

Israel's Responsibility for Her Unbelief

Romans 10:12–21

Romans 10:12–21 (NKJV)

¹² For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich to all who call upon Him. ¹³ For “*whoever calls* on the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

¹⁴ 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? ¹⁵ And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written:

*“How beautiful are the feet of those who preach
the gospel of peace,
Who bring glad tidings of good things!”*

¹⁶ But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, “Lord, who has believed our report?”

¹⁷ So then faith *comes* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

¹⁸ But I say, have they not heard? Yes indeed:

*“Their sound has gone out to all the earth,
And their words to the ends of the world.”*

¹⁹ But I say, did Israel not know? First Moses says:

*“I will provoke you to jealousy by those who are not a nation,
I will move you to anger by a foolish nation.”*

²⁰ But Isaiah is very bold and says:

*“I was found by those who did not seek Me;
I was made manifest to those who did not ask for Me.”*

²¹ But to Israel he says:

*“All day long I have stretched out My hands
To a disobedient and contrary people.”*

Introduction:

Israel was and is a nation of great privilege. Of all the families of the earth, they were chosen, adopted and made the people of God. They were uniquely given the revelation of God through the powerful display of God in delivering them from Egypt thru the 10 plagues, the crossing of the Red Sea, the giving of the law, the feeding and provision in the wilderness. The power of God was uniquely with them in the conquering of the land that God has given to them. His unique presence was in the Tabernacle and Temple. He gave them the Old

Testament Scriptures and made them a holy nation unto the Lord.

They were set apart from all other nations. Given Revelation that no other nation had and God was their God and they worshiped Him. But beyond all of this, they were the means that God chose to bring Messiah. Jesus would come into the world through the lineage of Israel.

Profound and powerful displays of God's power would be with them for over 3 years. Irrefutable evidence that Jesus was the Messiah would be manifest.

Acts 2:22 (NKJV)

²² “Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know—

John 3:2 (NKJV)

² This man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, “Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him.”

John 7:31 (NKJV)

³¹ And many of the people believed in Him, and said, “When the Christ comes, will He do more signs than these which this *Man* has done?”

Matthew 11:2–5 (NKJV)

² And when John had heard in prison about the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples ³ and said to Him, “Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?”

⁴ Jesus answered and said to them, “Go and tell John the things which you hear and see: ⁵ *The blind see and the lame walk; the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear; the dead are raised up and the poor have the gospel preached to them.*”

John 21:25 (NKJV)

²⁵ And there are also many other things that Jesus did, which if they were written one by one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that would be written. Amen.

The tragedy is that, in spite of all the evidence and all the miracles, the majority of Israel reject her Messiah. They did not believe and were unwilling to believe.

In the face of the most brilliant light, they closed their eyes in unbelief.

The Gospel of their salvation was rejected. The culmination and climax of the history of Israel was refused.

It is an unimaginable and unbelievable situation.

So how are we to explain this....the only means of salvation for the Jews was rejected by the very ones through whom it came. The ones who should have been eager to receive Christ killed their Messiah.

John 12:35–40 (NKJV)

³⁵ Then Jesus said to them, “A little while longer the light is with you. Walk while you have the light, lest darkness overtake you; he who walks in darkness does not know where he is going. ³⁶ While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light.” These things Jesus spoke, and departed, and was hidden from them.

³⁷ But although He had done so many signs before them, they did not believe in Him, ³⁸ that the word of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spoke:

“Lord, who has believed our report?”

And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?”

³⁹ Therefore they could not believe, because Isaiah said again:

⁴⁰ *“He has blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts,
Lest they should see with their eyes,
Lest they should understand with their hearts and turn,
So that I should heal them.”*

Paul in Romans 9-11 explains this amazing and complex plan of God that includes the unbelief of Israel.

He explains from Romans 9, that this is part of God sovereign choice.

He explains from Romans 10 that this is because of the willing unbelief of Israel.

One reason is from divine sovereignty while

The other is from human responsibility

Both are equally true and both are equally causal.

Not Jew can be saved apart from God choosing to save him and enabling him to believe and repent.

Also

No Jew can be saved unless he believes and repents for which he is fully responsible if God never chose him

HOW

How can God hold Israel responsible for not believing if they only way they ever would believe is if God gave them the ability to believe.

