, to pray to anyone other than the one true God was utterly repugnant.

(iv) He associates Christ with God again and again in ways which imply nothing less than a community of nature between them. Thus without any sense of incongruity he can name together ‘God our Father’ and ‘the Lord Jesus Christ’ as the source of grace and peace (1.7; 1 Cor 1.3; 2 Cor 1.2) and can speak indifferently of the love of God and the love of Christ (e.g. 8.35 and 39).

We take that, for Paul, the confession that Jesus is Lord meant the acknowledgment that Jesus shares the name and the nature, the holiness, the authority, power, majesty and eternity of the one and only true God. And, when, as if often the case, there is joined with the title [lord] a personal pronoun in the [possessive sense], there is expressed in addition the sense of His ownership of those who acknowledge Him and of their consciousness of being His property, the sense of personal commitment and allegiance, of trust and confidence.” [Cranfield, Romans 9-16, pg 529]

v 10 — “Verse 10 provides corroboration of the connection between confession and faith on the one hand and salvation on the other: ‘For with the heart one believes for righteousness, and with the mouth one confesses for salvation.’ This general way of stating the matter prepares the way for Paul’s universalizing application in vv. 11-13. Verse 10 is, then, transitional.... *[Paul would not want us to find any difference in the meanings of ‘righteousness’ and ‘salvation’ here. Each expresses in a general way the new relationship with God that is the result of believing ‘with the heart’ and confessing ‘with the mouth.’]*” [Moo, Romans, pg 658f]

“Faith is not the mere assent of the mind to the truth of certain propositions. It is a cordial persuasion of the truth, founded on the experience of its power or the spiritual perception of its nature, and on the divine testimony. Faith is, therefore, a moral exercise. Men believe with the heart, in the ordinary scriptural meaning of that word. And no faith, which does not proceed from the heart, is connected with justification.” [Hodge, Romans, pg]

v 11 — PAUL’S TWO-FOLD REASON TO QUOTE ISAIAH 28:16 — “Paul’s quotation of Isa. 28:16 in this verse has two purposes. First, it provides further scriptural support for his critical connection of faith and salvation. For *‘not being put to shame’ refers to deliverance at the time of judgement* (see, e.g., Isa. 50:7b-8a: ‘I know that I shall not be put to shame; he who vindicates me is near’ – NRSV). Second, by adding the word ‘no one’ at the beginning of the quotation, Paul is able to cite the text to support his contention that *the salvation now made available in Christ is for anyone who believes*. This verse therefore finally picks up the element of universality in 10:4b: ‘for everyone who believes.’” [Moo, Romans, pg 659]

v 12 — JESUS IS LORD OVER ALL, JEW AND GENTILE — “Paul unpacks the universality inherent in ‘everyone’ in this verse. As so often in Romans, Paul is particularly concerned with the equal footing given to both Jews and Gentiles by the gospel. As there is ‘no distinction’ between the two groups of people in sin and judgment (3:23), so there is ‘no distinction’ between them as far as the Lord who rules over them or in the grace that the Lord offers to them. Paul has earlier in the letter shown that the confession that there is only one God leads naturally to the conclusion that God must rule both Jews and Gentiles (3:29-30).” [Moo, Romans, pg 659]

CALL UPON — “‘Call upon’ with a personal object is used in secular Greek for asking someone for assistance, and especially of asking God, or the gods, for help or intervention. But ‘calling on the Lord’ is also quite common in the LXX and Jewish literature, and was taken over by the early Christians with reference both to God the Father and to Christ.” [Moo, Romans, pg 660]

v 13 — CALL UPON THE LORD — “Paul brings to a close this paragraph with an implicit quotation from Joel 2:32. The catchword ‘call upon’ is clearly the link between the context and the quotation, which was important in early Christian preaching. But perhaps even more important for Paul was its emphasis on the universal availability of salvation. The quotation brings together two crucial terms from this context: ‘everyone’ (cf. vv. 4, 11, 12) and ‘salvation’ (cf. vv. 1, 9, 10). *In the OT, of course, the one on whom people called for salvation was Yahweh; Paul reflects the high view of Christ common among the early church by identifying this one with Jesus Christ, the Lord.*” [Moo, Romans, pg 660]

