

Romans Chapter 9-10: (30 - 20)

Many-many years ago we knew that light was a wave. We do experiments and it show us that light is definitely a wave and conforms all the characteristics of waves and in other experiments they found that light is also particles due to photons. The question is can light be particle as well as wave at the same time and for a long time we thought if it is a wave it is a wave, if it is a particle it is a particle, it cannot be both. Until Albert Einstein came and he actually paradoxically proved that light can both be a wave as well as a particle. It tells that we can have concepts which are seemingly paradoxical in our mind and still can make sense. The point here is you can have free will or you could have predestination and they can both co-exist but there are some bad applications. William Kerry when he went off to India as a great missionary there and when he was going to go they proposed to his church and they said,

“Sit down young man, you are an enthusiast. When God pleases to convert the hidden He will do without you, without consulting you or me.” So people are Calvinist. They believe that God will convert the masses. They are all predestined anyway, so there is no need to go. On the other hand if you believe in free will then you will be wondering, “I believe in Jesus Christ now, but tomorrow I do not know whether I will be saved or not because I might have done something”.

FREE WILL:

Hosea is the most unusual prophet ever. He was instructed by God to marry a working woman and then she had children and they were named Jezreel (our punish), Lo-Ruhamah (no mercy) and Lo-Ammi (not my people). The reason why God made him do that was because this is called prophetic symbolism. He wanted to show the people of Israel how he felt because the people of Israel was supposed to be infidelity with him in covenant relationship where a marriage is a covenant relationship. How they have actually abandoned God. They chased after other gods which is exactly the same as Hosea marrying a prostitute who then defiles her matrimonial bed and go after other man and produce the spawn of adultery. In this context as you know the history, Hosea went back to redeem his wife. She was in a very bad state. Nobody wanted her, he went and bought her back and brought her back to the field.

Hosea 2:23

23 and I will sow her for myself in the land. And I will have mercy on No Mercy, and I will say to Not My People, 'You are my people'; and he shall say, 'You are my God.'"

So therefore basically he is redeeming the people back. This is the background of Hosea. Hosea preached during the time of the Northern Kingdom. The Northern Kingdom was the time where the Assyrians came 722 BC and they sack the place, the entire population of Northern Kingdom was taken away in exile and they actually never came back. The ones who were left behind were basically called Samaritans because Assyrians were brought in, they intermarried and there are few than a few thousand Samaritans today, they went to the exile and they never returned from exile and Hosea is now addressing the people of Israel at that time who were then dispersed that one day I will bring you back, those who are not my people will become my people.

Romans 9:25

As indeed he says in Hosea, "Those who were not my people I will call 'my people,' and her who was not beloved I will call 'beloved.'"

What Paul has done is that he took the Hosea prophecy and applied it to gentiles, because the gentiles were never his people and now he takes this prophecy because this Northern Kingdom have been totally dispersed, they never came back anymore. They were like exiled and when they did come back they came back as the Chinese, Indians and all of us. So Paul writes scripture, he is inspired and he applies Hosea to the church today. So therefore this prophecy in Hosea is fulfilled in the church of Jesus Christ today.

26 "And in the very place where it was said to them, 'You are not my people,' there they will be called 'sons of the living God.'"

This is Hosea 1 that tells them you will be called children of living God, we are now the children of the living God. So this is the Old Testament backing that tells us that the gentiles are very much part of God's plan right from the beginning.

27 And Isaiah cries out concerning Israel: "Though the number of the sons of Israel be as the sand of the sea, only a remnant of them will be saved,

28 for the Lord will carry out his sentence upon the earth fully and without delay."

29 And as Isaiah predicted, "If the Lord of hosts had not left us offspring, we would have been like Sodom and become like Gomorrah."

Which means here of ethnic Israel itself they will not be cast away. They will actually be saved. The nation of Israel that was actually saved was Judah. When Isaiah prophesized, he is a prophet to the Southern Kingdom. It was the Southern Kingdom that was saved from the Assyrians in 722 but they too were sent to the exile at 587 BC in four trenches of them going off into exile. Eventually they came back from the exile. The question now is that why did Israel fail? Why do we have situation that Israel failed to follow God? The issue is that the Jews rejected Jesus because they were faithful to the law while Jesus contradicted the law. Jesus went against their law and that was the main reason for them to not follow Jesus.

