

“Israel’s Unbelief Leads To Salvation For The Gentiles” Romans 9:21-33

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May 31, 2026

Teaching Aim: To realize God endures with much longsuffering those who reject Him so that His attributes will be displayed and everyone will have an opportunity to be saved. To understand the emphasis in this chapter is on God’s mercy, not His wrath. To see salvation is found by grace through faith in Christ alone, not by any works that we do. To encourage every person (Jew and Gentile alike) to receive Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.

DIGGING DEEPER INTO GOD’S WORD (*BIBLE STUDY*)

Part I: Our Heavenly Potter and the mercy He provides for His people (Rom. 9:21-23)

1. When it comes to the potter and the clay, who is in control of what will be made (**vs. 21**)? Does the clay have the right to tell the potter what he must create? What are some of the many options of the potter? In the illustration in **verse 21**, who is the Potter? Who is the clay? How does the illustration of the Potter and the clay relate to people today?

2. What can born-again Christians (or the “*vessels of God’s mercy*”) learn about God and His grace from God’s endurance and longsuffering on our behalf (**vv. 22-23**)? (See **1 Tim. 2:4; 2 Pet. 3:9**) Do people still perish even though God’s grace is being offered? If so, why do they perish? How do God’s mercy and compassion demonstrate His glory to us today? (See **Exod. 33:18-19**) What can we learn about God from these attributes? Who are the “*vessels of God’s mercy*?” When were they chosen by God according to the Bible (**vs. 23**)? (See **Eph. 1:4-6**) Why should Christians evangelize if God has already predestined some to mercy? (See **Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16; Rom. 10:9-15**) Are we sinning if we don’t evangelize? Do you evangelize?

Part II: God’s grace even though most Jews are walking in disobedience (Rom. 9:24-29)

1. What startling announcement did Paul make to the Jewish believers in **verse 24**? When Paul refers to “*calling*” in **verse 24**, he is referring to “*God’s effectual calling*” of the believer unto salvation. One of the great mysteries revealed in the New Testament is that salvation in Christ is for both the Jews and Gentiles alike. Why would many Jews find this offensive? Do you?

2. Paul uses three verses from the book of Hosea to illustrate his point that believing Gentiles will be included in the kingdom of God (**vs. 25**). What are they? (See your Bible footnotes) What was the historical event referred to in **Hosea 1:9-10 & 2:23**? (See Commentaries) Although many people claim the God of the Old Testament is a wrathful God, what can we learn from these verses about God's grace towards His adulterous wife Israel? (NOTE: The nation Israel was adulterous because she worshipped other gods, not Yahweh.)

3. The prophets Hosea and Isaiah were contemporaries, both writing about 700 years before Christ. Both lived during the same time period historically and referred to some of the same events. In **Genesis 22:17**, God promised Abraham that his descendants would be like the sand on the seashore. Thinking of the vast quantity of sand in the world, what does this illustration teach us about the physical descendants of Abraham? According to **verse 27**, how many Jews will be saved after God punishes Israel for disobedience and unbelief? (See **Isa. 10:22-23**) What is the meaning of the word "*remnant*?" (See Dictionary) Although there are many more Gentiles being saved today than Jews, are the saved Gentiles still just a small percentage of the overall Gentile population? If so, why do you think so many people reject Christ? (See **2 Cor. 4:3-4**) Do you have family members and friends who have rejected Jesus?

4. **Verse 28** is difficult to understand. Describe in your own words the meaning of this verse. (You might check **vs. 28** in different Bible translations to see if this helps?) What can we learn about the holiness of God as well as His justice from **verse 28**?

5. The term "*LORD of Sabaoth*" can mean the "*Lord of hosts*" or "*Lord of the heavenly army.*" What special act of grace did God do for Israel in **verse 29**? What did Isaiah mean when he wrote, "*Unless the LORD of Sabaoth had left us a seed, we would have become like Sodom, and we would have been made like Gomorrah?*" What does the word "*seed*" imply? Who is the ultimate "*Seed*" according to the Bible? (See **Gal. 3:16**) How does **verse 29** relate to the Gentiles and the kingdom of God? (See **John 3:16**)

Part III: Jesus Christ, a stumbling stone and rock of offense to many, but Savior and Lord to His people (Rom. 9:30-33)

1. Do you think it was fair that the Gentiles were saved by grace through faith in Christ alone while the Israelites who rejected Christ and tried so hard to earn their salvation through following the Mosaic Law were not (**vs. 30**)? Why or why not? (See **Gal. 3:24**) What is the only way a person can be saved in both the Old and New Testaments? What difference, there if any, was there? (See **Gen. 15:6; John 3:16; 14:6; Acts 4:12; Eph. 2:8-10**)
2. How did the Israelites try to obtain a standing of righteousness before God (**vs. 31**)? In your opinion, was this a mistake on their part? If so, why? (See **Gal. 2:16; 3:11, 24; 4:4-5; Jam. 2:10**)
3. According to **verse 32**, why did the Israelites fail in their attempt to obtain righteousness? In many ways, the focus of Israel became the Mosaic Law itself rather than God Himself. Are some Christians guilty of focusing more on *“their church”* (or religion) rather than focusing on their relationship with God today? Is it possible for good things like Bible studies, attending church, and other relations activities to replace true Christianity? If so, how? Are people saved just because they go to church today? Why, or why not? (See **Matt. 13:24-30**) What is the difference between the *“visible church”* and the *“invisible church?”*
4. According to **verse 32**, what did the Jews stumble over? Who is the stone that caused them to stumble? (See **Matt. 16:15-19; 21:42-44; Acts 4:10-12; 1 Pet. 2:4-8**) Do you know of people who have stumbled over Jesus? What is *“church hurt?”* What makes this so dangerous to Christians?
5. Paul quotes two separate verses from the book of Isaiah in **verse 33** (See **Isa. 8:14 & 28:16**). According to these verses, what two ways can a person choose to respond to Jesus Christ? *“Zion”* is certainly a reference to Israel and to the Jews. Why would Christ (a Jew) be *“a stumbling stone”* to them? Why do you think Jesus Christ was *“a rock of offense”* to His own people? (See **Mark 6:4**) Why is Jesus an offense to so many people in our own culture today? (See **John 14:6**) What are some more effective ways that we can share Jesus with our community?

6. What promise is given in **verse 33** to those who put their faith in Christ? Do you find this promise true in your own life? Why or why not?

7. The most important thing you can do in your entire life is to trust Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. Have you? If you have never received Jesus Christ as your Savior, why not repent and do so right now in prayer?

MINER'S CORNER ~ *Manna to live by!*

- **Verses 22 and 23** emphasize the mercy of God, not His wrath.
- The offer of salvation is to everyone, Jew and Gentile alike.
- Only a small number of people will be saved, a remnant.
- Apart from God's grace, the entire human race would be completely wiped out like Sodom and Gomorrah because of sin.
- Salvation is by grace through faith in Jesus Christ alone, not by the works of the Law.
- Don't let Jesus be a stumbling stone to you or consider Him an offense, trust Him as your Savior and Lord—*He is the only way to heaven!*