“The paragraph is concluded with a scriptural quotation from Joel 2:32, Paul applying to the invocation of the exalted Christ what in its OT context was a promise that in the critical period preceding ‘the great and terrible day of the LORD’ every one who invokes the name of the LORD (i.e. Yahweh) will be saved.” [Cranfield, Romans 9-16, pg 532]

Israel’s Accountability (10:14-21)

How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful

How, 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? And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, “How

How then shall they call upon [him] in whom they did not believe? and how shall they believe [on him] of whom they did not hear? and how shall they hear apart from one preaching? and how shall they preach, if they may not be sent? according as it hath been written, ‘How beautiful the feet

are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. But I say, Have they not heard? Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world. But I say, Did not Israel know? First Moses saith, I will provoke you to jealousy by them that are no people, and by a foolish nation I will anger you. But Esaias is very bold, and saith, I was found of them that sought me not; I was made manifest unto them that asked not after me. But to Israel he saith, All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people. (Rom 10:14-21 KJV)

beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!” But not all the Israelites accepted the good news. For Isaiah says, “Lord, who has believed our message?” Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ. But I ask: Did they not hear? Of course they did: “Their voice has gone out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world.” Again I ask: Did Israel not understand? First, Moses says, “I will make you envious by those who are not a nation; I will make you angry by a nation that has no understanding.” And Isaiah boldly says, “I was found by those who did not seek me; I revealed myself to those who did not ask for me.” But concerning Israel he says, “All day long I have held out my hands to a disobedient and obstinate people.” (Rom 10:14-21 NIV)

of those proclaiming good tidings of peace, of those proclaiming good tidings of the good things!’ But they were not all obedient to the good tidings, for Isaiah saith, ‘Lord, who did give credence to our report?’ so then the faith [is] by a report, and the report through a saying of God, but I say, Did they not hear? yes, indeed — ‘to all the earth their voice went forth, and to the ends of the habitable world their sayings.’ But I say, Did not Israel know? first Moses saith, ‘I will provoke you to jealousy by [that which is] not a nation; by an unintelligent nation I will anger you,’ and Isaiah is very bold, and saith, ‘I was found by those not seeking Me; I became manifest to those not inquiring after Me;’ and unto Israel He saith, ‘All the day I did stretch out My hands unto a people unbelieving and gainsaying.’ (Rom 10:14-21 Young’s Literal Translation)

“Verse 14, with its ‘therefore’ followed by a question, marks the beginning of a new unit of thought (all modern English versions and almost all commentators take this view). The immediate point of contact is with the word ‘call upon’ in the quotation of Joel 2:28 in v. 13. *That quotation asserts that salvation is a matter of calling on the Lord. In vv. 14ff., Paul asks whether such calling on the name of the Lord is really possible.* He begins by analyzing the conditions that are necessary for such calling on the Lord in a series of rhetorical questions (vv. 14-15a). He then makes clear that every condition — except one — has been met. First, the gospel, ‘the word of faith’ (cf. v. 8), has been preached (v. 15; cf. v. 14c). Second, that message of the gospel, ‘the word of Christ’ has been heard; indeed, the voices of its messengers have been heard throughout the inhabited world (v. 18; cf. vv. 14b and 17). Not only has the gospel been made known; it has, to at least some extent, been understood (vv. 19-20). *What is the missing ingredient? Faith. For calling on the name of the Lord is another way of saying ‘believe’; and it is this humble acceptance for oneself of the gospel that is missing (v. 16).* Verse 16 is therefore the center of this paragraph and expresses its main point.