30 What shall we say, then? That Gentiles who did not pursue righteousness have attained it, that is, a righteousness that is by faith;

31 but that Israel who pursued a law that would lead to righteousness did not succeed in reaching that law.

So we have a very ironic situation. The ironic situation is that the Jews looking to be saved were not saved; the gentiles not looking to be saved were accidentally saved. Basically Paul has to explain this irony is there, why?

32 Why? Because they did not pursue it by faith, but as if it were based on works. They have stumbled over the stumbling stone,

Why didn't the Jews believe? It goes all the way back to their traditions. The Jews used the law for works, to gain righteousness on their own. There are two ways to look at the law. The law is given to you, we can do two things. God gives you the law; you can use the law in order to gain your own righteousness, so that you can get to heaven and demand a place inside or you could use the law as an expression of your faith in God's mercy, which means I don't know how I am going to get saved Lord, have mercy on me and God chooses you then you use the law to reflect who He is. The other way you use the law in order to gain favor of God, in order to get salvation from him.

Was the original purpose of the law for people was that the law will save them?

Exodus 19:

4 You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself.

5 Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine;

6 and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. These are the words that you shall speak to the people of Israel."

God saved Israel from Egypt and brought them closer before the giving of law. This means because they are saved therefore the law becomes their way of life. So that's the difference. So right from the beginning the law was given so that it becomes a way in which the people of God can express their oneness and fidelity and faith to God. It was never given to them as a proxy or a way in which they can reach God. God already reached them and saved them. So that is the original purpose of the law. The other way of looking at it, you earn your way to salvation because God gave you this law and then you will be saved by works. It does not work that day. This is an expression of their identity to God. So the issue is, the goal of the law was to become like the son, to be like God, which they misunderstood. So if they misunderstood the law they will definitely misunderstand the son. That means God gave them only two things in life, give you the law that one you misunderstand. If you misunderstand the law you will misunderstand the son when he comes because the son is a goal of the law.

Romans 9:

32 Why? Because they did not pursue it by faith, but as if it were based on works. They have stumbled over the stumbling stone,

33 as it is written, "Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense; and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame."

So why did they stumble? Because they did not pursue it by faith. The whole idea of the law is to be pursued by faith. You obey the law because you trust God's mercy. Now they obey the law in order to get God's mercy. The gospel is very slippery and where it is the

slipperiest is here, because don't think that you are immune. Gospel is hard to understand, people cannot accept salvation is by grace. You have to earn it some way. If the Jews after thousands of years of existence couldn't get it, do we think we will get it? That is the hardest part. So therefore they failed because they stumble as it is based on works.

These are the cornerstone passages. This is what Paul writes.

Romans 9:33 as it is written, "Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense; and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame."

It is taken from Isaiah 28 and Isaiah 8:14-15. In this prophecy God says I am putting a stone and the other says that I will be stone.

So God is going to come in the future. Isaiah is now prophesying to the Southern Kingdom just before they get thrown into exile because of the idolatry and he is trying to tell them that he will become the stumbling rock. So when Lord will come he will do two things. He will save you or He will stumble you. Cornerstone in architecture is the most important stone of the entire building. It is put first of all the stones. That means God is our foundation. The other stones are put in to the relationship to the cornerstone. So from the cornerstone you drew a plum line; north, south, east and west and following the plum line then you put all the other stones. Everything is lined up through the cornerstone. If your cornerstone is off then everything is off. If your stone does not measure up then it is thrown away. If your stone is within that plum line it is then incorporated. So when the cornerstone comes all of you will be properly aligned, some of you will stumble because you cannot make the great as it were.

Isaiah 28:

16 therefore thus says the Lord GOD, "Behold, I am the one who has laid as a foundation in Zion, a stone, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone, of a sure foundation: 'Whoever believes will not be in haste.'

