

# CHAPTER 10

The dissolving of the peculiar church-state of the Jews, and the rejection of that polity by the repealing of their ceremonial law, the vacating of all the institutions of it, the abolishing of their priesthood, the burning of their temple, and the taking away of their place and nation, and in their room the substituting and erecting of a catholic church-state among the Gentile nations, though to us, now that these things have long since been done and completed, they may seem no great matter, yet to those who lived when they were doing, who knew how high the Jews had stood in God's favour, and how deplorable the condition of the Gentile world had been for many ages, it appeared very great and marvellous, and a mystery hard to be understood. The apostle, in this chapter, as in the foregoing and that which follows, is explaining and proving it; but with several very useful digressions, which a little interrupt the thread of his discourse. To two great truths I would reduce this chapter: —

- I.** That there is a great difference between the righteousness of the law, which the unbelieving Jews were wedded to, and the righteousness of faith offered in the gospel (v. 1-11).
- II.** That there is no difference between Jews and Gentiles; but, in point of justification and acceptance with God, the gospel sets them both upon the same level (v. 12 to the end).

## ROMANS 10:1-11

### PAUL'S DISCOURSE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

The scope of the apostle in this part of the chapter is to show the vast difference between the righteousness of the law and the righteousness of faith, and the great pre-eminence of the righteousness of faith above that of the law; that he might induce and persuade the Jews to believe in Christ, aggravate the folly and sin of those that refused, and justify God in the rejection of such refusers.

**I.** Paul here professes his good affection to the Jews, with the reason of it (v. 1, 2), where he gives them a good wish, and a good witness.

**1.** A good wish (v. 1), a wish that they might be saved — saved from the temporal ruin and destruction that were coming upon them — saved from the wrath to come, eternal wrath, which was hanging over their heads. It is implied in this wish that they might be convinced and converted; he could not pray in faith that they might be saved in their unbelief. Though Paul preached against them, yet he prayed for them. Herein he was merciful, as God is, who is *not willing that any should perish* (~~1~~2 Peter 3:9), desires not the death of sinners. It is our duty truly and earnestly to desire the salvation of our own. This, he says, was *his heart's desire and prayer*, which intimates,

**(1.)** The strength and sincerity of his desire. It was *his heart's desire*; it was not a formal compliment, as good wishes are with many from the teeth outward, but a real desire. This it was before it was his prayer. The soul of prayer is the heart's desire. Cold desires do but beg denials; we must even breathe out our souls in every prayer.

**(2.)** The offering up of this desire to God. It was not only his heart's desire, but it was his prayer. There may be desires in the heart, and yet no prayer, unless those desires be presented to God. Wishing and woulding, if that be all, are not praying.

**2.** A good witness, as a reason of his good wish (v. 2): *I bear them record that they have a zeal of God*. The unbelieving Jews were the most bitter enemies Paul had in the world, and yet Paul gives them as good a character as the truth would bear. We should say the best we can even of our worst enemies; this is blessing those that curse us. Charity teaches us to have the best opinion of persons, and to put the best construction upon words and actions, that they will bear. We should take notice of that which is commendable even in bad people. *They have a zeal of God*. Their opposition to the gospel is from a principle of respect to the law, which they know to have come from God. There is such a thing as a blind misguided zeal: such was that of the Jews, who, when they hated Christ's people and ministers, and cast them out, said, *Let the Lord be glorified* (~~2~~Isaiah 66:5); nay, they killed them, and thought they did God good service, ~~1~~John 16:2.

**II.** He here shows the fatal mistake that the unbelieving Jews were guilty of, which was their ruin. Their zeal was *not according to knowledge*. It is true God gave them that law for which they were so zealous; but they might have known that, by the appearance of the promised Messiah, an end was put to it. He introduced a new religion and way of worship, to which the former must give place. He proved himself the Son of God, gave the most convincing evidence that could be of his being the Messiah; and yet they did not know and would not own him, but shut their eyes against the clear light, so that their zeal for the law was blind. This he shows further, v. 3, where we may observe,

**1.** The nature of their unbelief. They *have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God*, that is, they have not yielded to gospel-terms, nor accepted the tender of justification by faith in Christ, which is made in the gospel. Unbelief is a non-submission to the righteousness of God, standing it out against the gospel proclamation of indemnity. *Have not submitted*. In true faith, there is need of a great deal of submission; therefore the first lesson Christ teaches is to deny ourselves. It is a great piece of condescension for a proud heart to be content to be beholden to free grace; we are loth to sue *sub forma pauperis* — *as paupers*.