But of whom is Paul speaking in this paragraph? He explicitly identifies ‘Israel’ as the object of his criticism in v. 19. But up to that point, Paul has used indefinite third person plural verbs, making it likely that at least in vv. 14-15, and perhaps in all of vv. 14-18, he is thinking of people generally. However, there are also indications that Paul is thinking of Israel particularly in this paragraph. The third person verbs in v. 14 take the reader back inevitably to the last use of such verbs in chap. 10, in Paul’s indictment of the Jews for their ignorance of, and failure to submit to, God’s righteousness in vv. 2-3. Verses 14-21 seem to continue that indictment, as Paul removes any possible excuse that the Jews might have for their failure to respond to God’s offer of righteousness in Christ. *Probably, then, Paul writes generally in vv. 14-18 about the relationship of all people to the message of the gospel while at the same time thinking especially of the application of these points to Israel. His point, then, is that Israel cannot plead ignorance: God has made his purposes clear in both the OT (note the six OT quotations in vv. 14-21) and the worldwide proclamation of the gospel. So the fault rests with Israel: she has been ‘disobedient and obstinate’ (v. 21; cf. v. 16).* [Moo, *Romans*, pg 662f]

v 14, 15 — THE ROAD OF FAITH — “Verse 14 and the first part of v. 15 contain a series of four parallel rhetorical questions, each beginning with the interrogative ‘how.’ *By repeating the verb from the end of one question at the beginning of the next, Paul creates a connected chain of steps that must be followed if a person is to be saved (v. 13).* Paul in v. 13 has asserted a universally applicable principle: that salvation is granted to all who call on the Lord. But people cannot call on the Lord if they do not believe in him. They cannot believe in him if they do not hear the word that proclaims Christ. And that word will not be heard unless someone preaches it. But a preacher is nothing more than a herald, a person entrusted by another with a message. Thus preaching, finally, cannot transpire unless someone sends the preachers.” [Moo, *Romans*, pg 662f]

PREACHING, PREACHERS AND ISAIAH 52:7 — “*The quotation of Isa. 52:7 at the end of v. 15 serves two functions. First, it provides scriptural confirmation of the necessary role of preaching. Second, however, it implicitly suggests that the last condition for salvation listed by Paul in vv. 14-15a has been met: God has sent preachers.* Significant for this latter point is the use of the verb ‘preach good news’ in the Isaiah text. Paul’s use of this passage would inevitably suggest an allusion to the preaching of the gospel by himself and other ‘authorized messengers’ sent out by God (e.g., apostles) — especially since *the passage was widely viewed as prophetic of the messianic age.* It is also possible that the Greek word *hōraioi* should be translated

‘timely,’ rather than ‘beautiful,’ lending further support to the eschatological focus on the apostolic preaching.” [Moo, *Romans*, pg 663f]

“At this point Paul is concerned to show that the Jews have really had full opportunity to call upon the name of the Lord in the sense of vv. 12 and 13, and are therefore without excuse.” [Cranfield, *Romans 9-16*, pg 533]

v 16 — REBUKE FOR HIS JEWISH BRETHREN? — “In this verse Paul identifies the link in the chain of requirements leading to salvation that is missing for so many people: faith (cf. v. 14a). While Paul has been speaking generally of all people in vv. 14-15, here he probably focuses especially on the Jews (this is suggested by the use of Isa. 53:1 in John 12:38, along with Paul’s use of Isa. 53 elsewhere, cf. esp. Rom. 15:21). The verse therefore is central to Paul’s argument in vv. 14-21 and, indeed, in 9:30-10:21, reasserting as it does Paul’s basic accusation of his Jewish brothers and sisters.” [Moo, *Romans*, pg 664]

PAUL’S POINT IS PREMATURE BUT PROPER — “Paul’s identification of the break in the chain of vv. 14-15a seems a bit premature, since in vv. 18-21 he continues to do what he began in v. 15b, identifying the links in the chain that are in place. But Paul could not resist the natural contrast between the truth of the publication of the good news (v. 15b) and the Jews’ tragic reaction to it.” [Moo, *Romans*, pg 664f]

