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## Romans 10

(2019)

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Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man, as to such I neither claim perfect knowledge or perfect understanding.

## Romans 10.

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### Topics.

- The Jews had zeal for God, but not according to knowledge.
- Christ is the end of the law for righteousness.
- Who will ascend into heaven and who will descend into the abyss?
- The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart.
- Everyone who believes in Christ will not be put to shame.
- How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the Good News.
- Faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.
- Their words have gone out to the ends of the world.
- I have been found by those who did not seek me.

**The previous chapter:** in the previous chapter Paul anguished over his Jewish brothers because he was fully aware that even though the population of Israel is likened to the sand of the sea only a remnant of them will be saved. He explained that righteousness is attained only by faith and not by strictly and legalistically attempting to keep Moses law and its customs, since God only counts those who attain righteousness by faith as Abraham's children. The chapter ended with Paul saying, both Gentiles and a remnant of Israel will attain to the righteousness that comes by faith and by this righteousness be saved to eternal life.

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**NOTE:** for information concerning people, places and the meaning of words see Map Locations and People of the Bible, and Bible Dictionary on Website Menu.

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### ROMANS 10:1-4

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#### The Jews had zeal for God, but not according to knowledge

- **Romans 10:1-4:** Brothers (Jewish brothers) my heart's desire and prayer to God for them is that they may be saved. <sup>2</sup>I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. <sup>3</sup>For, being ignorant of the righteousness that comes from God, and seeking to establish their own, they did not submit to God's righteousness. <sup>4</sup>For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.
- Remember this is a letter Paul is writing to the Christian brothers in Rome.

**Knowledge:** carries the idea of having recognition, full discernment and acknowledgment, to know perceive and become fully acquainted with.

**Self-righteousness:** refers to the following two groups of people: -

1. To those who believe they are righteous before God because of the good works they do.
2. To those who believe they are righteous because they strictly and meticulously adhere to a set of religious laws, rules and traditions and legalistically attend services and keep holy days etc., and believe that by doing these things they are made righteous.

The Jews were a perfect example of people who are self-righteous since they believed by strictly adhering to Moses Law and its customs they were right before God, but this kind of righteousness produces pride, self-exaltation and a sense of superiority over others who do not practice and adhere to these things as they do.

**NOTE:** this is not to say that all these things are bad in themselves they only become erroneous when by doing them a person becomes self-righteous and believes they are righteous before God because of their own self-efforts. God imputes righteousness that leads to salvation and eternal life as a pure and free gift to those who trust in His Son the Lord Jesus Christ, it is their faith that God counts as righteousness not our own self-efforts to attain to it.

**Salvation and rewards:** salvation should never be confused with rewards being stored in heaven, since salvation is a matter of faith, but rewards are a totally different matter. Paul tells the Corinthian church that:

- Each one's work will become manifest, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done. If the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives, they will receive a reward, but if anyone's work is burned up, they will suffer loss, though they themselves will be saved, but only as through fire (1 Cor. 3:13-15)

This means that those who have faithfully followed the Lord will be rewarded accordingly whereas those who have remained in faith, but lived apathetically toward the things of God and of Christ though they are saved by their faith will suffer some kind of loss.

**Rewards and loss:** storing up rewards in heaven and suffering loss cannot always be measured by outward appearances since we cannot know the heart or motivation of a person. For example we might be tempted to think that a minister who is gifted with oratory skills and has a very successful church with over ten thousand followers would be exalted above a woman who faithfully serves the Lord by cleaning the church after every meeting, but since we cannot know the heart of another this may not be the case. This is because the minister could be in God's service with the same spirit as the chief priests, Pharisees and scribes of Jesus generation were, (i.e., for their own self-glory, the power, money and esteem they got from those they had the authority over). When it comes to eternal standing only God knows our hearts and our true motives and because of this only He is able to judge righteously and in justice. It is quite likely some might get a surprise when they see the humble cleaning woman exalted above some very successful ministers who have a global following.