So therefore there will be coming a time where God will come and you have to believe, it is by faith. Salvation is not by performance anymore. He is telling you, when I will come whoever believes will not be in haste. There will be some people who believe and some people who won't believe when God comes again. So we are talking about Isaiah's prophecy just before the Southern Kingdom falls and he is telling one day I am going to come, I am going to be the new temple, I am going to be the cornerstone, those believe will be saved, those who don't believe will stumble. So the Lord himself will come, salvation or rejection on this. The fulfillment of this prophecy is God finally came as Jesus Christ. When God comes as Jesus Christ everything in the kingdom of God must be measured against Jesus Christ, but those guys are still hanging on to the tradition, they are still hanging on to their law. The Jews did not accept Jesus Christ and they stumbled over him. This is exactly the prophecy. The closest they came to welcoming him was when he came into Jerusalem, they said "Hosanna, Hosanna" and then later these same people gave him to get crucified. They totally misunderstood, they totally were stumbled. So therefore this idea of salvation by faith was already predicted back in the Old Testament. It is not something new. Right from the

beginning the law was just an expression of faith in God. The final expression of their faith would be to believe in Jesus Christ and that they failed.

Isaiah 2:2 It shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and shall be lifted up above the hills; and all the nations shall flow to it,

3 and many peoples shall come, and say: "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob, that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths." For out of Zion shall go the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

4 He shall judge between the nations, and shall decide disputes for many peoples; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.

Isaianic vision is that when the time comes when the stumbling block comes when this new cornerstone comes, this is the time it will be a wonderful time, all the nations will come. The law will then be spread out and everybody will follow what happens in Jerusalem. This is the vision of the end times. Isaiah always has this vision. So Paul is telling us, he had this vision right up from the beginning.

Romans 10:

1 Brothers, my heart's desire and prayer to God for them is that they may be saved.

2 For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge.

Jews were very sincere to God but they never followed what the prophecies were actually about. You can be sincere in life and sincerely wrong where you can do all sorts of things. When Jesus comes and speaks to the Samaritan woman, the Samaritans worship God at mount Gerizim. The Jews on the other hand worship at Jerusalem. She asked Jesus theological question. Jesus answered, "you worship what you do not know, we worship what we know. Salvation is from the Jews." It is always about the truth.

John 4:23 But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him.

24 God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth."

So truth is extremely important when you come to worship. Jesus Christ is all about the truth. That is why we call him Jesus is the way, the truth and the life. If Jesus Christ is the cornerstone, why did Jesus go in John chapter 2 and tell them, destroy this temple and in three days I will build it up. So if we look in the book of John, John tells us Jesus is the temple. He is the stumbling block. So when the real temple came people got so upset and every single Jew and most of the Jew stumbled.

Romans 10:

3 For, being ignorant of the righteousness of God, and seeking to establish their own, they did not submit to God's righteousness.

So there is a difference between God's righteousness and their own righteousness. Their own righteousness, you conforming to the law; God's righteousness is that somebody else conformed to the law and gives it to you for free. So there are two things. So they are ignorant of righteousness of God.

4 For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

Christ is the end; the Greek word for end is Teleios. Teleios can be translated as the goal or the purpose or the end result. Christ came to fulfill the law as he said. Sin is absence of righteousness that means we break God's law. Basically as we are made in the image of God we must be like God, we should be perfect like Him, but we are not perfect, Jesus was the perfect one, so He was the end of the law. Romans 8 says God causes all things to work for good for all those who love him and are called by him, so that they will be conformed to the image of the son. So entire law for the people of Israel and people of church today moving all of us towards the image of Jesus Christ. So Jesus Christ is the end result of the law. So Jesus comes not to abolish the law, he actually came to fulfill the law. Jews wanted to establish their own righteousness, they did not submit to God's righteousness.

5 For Moses writes about the righteousness that is based on the law, that the person who does the commandments shall live by them.