You can but you won't, and won't because you can't, You love your sin more than truth.

Another way to say this is

You are free to choose but your choice is not free.

You can come, you have a mind to think and understand, you have a will to choose life or death but You won't.

Why....

You won't because you can't

Why can't you?

Because you love your sin more than you love life.

You love your darkness more than life.

Men are able to be held responsible because they can but they won't and their bondage is created by their own love of sin.

John 3:19–20 (NKJV)

¹⁹ And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. ²⁰ For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed.

Hebrews 3:12–13 (NKJV)

¹² Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God; ¹³ but exhort one another daily, while it is called "*Today*," lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.

2 Thessalonians 2:9–12 (NKJV)

⁹ The coming of the *lawless one* is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, ¹⁰ and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. ¹¹ And for this reason God will send them

strong delusion, that they should believe the lie,¹² that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

There is also another reason for Romans 9-11
That is to explain how in the context of their unbelief to explain how Israel fits into the overall plan of God.

Romans 9. Israel's past and origins

Romans 10 Israel's current state —unbelief

Romans 11 Israel's future, grafted back in and salvation.

We are currently looking at the reason why Israel rejected the Gospel and remains in a state of unbelief.

Israel was Ignorant of the God of Salvation

[Romans 10:2–3](#) (NKJV)

² For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. ³ For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God.

Israel was Ignorant of the Christ of Salvation

Romans 10:4 (NKJV)

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

Israel was Ignorant of Faith for Salvation

Romans 10:9–10 (NKJV)

⁹ that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Romans 9:31–32 (NKJV)

³¹ but Israel, pursuing the law of righteousness, has not attained to the law of righteousness. ³² Why? Because *they did* not *seek it* by faith, but as it were, by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumbling stone.

Israel was Ignorant of the Extent of Salvation

Romans 10:11–13 (NKJV)

¹¹ For the Scripture says, “*Whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame.*” ¹² For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich to all who call upon Him. ¹³ For “*whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.*”

This was a huge problem for the Jews. The salvation and the covenants could be inclusive of the pagan Gentiles was repulsive, to say the least to the average Jew.

Paul’s point in the text tonight is **that although they were ignorant of**

1. God’s Righteousness
2. Christ Substitution
3. Faith’s appropriation
4. The Gospels Extension

There are **fully responsible** because,

1. They had been given all the information
2. They willfully rejected be of a rebellious heart.

I. They did not Obey

II. They did not Listen

III. The did not Understand

III. They did not Submit.

I. They did not Obey

Romans 10:16 (NKJV)

¹⁶ But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, “Lord, who has believed our report?”

5219. ὑπακούω *hupakouō*; fut. *hupakouēsō*, from *hupó* (5259), and *akouō* (191), to hear. To hearken, obey.

(I) To listen to something, hearken with stealth, stillness, or attention in order to answer (Acts 12:13).

(II) To yield to a superior command or force (without necessarily being willing).

(A) Of the wind and sea tempest (Matt. 8:27; Mark 4:41; Luke 8:25).

(B) Of unclean spirits (Mark 1:27).

(C) Of a sycamine tree (Luke 17:6).

(III) To believe (Acts 6:7; Rom. 10:16; 2 Thess. 1:8).

(IV) To yield to one’s passions giving them the upper hand (Rom. 6:12, 16).

(V) To obey God irresistably (Heb. 5:9).

(VI) Of children's obedience to parents (Eph. 6:1; Col. 3:20).

(VII) Of slaves to their masters (Eph. 6:5; Col. 3:22).

(VIII) To obey an apostle (Phil. 2:12; 2 Thess. 3:14).

(IX) Obedience by Abraham (Heb. 11:8).

(X) Obedience of Sarah to Abraham (1 Pet. 3:6).

(XI) A distinction should be made between the meanings of *hupakouō* and *hupotássomai* (5293), to place oneself under another, to assume a subordinate position.

(A) *Hupakouō* is used of the obedience children render to their parents (Eph. 6:1; Col. 3:20). This refers to an obedience which springs from their sense of duty toward, and dependence on parents.

(B) This same verb is used of the servile obedience rendered by slaves to their masters (Eph. 6:5; Col. 3:22). They must obey by virtue of their subordinate position.

Zodhiates, S. (2000). In [The complete word study dictionary: New Testament](#) (electronic ed.). AMG Publishers.