UNBELIEF = DISOBEDIENCE — “Surprisingly, Paul characterizes this reaction as ‘disobedience’ rather than unbelief. But Paul has linked faith and obedience since the beginning of the letter, and he is especially concerned in this context to show that Israel’s situation is the result not simply of a relatively passive unbelief, but of a definite and culpable refusal to respond to God’s gracious invitation (see 10:3 and 21). Nevertheless, Paul considers Israel’s disobedience and unbelief as two sides of the same coin, as the quotation from Isa. 53:1 in v. 16b makes clear: ‘Lord, who has believed our report?’ As he does on three other occasions in Rom. 9-11 (see also 9:27, 29; 10:20), Paul names Isaiah as the biblical author.” [Moo, *Romans*, pg 665]

v 17 — PAUL WORKING HIS WAY BACK INTO HIS ARGUMENT — “This verse seems awkwardly placed. The introductory ‘therefore’ and its content suggest that it is a conclusion drawn from the chain of salvation requirements in vv. 14-15a. Some scholars therefore think the verse is out of place or even that it was a later addition to the text of Romans. These desperate measures are not, however, necessary. As we have seen, the identification of the one point in the chain at which Israel has fallen short in v. 16 is premature, interrupting Paul’s assertion of those points that have found fulfillment. What Paul says in v. 17 is therefore a necessary transition back into this topic. It picks up immediately the connection between ‘believing’ and ‘hearing / report’ that the quotation of Isa. 53:1 in v. 16b assumes and restates the second step in the series of salvation requirements: faith comes as a result of ‘hearing’ (cf. v. 14b). The last part of v. 17 then restates and expands on the third step in that sequence (v. 14c): hearing, the kind of hearing that can lead to faith, can only happen if there is a definite salvific word from God that is proclaimed. That word through which God is now proclaiming the availability of eschatological salvation and which can awaken faith in those who hear it is ‘the word of Christ’: the message whose content is the lordship and resurrection of Christ (see 10:8-9).” [Moo, *Romans*, pg 665f]

“Faith results from hearing the message, and the hearing of the message comes about through the word of Christ (i.e., through Christ’s speaking the message by the mouths of His messengers). This corroborates what was said in vv. 14-15a, but is not a mere pointless repetition, since in it hearing becomes the hinge, so that it leads naturally into v. 18.” [Cranfield, *Romans 9-16*, pg 537]

“If ‘faith comes by hearing,’ how great is the value of a stated ministry! How obvious the duty to establish, sustain, and attend upon it!” [Hodge, *Romans*]

v 18 — PEOPLE HAVE HEARD — “Verse 17 has focused attention on the critical step of ‘hearing’ in the sequence of steps leading to salvation. Paul now goes back to this step and asks ‘have they not heard?’ Probably here again (as in vv. 14-15) Paul is speaking generally about all people but with special reference to Jews. Paul puts his question in a form that makes it legitimate to paraphrase it with an assertion: people have heard.... The question is put in a negative form ... and introduced with another negative particle, ... implying that the question should be answered in the negative: ‘it is not the case, then, that they have not heard, is it?’” [Moo, *Romans*, pg 666]

SCRIPTURAL SUPPORT FROM PSALMS 19:4 — “In keeping with his concern throughout this paragraph and Rom. 9-11 generally, Paul substantiates this assertion with an appeal to Scripture: ‘Indeed,’ Paul says, they have heard, for Ps. 19:4 asserts that ‘their voice has gone out into all the earth, their words unto the ends of the inhabited world.’ Paul’s use of this text raises two questions. First, what is Paul’s purpose in using a passage that extols God’s revelation in nature (as Ps. 19:1-6 does) in this context? The implied object of the verb ‘heard’ in Paul’s question must be ‘the word of Christ’; ‘their voice’ and ‘their words’ in the Psalm verse must then refer to the voices and words of Christians preachers (see vv. 14-16). **Paul is not, then, simply using the text according to its original meaning. His application probably rests on a general analogy: as God’s word of general revelation has been proclaimed all over the earth, so God’s word of special revelation, in the gospel, has been spread all over the earth. His intention is not to interpret the verse of the Psalm, but to use its language, with the ‘echoes’ of God’s revelation that it awakes, to assert the universal preaching of the gospel.**” [Moo, *Romans*, pg 666f]