Only Christ have lived the perfect life. So Christ brings an end, the attempt to establish one's own righteousness Christ is the goal and the climax of the law, because Christ fulfills it completely for us. That is why when Jesus says,

Matthew 11:28 Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

So many preachers preach that Jesus will take all your burden, He will take all your problems, diseases and pain. If we look at that time in those days two bulls or cows are put into the yolk. The main cow bull pulls the whole thing, the second cow or bull is lightly tied to the main bull. The main cow or bull does all the heavy things. If the main cow does all the heavy lifting it means that we don't have to take the whole yolk of the law, Jesus has done this for you. He has applied it, He has lived it, He has triumphed over it, He has risen from the dead from it and all you do is a little cow or bull walk beside him and you don't really have to fulfill the law. Jesus has done that for us. That is why it is easy, that is why all the burden is off. It is not to lift up your other problems.

How do we receive it?

This comes to a bit of a difficult verse.

Romans 10:9 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.

10 For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.

This is the cornerstone every church in entire world will go onto this. Is there any proof that this works. In the Old Testament Moses writes about the righteousness that is based on the law that the person who does the commandments shall live by them. So basically Moses is trying to tell us that if you want to follow like the Jews you have to follow it completely, which is very-very difficult,

Romans 10:6 But the righteousness based on faith says, "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?'" (that is, to bring Christ down)

7 "or 'Who will descend into the abyss?'" (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead).

8 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);

This all is taken from Deuteronomy 9, 30 and some Paul additions into it.

Deuteronomy 9:4 "Do not say in your heart, after the LORD your God has thrust them out before you, 'It is because of my righteousness that the LORD has brought me in to possess this land,' whereas it is because of the wickedness of these nations that the LORD is driving them out before you.

He is talking about the Promised Land, God's drives up the evil tribes and bring them there and God says, it is not because of your righteousness.

Deuteronomy 28 to 30 is about return from exile, restoration and spiritual renewal. So Moses is telling them, one day you guys are going to be so naughty, I am going to kick you out of the Promised Land. For this commandment that I command you, today is not too hard for you neither is it far off. This is the Mosaic Law,

Deu 30:12 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?'

13 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?'

14 But the word is very near you. It is in your mouth and in your heart, so that you can do it.

He is talking about the Mosaic Law. It is not hard, it is not so high in heaven that you have to go up and grab it, it is not so low that you have to go down to the abyss and across the sea and then get it right. Moses brought the law in two tablets. You don't have to go to heaven to get it, you don't have to swim in the ocean and get it. Moses brought it in two tablets. So therefore this law is very simple.

Deu 30:6 And the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your offspring, so that you will love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live.

Now Moses talks about the circumcision of the heart. Paul talks about this in Romans 2,

Rom 2:29 But a Jew is one inwardly, and circumcision is a matter of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter. His praise is not from man but from God.

This means that there is a spiritual process which Moses have talked to Israel beforehand that one day when you are all gone from exile, when I bring you back from exile I will circumcise your heart. I will change your heart so much so that you will learn to love me and that has not been fulfilled. The whole entire history of the Old Testament has not been fulfilled yet. It has been fulfilled in the life and death of Jesus Christ.

No need to go to heaven to bring the commandments because Christ came down. No need to go down into the sea to bring commandments out because Christ came up from the dead. So what he is doing is using a saying from the Old Testament and he put his own insight there and apply the word which is basically the Mosaic Law. It is not so high to have to bring it down, it is not so deep in ocean you have to take it up. Instead of Mosaic Law take that away and you put the person of Jesus Christ. It is not so difficult for you to obey Jesus Christ anymore to have salvation by faith, because Jesus has come down from heaven and risen from the dead. So therefore it is very simple, it is already done for us. We do not have to do anything, all we have to do is believe. That is why he concludes in the end.

14 But the word is very near you. It is in your mouth and in your heart, so that you can do it.

Same one as Moses said. Moses was talking about the future, one day when God will circumcise their hearts because they love God, they will be able to obey the law and Paul takes that entire passage and applies it to Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ life and death is already done for you. All we have to do is to believe.