**NOTE:** knowing God will do the right thing brothers and sisters in Christ, who are stronger in the faith not only have an obligation to welcome and help their weaker brothers and sisters who for whatever reason may be struggling, but are also called to bear with their failings rather than please themselves (Acts 20:35) (Rom. 14:1) (Rom. 15:1) and leave the eternal judging of their salvation to the only judge qualified to judge in love and with justice; our perfect and eternal High Priest the Lord Jesus Christ.

**They have zeal for God, but not according to knowledge:** Paul desired with all his heart that his Jewish brothers would be saved he recognised they loved God and were zealous to serve him, but sadly they were mistaken in their knowledge of what God desired and could not perceive that God counts faith as righteousness not self-effort. There is a good lesson we can all learn from Paul's attitude, he did not condemn these Jews, but rather felt enormous sorrow and desired they be saved. In some circles of Christianity today if a group of believers are worshipping God and faithfully following the Lord Jesus Christ, but happen to have certain doctrinal interpretations of the Scriptures different to another religious organisation they are often demonised, criticised and spoken of in a demeaning manner. This is clearly not the attitude Paul displayed to

his Jewish brothers and sisters, rather he saw their hearts desire to follow God and understood that they had been for many years indoctrinated with a wrong understanding of what is truly important to God's heart and could not perceive the Good News of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ and Paul rather than demonize or demean them had great sorrow toward them.

**Christ is the end of the law for righteousness:** the words, "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes" (v4) puts a floodlight on the fact that endeavouring to keep the law, religious works, holy days will not save a person no-one can do anything to earn their own salvation, except believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. Paul is highlighting the fact that those who believe in Christ are set free from vain attempts to attain to the holy and perfect standard of the law by self-effort since they know that their righteousness is not based on their own efforts, but on their faith they are fully assured that it is their faith that God counts as righteousness and not self-effort. God has designed salvation this way because we are all descendants of Adam and have been infected with sinful aberrations and dysfunction in our fallen and corrupted human nature and because of this we are all limited to attaining to the perfect standard the law demands and therefore we all fall short of God's glory and His Holy and perfect standard. This is why God in His eternal foreknowledge purpose a plan whereby we could attain to righteousness that would be independent of our fallen and corrupted nature.

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## ROMANS 10:5-7

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### Righteousness based on Law and on Faith.

- **Romans 10:5-7:** For Moses writes about the righteousness that is based on the law, that the person who does the commandments shall live by them. <sup>6</sup>But the righteousness based on faith says, "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?' "(that is, to bring Christ down) <sup>7</sup>"Who will descend into the abyss?" (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead).

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The law does not have mercy or compassion. Its demand on those that are under it is strictly official, formal and legal and enforced without compassion or any sense of sorrow toward its condemned victims. The demand of the Law states:

- If anyone fails to keep it in any aspect they are guilty of breaking it.

The law then rightfully and legally judges and sentences its victims to death. It is futile to attempt to attain to righteousness by keeping the law since the law states:

- You shall not covet your neighbour's house; you shall not covet your neighbour's wife, or his male servant, or his female servant, or his ox, or his donkey, or anything that is your neighbour's." (Exod. 20:17)

Today this verse could be stated in the following way:

- You shall not covet your neighbour's house, his wife, his very successful business, his new car, beautiful boat or anything that belongs to him (Exod. 20:17)

And the Royal law states:

- You shall love your neighbour as yourself" (Rom. 13:9).

Jesus says all the commandments regarding mankind are summed up in the words of the Royal law. This is because the spirit underpinning the Royal law is desiring the best for others as we desire the best for ourselves contrasted to the spirit underlying coveting which is craving what others have. The commandment, "You shall not covet" exposes human selfishness, pride, lust, and greed etc. It reveals the sinful dysfunctions and aberrations that are imbedded within our fallen corrupted human nature that hinder us from attaining to the perfection of God's Holy Law.