HAS THE GOSPEL GONE TO THE “WHOLE WORLD?” — Moo asks the second question arising from Paul’s quote: How

could Paul assert, in A.D. 57, that the gospel has been proclaimed ‘to the whole earth’? One possible explanation is that Paul may have been thinking of the Roman Empire of his day rather than the entire globe. Another explanation might be that Paul’s focus is corporate rather than individualistic: he asserts the gospel has been preached to every nation, Jew and Gentile, but not necessarily every individual in those nations. Moo concludes by suggesting it would be simpler to think Paul is using a hyperbole, that many people by the time of Paul’s writing have had the opportunity to hear (compare Col. 1:23 where Paul claims the gospel has been preached “to every creature under heaven”). Paul’s point is this: it cannot be lack of opportunity, then, that explains why so few Jews have come to experience the salvation God offers in Christ.

“It is quite unlikely that Paul’s use of this quotation means that he thinks that the preaching to all the nations (cf. Mk 13.10) has been completed. The fact that he hopes to undertake a missionary journey to Spain (15.24, 28) itself disproves this. Probably all that he wants to assert is that the message has been publicly proclaimed in the world at large — the significant thing is that it has been quite widely preached to the Gentiles (cf. v. 19f) — and therefore cannot be supposed not to have been heard by the generality of Jews.” [Cranfield, *Romans 9-16*, pg 537f]

v 19 — THE JEWS KNEW AND WILLFULLY REJECTED — “The repetition of the opening words of v. 18 — ‘but I say’ — marks out v. 19 as a second step in Paul’s argument that began in v. 18. There he showed that it was not lack of opportunity to hear that prevented Jews from being saved. Now he takes a step further and, abandoning the opening sequence of steps, probes deeper into the nature of the Jews’ ‘hearing.’ ***Specifically, he raises and rejects the possibility that this hearing was a merely superficial hearing, not accompanied by genuine understanding. No, Paul affirms, Israel has ‘known.’*** Paul explicitly uses the word ‘Israel’ to make clear for the first time his ‘real’ subject in this paragraph. At the same time, the use of the word adds emphasis to his point: Can it really be that *Israel*, the recipient of God’s numerous and detailed prophecies about his plans and purposes, does not ‘know’? ***What it was that Israel ‘knows,’ as the subsequent context suggests, is that God could very well act in such a way that the preaching of Christ would result in the inclusion of the Gentiles and in judgment upon Israel (see the OT quotations in vv. 19b-21). This Israel knows from her own Scriptures; her ‘ignorance,’ then (v. 3), consists in her willful refusal to recognize the fulfillment of these texts in the revelation of God’s righteousness in Christ. Israel, Paul suggests, ‘sees, but does not perceive; hears, but does not comprehend’*** (Isa. 6:9; cf. Mark 4:12 and pars.; John 12:40; Acts 28:26-27).” [Moo, *Romans*, pg 667f]

PAUL QUOTES DEUT. 32:21b AS THE FIRST DEMONSTRATION OF WHAT ISRAEL KNEW — “Paul quotes Deut. 32:21b as the first step — ‘Moses *first* says’ (probably highlighting Moses as the ‘first’ in a long line of witnesses to the truth Paul is communicating) — in his demonstration from Scripture of what Israel knew. The verse is part of Moses’ ‘song’ to Israel, in which he rehearses the history of God’s gracious acts on Israel’s behalf and Israel’s stubborn and sinful response to those acts. ***The words Paul quotes state God’s ‘equivalent’ response to Israel’s idolatry: because Israel has made God jealous with ‘what is no god’ (v. 21a), God will make Israel ‘jealous’ with what is ‘no people.’*** The phrase ‘no people’ was probably the catch phrase that drew Paul’s attention to this text, since he quotes the Hosea prophecy about those ‘not my people’ becoming the people of God in 9:25-26. ***Paul sees in the words a prophecy of the mission to the Gentiles: the inclusion of Gentiles in the new people of God stimulates the Jews to jealousy and causes Israel to respond in wrath against this movement in salvation history. From their own Scriptures, then, Israel should have recognized that God was at work in the gospel.***” [Moo, *Romans*, pg 668]