Chuck Swindoll writes it as, *We are not expected to ascend to heaven to obtain anything; Christ has descended to bring us everything we need. Now do we need to have to pay for penalty of sin, Christ has paid the penalty for us and then risen again to give us life.*

The whole idea of Christianity is not doing, it is believing. So salvation and righteousness is by faith. So perfection is not a reasonable expectation, devotion is a faith response which is very much within the reach of humanity. So if you go and see all your other person struggling in the world irrespective of their religion, perfection is the only way you are going to please God and if it is perfection then you to go to heaven to get it or how deep, how terrible, to be perfect is going up to heaven or going to the deeper seas. None of us can do that. So salvation by faith is very close, we all can do it because it is already done for us.

Roman 10:9 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.

10 For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.

Both outward and inward are important. This sinner's prayer has both your mouth saying it and you believing it.

The word Lord means "kurios". In the Greek Old Testament it is meant 6000 times for Yahweh. So when we say "Jesus is Lord" it means "Jesus is God (Yahweh)". When we say Jesus is Lord, it means Jesus is Lord over the whole area of life. Saying Jesus is Lord means that we are repenting and we are no longer lord anymore and it applies repentance.

Believe in your heart that God raised him from death. Jesus Christ physically rising from the death is the most important historical and supernatural fact and it is the underpinning of our entire faith. Jesus Christ rising from death is a falsifiable claim which makes it a coherent claim, we can actually put facts to it, and you can actually put your money on it. So therefore Jesus rising from death will then encapsulate his life, he lived, he died and he rose again. So therefore not only must we acknowledge him as God in your life, we must also acknowledge and believe he is God based on what he has done.

By saying all those things he is saying that righteousness equal salvation, belief equals confession. So salvation comes because you are righteous. No righteous cannot be saved. To enter God's presence which is heaven we have to be like him completely and the only way we can do that is to believe and believe is the same as confess. You cannot confess without believe or believe without confess.

Romans 10:11 For the Scripture says, "Everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame."

12 For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, bestowing his riches on all who call on him.

13 For "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."

There is no distinction, every single person in the world can actually believe in our Lord Jesus Christ he will not be put to shame.

14 How then will they 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?

15 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!"

All of these questions are answered by the fact that they are said, God has sent people. In the Old Testament and also in the new that he will send people to preach the gospel. This is a faith that can only come through hearing. If you don't hear you cannot believe. So therefore we have to go.

Isaiah 52:7 How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news, who publishes peace, who brings good news of happiness, who publishes salvation, who says to Zion, "Your God reigns."

Roman 10:16 But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us?"

17 So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.

18 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."

Word of Christ is two things, Jesus Christ is Yahweh and that rose from the dead. Paul is saying that Gospel has gone through all the earth and the ends of the earth and what he means is not the whole end of the earth, he lives in the Roman Empire, so therefore the word has gone through the entire Roman Empire. To the ends of the earth to Jews and Gentiles.

19 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."

This is Deuteronomy 32. Paul is saying that God makes the people of Israel jealous with bringing in another nation inside.

20 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."

21 But of Israel he says, "All day long I have held out my hands to a disobedient and contrary people."

So this describes the mission to the gentiles. Isaiah prophesized this way before Jesus came that one day God will bring the gospel to those who do not seek me, those who do not ask for me but for Israel all day long I held up my hands and these people still refuse to accept me. God's attitude is grace, Israel's attitude is disobedience. Why did Israel fail, did God's covenant fail? Covenant is always about chosen people by a promise not ethnic criteria and based on God's sovereignty, a remnant will be saved, new Israel will include gentiles, Israel has free will. They sought to obey the law as works for self-righteousness. God never forced them; God gave them the law, by free will they choose to abuse the law. They were too angry that they were not able to hear God's voice.

Does Israel have free will or were they destined to die in hell?

God sovereign choice but human beings have free will as well as accountability. Israel is a prime example, time and time again they receive God's law, they receive God's prophets, they have received God son. Jews had the best opportunity but they spurned God. It tells us that human beings are all sinful. Jews had everything with them and still they rejected Him. Free will has its consequences. The invitation is there open to everyone. All we have to do is to call Jesus as Lord and believe in our heart that God has raised Him from the dead.