It exposes our self-centeredness in our desires for more than we need, our excessive avariciousness toward materialism, our overeating of tasty foods the craving to be important or esteemed, our sensual and lustful thoughts, the desire to be rich and have abundantly more than we need etc. You shall not covet shines a spotlight on our self-interest, it highlights our lack of willingness to give to those less fortunate and those in need, our degrading, resentful, bitter or jealous thoughts of others and the list goes on. In summary the command you shall not covet embraces all those attitudes and thoughts that dwell within our members that are contrary to the law of love and the Holiness of God which means the entire human race is held guilty before the Law and therefore it legally has the right and the power to condemn us all to death which it does without hesitation compassion or mercy. The law you shall not covet also shines a spotlight upon the truth that any attempt to attain to righteousness that leads to eternal life by self-effort is vain because sin has imbedded so deep in our hearts and minds it can only ever be restrained and never annihilated or removed and because of the law of Sin and death the law has every legal right to condemn us all to death, but the Good News is that those who belong to the Lord Jesus Christ are set free from the law of Sin and death by their faith and by God's grace will be raised to eternal life and everlasting glory.

### **Who will ascend into heaven and who will descend into the abyss?**

The following question:

- Who will go up to heaven and bring Christ down to earth to establish righteousness and who will go down to the grave and bring Christ up from the dead to establish righteousness (v7-8).

Is alluding to the following words of Moses as recorded in the book of Deuteronomy:

- When all these things come upon you, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before you, and you call them to mind among all the nations where the LORD your God has driven you (Deut. 30:1) ---- NOW GO TO VERSE ELEVEN ---- know that this commandment is not too hard for you, neither is it far off. It is not in heaven, that you should say, 'Who will ascend to heaven for us and bring it to us that we may hear it and do it?' Neither is it beyond the sea, that you should say, 'Who will go over the sea for us and bring it to us that we may hear it and do it?' But the word is very near you. It is in your mouth and in your heart, so that you can do it. "I have set before you today life and good, death and evil (Deut. 30:11-14).

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Moses told Israel if they:

- Love the LORD their God, by walking in his ways they will live and God will bless them, but if in their heart they turn away to worship other gods they will surely perish (Deut. 30:16-18).

God through Moses is offering to the nation of Israel life or death. When Moses and Paul said to the people of Israel:

- Do not say in your heart who will ascend to heaven or who will go over the sea and bring it to us etc.?

They were basically saying the path to righteousness and salvation is not so far away that it is difficult to find. Moses and Paul's words carry the idea of accessibility meaning that righteousness that leads to salvation is not so high or so far away that it is inaccessible for ordinary folk. Moses was telling the children of Israel that the way to life was not hard all they had to do was remain faithful and obedient to the LORD and Paul is making a similar statement (i.e., no-one has to do great things to obtain the righteousness of God in Christ because it does not come by self-effort, but by faith).

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### **ROMANS 10:8-11**

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**The word is near you, in your Mouth and in your Heart.**

- **Romans 10:8-11:** But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart" (that is, the word of faith that we proclaim); <sup>9</sup>because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. <sup>10</sup>For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved. <sup>11</sup>For the Scripture says, "Everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame."

This does not mean responding in a church service to a motivational speaker while mood music is being played and confessing the name of Christ, (though some may be saved this way) for most it is a response from emotion and not from a belief in the heart. Confession in this context means declaring what is secret in the heart it carries the idea of saying something so that it won't be a secret anymore which means that salvation comes through belief in the heart and an outward confession that declares that inward belief.

**With the heart one believes:** (v10) refer to the vital principal or sum total of what a person believes. Confession is important because it witnesses what is in the heart. In Jesus era and the age of the apostles' no-one came to Christ in an atmosphere of music, but simply by hearing the Good News of the Gospel. That does not mean that it is wrong to invite people to Christ in a church service, but it should always be remembered that confessing in this context is continual and ongoing it is about sharing what is already in the heart with family, friends and those we come in contact with when it is safe to do so (Christ does not expect or demand his children to deliberately put their life in danger or harm's way physically or verbally), which means that biblical confession that leads to salvation is not a one-time confession, but speaking openly about our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and not hiding the fact that we are Christians.