v 20 — FURTHER DEMONSTRATION THAT ISRAEL KNEW, THIS TIME FROM THE PROPHETS — “But it is not only the ‘law’ that anticipates the gospel and Israel’s negative reaction to it; the ‘prophets’ bear witness to the same truth. In fact, Paul suggests, the prophetic text testifies even more clearly to these points: ‘Isaiah boldly says, “I will be found by those who are not seeking me, I will make myself manifest to those who are not asking for me.”’ ***Paul quotes from Isa. 65:1, a verse that in its context refers to God’s making himself known to the people of Israel. As he did with Hos. 1:10 and 2:23 in 9:25-26, Paul takes OT texts that speak of Israel and applies them, on the principle of analogy, to the Gentiles. Paul’s application of this text to the Gentiles could be based on the language of ‘those who did not seek me.’ The wording of the quotation therefore brings us back to where this whole passage began: Gentiles, who were not pursuing righteousness, have attained a right relationship with God (9:30).***” [Moo, *Romans*, pg 669]

BOLDLY — ἀποτολμῆ [apotolmai] ‘with boldness,’ used only here in the Greek Bible.

v 21 — GOD’S GRACE AND ISRAEL’S RESISTANCE — “Having applied Isa. 65:1 in v. 20 to the Gentiles, Paul now applies Isa. 65:2 to Israel, an application that matches the original meaning of the text. ***The passage stresses both God’s constant offer of grace to his people and their stubborn resistance to that grace.*** But which is uppermost? God’s continuing gracious concern for Israel? Or Israel’s disobedience? The question that this verse sparks in 11:1 might suggest that the latter is closer to the truth. But we should probably not choose between the two. Both the grace of God in revealing himself and in reaching out to Israel and Israel’s refusal to respond to that grace are important for Paul’s argument.” [Moo, *Romans*, pg 669f]

“The spreading out of the hands, in Ps 143.6 a gesture of supplication, is here a gesture of appealing welcome and friendship.... The quotations in vv. 19 and 20 have shown not only that Israel has certainly known and that its mission in which Paul himself is engaged is foretold in Scripture. The quotation in v. 21 confirms incidentally that Israel has known, but its special function is twofold. It (1) looks back to what has already been said concerning Israel’s disobedience and gathers it up in one comprehensive statement, which by making it clear that this disobedience is precisely rejection of God’s steadfast grace brings out its full

enormity; and (2) looks forward to what is going to be said of hope for Israel, depicting vividly the steadfast patience of that divine grace against which Israel has so continually sinned.” [Cranfield, *Romans 9-16*, pg 541]

“If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the LORD Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved” — Romans 10:9

There must be confession with the mouth. Have I made it? Have I openly avowed my faith in Jesus as the Savior whom God has raised from the dead, and have I done it in God’s way! Let me honestly answer this question. There must also be belief with the heart. Do I sincerely believe in the risen LORD Jesus? Do I trust in Him as my sole hope of salvation? Is this trust from my heart? Let me answer as before God. If I can truly claim that I have both confessed Christ and believed in Him, then I am saved. The text does not say it may be so, but it is plain as a pikestaff and clear as the sun in the heavens: “Thou shalt be saved.” As a believer and a confessor, I may lay my hand on this promise and plead it before the LORD God at this moment, and throughout life, and in the hour of death, and at the Day of Judgment. I must be saved from the guilt of sin, the power of sin, the punishment of sin, and ultimately from the very being of sin. God hath said it — “Thou shalt be saved.” I believe it. I shall be saved. I am saved. Glory be to God forever and ever! [Spurgeon, *Faith’s Checkbook*]