Romans 1:5 (NKJV)

⁵ Through Him we have received grace and apostleship for obedience to the faith among all nations for His name,

Romans 2:8–9 (NKJV)

⁸ but to those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness—indignation and wrath, ⁹ tribulation and anguish, on every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek;

Romans 6:17 (NKJV)

¹⁷ But God be thanked that *though* you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered.

Romans 16:25–26 (NKJV)

²⁵ Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery kept secret since the world began ²⁶ but now made manifest, and by the prophetic Scriptures made known to all nations, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, for obedience to the faith—

2 Thessalonians 1:8 (NKJV)

⁸ in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Hebrews 11:8 (NKJV)

⁸ By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going.

The unbelief of Israel should be no surprise

16 But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, “Lord, who has believed our report?”

Isaiah 53:1 (NKJV)

53 Who has believed our report?

And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?

When Isaiah wrote the words quoted by Paul in Romans 10:16, the prophet was speaking of the suffering, dying, substitutionary Savior, who “was pierced through for our transgressions, [and] was crushed for our iniquities; the chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, and by His scourging we are healed” (Isa. 53:5). The **report** of which Isaiah and Paul speak is **the glad tidings** of the gospel, the good news of Christ’s dying that we might live,

MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (1991). [Romans](#) (Vol. 2, p. 86). Moody Press.

John 12:37–38 (NKJV)

³⁷ But although He had done so many signs before them, they did not believe in Him, ³⁸ that the word of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spoke:

*“Lord, who has believed our report?
And to whom has the arm of the Lord been
revealed?”*

I. They did not Obey

II. They did not Listen

Romans 10:17–18 (NKJV)

¹⁷ So then faith *comes* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

¹⁸ But I say, have they not heard? Yes indeed:

Someone might suggest that they were not given enough information.... Maybe they didn't believe because they really never heard enough!

¹⁸ But I say, have they not heard? Yes indeed:

*“Their sound has gone out to all the earth,
And their words to the ends of the world.”*

He then quoted Psalm 19:4, from Septuagint

Psalm 19:4 (NKJV)

⁴ Their line has gone out through all the earth,
And their words to the end of the world.

concerning God's general revelation in the cosmic heavens (cf. Rom. 1:18–20).

Romans 1:19–21 (NKJV)

¹⁹ because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown *it* to them. ²⁰ For since the creation of the world His invisible *attributes* are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, *even* His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse, ²¹ because, although they knew God, they did not glorify *Him* as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened.

However, that psalm also discusses God's special revelation in the Old Testament (Ps. 19:7–11). Paul's obvious answer to his question is that Israel had ample opportunity by both general and special revelation to respond to God. Certainly she heard.

Witmer, J. A. (1985). [Romans](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, pp. 481–482). Victor Books.

They had been directly given the information. There is not only general revelation, but they had specific prophetic details about the Messiah that no one else had. They had the Gospel in infancy in Genesis 3:15. In symbol and imagery through the sacrificial system and passover and specifically declared in passages like Isa 53

They were unwilling to see and unwilling to listen.

When Galileo was summoned before the Roman Catholic inquisition for teaching that the earth revolved around the sun rather than the sun around the earth, he was charged with heresy. When he offered to demonstrate the truth of his findings by having them look through his telescope, they refused. Their minds were already made up, and they refused even to consider evidence to the contrary. With that same obstinacy, most of Israel, from New Testament times to the present, have refused even to consider the claims of the gospel. Consequently, they have failed to know God, Jesus Christ, and saving faith.

MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (1991). [Romans](#) (Vol. 2, p. 88). Moody Press.

I. They did not Obey

II. They did not Listen

III. The did not Understand

The apostle anticipated another objection. Someone might argue, “Yes, Israel heard but she did not understand that God purposed to offer righteousness by faith to all mankind, including Gentiles.”

Witmer, J. A. (1985). [Romans](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, p. 482). Victor Books.

19 But I say, did Israel not know? First Moses says:

*“I will provoke you to jealousy by those who are not a nation,
I will move you to anger by a foolish nation.”*

Deuteronomy 32:16–21 (NKJV)

¹⁶ They provoked Him to jealousy with foreign *gods*;
With abominations they provoked Him to anger.