**Everyone who believes in Christ will not be put to shame:** (v11) means that those who are trusting in Christ for their eternal salvation will not be humiliated or let down, they will be vindicated, because their eternal salvation is guaranteed since it is based on the promise of God and He cannot lie. All those in the Old Testament who throughout history were faithful to God and believed in the coming promised Messiah and those who throughout the generations of the New Testament until Christ return who have had faith in Christ will be vindicated when the Lord returns in spectacular and awesome power and glory as, King of kings and Lord of lords (Rev. 19:11-16) to rule and reign from God's Holy city Jerusalem (on Mount Zion God's Holy Mountain) to establish God's Kingdom on earth during his glorious millennial reign. In the first resurrection (Rev. 20:4-5) the dead in Christ and the faithful, who are alive, will be gathered together to rule and reign as kings and priests with the Lord over those nations who are left outside the Holy City of God.

Christ the King united with his people will not only bring peace to the Middle East, but establish God's Kingdom of steadfast love, faithfulness, righteousness, joy and peace throughout the world and the glory of God will cover the earth. Jesus will do justice to the poor and oppressed, he will be a faithful and compassionate King forever. He will not allow anyone to strike terror in the earth or use lies and deception to enlarge their own wealth and power. The land will abundantly produce and even the deserts will flourish. The animals will not feed on each other and even the lamb will be able to lie down with the wolf and everyone will eat of their own hands because all that they plant will produce. All nations the LORD has made will come and worship before the Lord Jesus Christ. They will glorify God's Name, proclaiming the LORD is great and does wondrous things and that He alone is God.

The book of Revelation states:

- Jesus Christ, the faithful witness who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood has made us kings and priests unto God and his Father is coming in glory and every eye shall see him, and they also who pierced him and all kindreds of the earth (Revelation 1:5-7).

And in Revelation chapter five we are told that:

- Christ was slain, and by his blood he redeemed a people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation and made them a kingdom and priests to God and they shall reign on the earth (Revelation 5:9-10).

At the end of this glorious Kingdom age God descends to earth on a Great White Throne the sea, death and hades (the grave) give up the dead. They stand before God and are judged according to what is written in certain heavenly books according to what they have done. Death and those counted unworthy are cast into the Lake of Fire a symbol of eternal destruction (i.e., total extinction) (also called the, Second Death) (Rev. 20:11-15). Christ hands the Kingdom over to his heavenly Father and God is ALL in ALL and ETERNITY begins in all its fullness and majestic royal glory. For further information see titles:

- Kingdom of God (ON WEBSITE MENU).
- The Second or Great White Throne Judgment.

In, Resurrection (ON WEBSITE MENU).

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## ROMANS 10:12-15

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### There is no Distinction between Jew and Greek.

- **Romans 10:12-15:** For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; the same Lord is Lord of all, bestowing his riches on all who call on him. <sup>13</sup>For "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." <sup>14</sup>But how are they to call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? <sup>15</sup>And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!"

Since Christ's death and resurrection and the curtain of the temple being torn from top to bottom there is no longer any difference between the Jews and the Gentiles all must come to God through faith in Jesus and all are united as one nation in Christ. Paul in the book of Ephesians brilliantly and skilfully explained this truth in the following way:

- Therefore remember that at one time you Gentiles in the flesh, called "the uncircumcision" by what is called the circumcision (Jews), which is made in the flesh by hands— <sup>12</sup>remember that you (Gentiles) were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the *COMMONWEALTH OF ISRAEL* and *STRANGERS* to the *COVENANTS of PROMISE*, having no hope and without God in the world. <sup>13</sup>But now in Christ Jesus you (Gentiles) who once were far off (from God) have been brought near by the blood of Christ. <sup>14</sup>For he himself is our (Jews and Gentiles) peace, who has made us both *ONE* and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility <sup>15</sup>by abolishing the law of commandments and ordinances, that he (Jesus) might create in himself *ONE NEW MAN* (or nation) in place of the two (Jews and Gentiles), so making peace, <sup>16</sup>and might reconcile us (Jews and Gentiles) both to God in *ONE BODY* through the cross, thereby killing the hostility (between the Jews and Gentiles). <sup>17</sup>And he (Jesus) came and preached peace to you (Gentiles) who were far off (from God) and peace to those who were near (Jews). <sup>18</sup>For through him (Jesus) we both (Jews and Gentiles) have access in *ONE SPIRIT* to the Father. <sup>19</sup>So then you (Gentiles) are *NO LONGER* strangers and aliens, but you are *FELLOW CITIZENS* with the *SAINTS* (the faithful Jews) and members of the *HOUSEHOLD* of God, <sup>20</sup>built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone <sup>21</sup>in whom the *WHOLE STRUCTURE* being joined together (Jews and Gentiles) grows into a holy temple in the Lord. <sup>22</sup>In him you (Jews and Gentiles) also are being built together into a *DWELLING PLACE* for *GOD* by the Spirit (Ephes. 2:11-22).

Gentiles were separated from Christ, alienated from the, Commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus they have been brought to God by the blood of Christ. Jesus has made Jews and Gentiles both one by abolishing the law of commandments and ordinances so that Jesus



might create in himself one new man (Nation) in place of the two (Jews and Gentiles). In Jesus both Jews and Gentiles are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit. Christ is the head of this new nation and its Jewish and Gentile citizens are now equal in status before God because in Christ we are all brothers and sisters in the same eternal family that God is now establishing in the Lord Jesus Christ throughout all nations of the world.

**The practical application:** of what this means, is that all the future and eternal promises God made to Israel apply to whoever belongs to Christ. The book of Revelation states:

- When Christ returns in glory every eye will see him, even those who pierced him and all the tribes of the earth (Rev. 1:7).

And in Revelation chapter five we are told that:

- Christ was slain, and by his blood he ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation (i.e., Jews and Gentiles) and he has made them a kingdom and priests to God and they shall reign on the earth (Rev. 5:9-10).

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### HOW BEAUTIFUL ARE THE FEET OF THOSE WHO PREACH THE GOOD NEWS

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In the context of these verses the Good News does not refer to every doctrine of the Bible from Genesis to Revelation since no one has to be a walking Bible encyclopaedia to be in union with God and saved to eternal life. The Good News refers to the message of the cross and the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ it refers to those teachings that bring a sinner to Christ and delivers them from the domain of darkness and transfers them into the kingdom of Gods beloved Son (Col. 1:13). The Good News of the Gospel for all who trust in Christ not only proclaims that the law of the Spirit of life has set them free in Christ Jesus from the law of Sin and Death which states that the wages of sin is death, but also proclaims the Good News that they have been granted eternal life in the Lord Jesus Christ which is a free gift of God (Rom. 6:23) (Rom. 8:2). This means that the law of Sin and Death has no power over those who believe in Christ and faithfully follow him they like Christ will be raised to eternal glory. Salvation is about believing in the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ and recognising that one falls short of God's Glory and absolute Holiness. It is about repentance, baptism and abiding in the faith. Throughout the entire history of mankind there has only been one man who has ever been able to attain to God's perfect standard. Salvation is recognising this reality, repenting before God and accepting His foreordained plan of salvation. Salvation is about trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ, looking forward to his return and being raised to eternal glory. The majestic Good News of the Gospel, states that whoever comes to God through repentance and faith in His Son the Lord Jesus Christ is not only approved of and accepted by God the Father but all their sins are forgiven, not because they are deserving of it, by any self-effort or religious good works, but because through faith in Christ righteousness is imputed from God to them as a pure and free gift, but this is not the end of the Good News since God's promises also state that the faithful in Christ will be resurrected to eternal glory and everlasting life. Can there be any better news than this? This is of course, the reason it is called, "the Good News."