¹⁷ They sacrificed to demons, not to God,
To gods they did not know,
To new gods, new arrivals
That your fathers did not fear.

- 18 Of the Rock *who* begot you, you are unmindful,
And have forgotten the God who fathered you.
- 19 “And when the Lord saw *it*, He spurned *them*,
Because of the provocation of His sons and His
daughters.
- 20 And He said: ‘I will hide My face from them,
I will see what their end *will be*,
For they *are* a perverse generation,
Children in whom *is* no faith.
- 21 They have provoked Me to jealousy by *what* is not
God;
They have moved Me to anger by their foolish
idols.
But I will provoke them to jealousy by *those who*
are not a nation;
I will move them to anger by a foolish nation.

Quoting again from **Isaiah**

20 But Isaiah is very bold and says:

*“I was found by those who did not seek Me;
I was made manifest to those who did not ask for
Me.”*

Quoting again from **Isaiah**, Paul finally reminds his readers that the prophet was **very bold** when the Lord said through him, **“I was found by those who sought Me not, I became manifest to those who did not ask for Me”** (cf. Isa. 65:1). Through **Moses**, who represented the law and through **Isaiah**, who represented the prophets, Paul firmly established that Israel’s rejection of her Messiah came as no surprise to God. It was predicted that, because of that rejection, God would be **found by** Gentiles who had not **sought** Him and would **manifest** Himself to those Gentiles **who did not ask for Him.**

MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (1991). [Romans](#) (Vol. 2, p. 89). Moody Press.

I. They did not Obey

II. They did not Listen

III. They did not Understand

III. They did not Submit.

But as for Israel, God's chosen people, who ignored His Word and sought Him in their own way and on their own terms, the Lord said

MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (1991). [Romans](#) (Vol. 2, p. 90). Moody Press.

21 But to Israel he says:

*“All day long I have stretched out My hands
To a **disobedient** and **contrary** people.”*

Isaiah 65:2 (NKJV)

² I have stretched out My hands all day long to a rebellious people,
Who walk in a way *that is* not good,
According to their own thoughts;

disobedient

544. ἀπειθέω *apeithéō*; contracted *apeithṓ*, fut. *apeithésō*, from *apeithés* (545), disobedient. Not to allow oneself to be persuaded or believe, to disbelieve, be disobedient.

Zodhiates, S. (2000). In [The complete word study dictionary: New Testament](#) (electronic ed.). AMG Publishers.

36.23 ἀπειθέω^a; ἀπείθεια^a, ας *f*: unwillingness or refusal to comply with the demands of some authority

Louw, J. P., & Nida, E. A. (1996). In [Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament: based on semantic domains](#) (electronic ed. of the 2nd edition., Vol. 1, p. 467). United Bible Societies.

contrary

483. ἀντιλέγω *antilégo*; fut. *antiléxō*, from *antí* (473), against, and *légo* (3004), to speak. To speak against.

(I) To contradict (Acts 13:45; 28:19, 22). Followed by *mé* (3361), not, with the inf., to deny (Luke 20:27).

(II) To oppose, disobey, revile (Luke 2:34; John 19:12; Rom. 10:21; Titus 1:9; 2:9; Sept.: Is. 50:5; 65:2; Hos. 4:4).

Deriv.: *antilogía* (485), contradiction.

Zodhiates, S. (2000). In [The complete word study dictionary: New Testament](#) (electronic ed.). AMG Publishers.

Luke 14:16–24 (NKJV)

¹⁶ Then He said to him, “A certain man gave a great supper and invited many, ¹⁷ and sent his servant at supper time to say to those who were invited, ‘Come, for all things are now ready.’ ¹⁸ But they all with one *accord* began to make excuses.

The first said to him, ‘I have bought a piece of ground, and I must go and see it. I ask you to have me excused.’¹⁹ And another said, ‘I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I am going to test them. I ask you to have me excused.’²⁰ Still another said, ‘I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.’²¹ So that servant came and reported these things to his master. Then the master of the house, being angry, said to his servant, ‘Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in here *the* poor and *the* maimed and *the* lame and *the* blind.’²² And the servant said, ‘Master, it is done as you commanded, and still there is room.’²³ Then the master said to the servant, ‘Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel *them* to come in, that my house may be filled.’²⁴ For I say to you that none of those men who were invited shall taste my supper.’ ”