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### ROMANS 10:16-21

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**Faith comes from Hearing through the Word of Christ.**

- **Romans 10:16-21:** But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us?" <sup>17</sup>So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ. <sup>18</sup>But I ask, have they not heard? Indeed they have, for "Their



voice has gone out to all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world." <sup>19</sup>But I ask, did Israel not understand? First Moses says, "I will make you jealous of those who are not a nation; with a foolish nation I will make you angry." <sup>20</sup>Then Isaiah is so bold as to say, "I have been found by those who did not seek me; I have shown myself to those who did not ask for me." <sup>21</sup>But of Israel he says, "All day long I have held out my hands to a disobedient and contrary people."

Paul in verse thirteen said, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved," and now says, "But not all have obeyed the gospel" meaning that calling on the name of the Lord and then living a lifestyle indifferent to God's ways and the life of Christ will not save a person. Biblical faith comes by hearing the words of Christ, repenting and believing Christ's words, this faith will be experienced inwardly by the heart's desire to live a lifestyle that honours God and brings a good testimony to the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and manifested by confessing our in dwelling faith in Christ to those around us.

**Their words have gone out to the ends of the world:** the words, "Their voice has gone out to all the earth and their words to the ends of the world" (v18) in this context refers to the nation of Israel they have throughout all their generations heard the word of God in the following three ways:

1. Through the prophets.
2. Through Christ himself.
3. Through the apostles.

So, they are without excuse, especially when one considers the following beautiful words of God through the prophet Isaiah: -

- All day long I have held out my hands to a disobedient and contrary people (v21).

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This verse not only paints a beautiful picture of a loving Father waiting with open arms for his child to return to him, but also clearly echoes Christ on the cross. The words:

- I have been found by those who did not seek me (v20).

Refer to the Gentiles (i.e., everyone who is not born a Hebrew or Jew). For further information see the notes following the title:

- There is no Distinction between Jew and Greek.
- Following Romans 10:12-15 (above) (The Common Wealth of Israel).

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## FOOTNOTE

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The following are the Old Testament verses that Paul alludes to in (Rom 10:16-21). Paul's words:

- Who has believed what he has heard from us? (Rom 10:16).

Is cited from Isaiah chapter fifty-three:

- Who has believed what they heard from us? (The prophets, but also echoing apostles) and to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed? For he grew up before him (God) like a young plant, and like a root out of dry ground; he had no form or majesty that we should look at him, and no beauty that we should desire him (Isaiah 53:1).

This entire chapter is majestic as it is full of echoes of the Lord Jesus Christ. The words:

- I will make you jealous of those who are not a nation (Rom 10:19).

Alludes to the following words of God that Moses recorded in Deuteronomy:

- Israel have made me jealous with what is no god; they have provoked me to anger with their idols. So I will make them jealous with those who are no people (echoing the Gentiles) I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation (Deut. 32:21).

While Paul's final words:

- All day long I have held out my hands to a disobedient and contrary people. (Romans 10:21).

Are cited from Isaiah chapter sixty-five in which God said:

- I was ready to be sought by those who did not ask for me; I was ready to be found by those who did not seek me." I said, "Here am I here am I to a nation that was not called by my name." I spread out my hands all the day to a rebellious people who walk in a way that is not good, following their own devices who say, "Keep to yourself do not come near me for I am too holy for you (Isaiah 65:1-5).

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*As the founder of Bible House of Grace, I would like to thank the many Christian scholars, commentators and theologians who have gone before me, and the many today, who have freely made available their works to enhance the knowledge of the Bible to all people worldwide. It is only with the help of these faithful writers that much of Bible House of Grace exists as it does today.*

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