**2.** The causes of their unbelief, and these are two: —

**(1.)** Ignorance of God's righteousness. They did not understand, and believe, and consider, the strict justice of God, in hating and punishing sin, and demanding satisfaction, did not consider what need we have of a righteousness wherein to appear before him; if they had, they would never have stood out against the gospel offer, nor expected justification by their own works, as if they could satisfy God's justice. Or, being ignorant of God's way of justification, which he has now appointed and revealed by Jesus Christ. They did not know it, because they would not; they shut their eyes against the discoveries of it, and love darkness rather.

**(2.)** A proud conceit of their own righteousness: *Going about to establish their own* — a righteousness of their own devising, and of their own working out, by the merit of their works, and by their observance of the ceremonial law. They thought they needed not to be beholden to the merit of Christ, and therefore depended upon their own performances as sufficient to make up a righteousness wherein to appear before God. They could not with Paul disclaim a dependence upon this (<sup><sup>COR></sup>Philippians 3:9),

*Not having my own righteousness.* See an instance of this pride in the Pharisee, ~~QNT~~ Luke 18:10, 11. Compare v. 14.

**III.** He here shows the folly of that mistake, and what an unreasonable thing it was for them to be seeking justification by the works of the law, now that Christ had come, and had brought in an everlasting righteousness; considering,

**1.** The subserviency of the law to the gospel (v. 4): *Christ is the end of the law for righteousness.* The design of the law was to lead people to Christ. The moral law was but for the searching of the wound, the ceremonial law for the shadowing forth of the remedy; but Christ is the end of both. See ~~QNT~~ 2 Corinthians 3:7, and compare ~~QNT~~ Galatians 3:23, 24. The use of the law was to direct people for righteousness to Christ.

**(1.)** Christ is the end of the ceremonial law; he is the period of it, because he is the perfection of it. When the substance comes, the shadow is gone. The sacrifices, and offerings, and purifications appointed under the Old Testament, prefigured Christ, and pointed at him; and their inability to take away sin discovered the necessity of a sacrifice that should, by being once offered, take away sin.

**(2.)** Christ is the end of the moral law in that he did what the law could not do (~~QNT~~ Romans 8:3), and secured the great end of it. The end of the law was to bring men to perfect obedience, and so to obtain justification. This is now become impossible, by reason of the power of sin and the corruption of nature; but Christ is the end of the law. The law is not destroyed, nor the intention of the lawgiver frustrated, but, full satisfaction being made by the death of Christ for our breach of the law, the end is attained, and we are put in another way of justification. Christ is thus the end of the law for righteousness, that is, for justification; but it is only to *every one that believeth*. Upon our believing, that is, our humble consent to the terms of the gospel, we become interested in Christ's satisfaction, and so are justified through the redemption that is in Jesus.

**2.** The excellency of the gospel above the law. This he proves by showing the different constitution of these two.

**(1.)** What is the righteousness which is of the law? This he shows, v. 5. The tenour of it is, *Do, and live*. Though it directs us to a better and more effectual righteousness in Christ, yet in itself, considered as a law

abstracted from its respect to Christ and the gospel (for so the unbelieving Jews embraced and retained it), it owneth nothing as a righteousness sufficient to justify a man but that of perfect obedience. For this he quotes that scripture (<sup>CRIB</sup>Leviticus 18:5), *You shall therefore keep my statutes and my judgments, which if a man do, he shall live in them.* To this he refers likewise, <sup>CRIB</sup>Galatians 3:12, *The man that doeth them, shall live in them.* *Live*, that is, be happy, not only in the land of Canaan, but in heaven, of which Canaan was a type and figure. The doing supposed must be perfect and sinless, without the least breach or violation. The law which was given upon Mount Sinai, though it was not a pure covenant of works (for who then could be saved under that dispensation?) yet, that is might be the more effectual to drive people to Christ and to make the covenant of grace welcome, it had a very great mixture of the strictness and terror of the covenant of works. Now, was it not extreme folly in the Jews to adhere so closely to this way of justification and salvation, which was in itself so hard, and by the corruption of nature now become impossible, when there was a new and a living way opened?

(2.) What is that righteousness which is of faith, v. 6, etc. This he describes in the words of Moses, in Deuteronomy, in the *second law* (so Deuteronomy signifies), where there was a much clearer revelation of Christ and the gospel than there was in the first giving of the law: he quotes it from <sup>CRIB</sup>Deuteronomy 30:11-14, and shows,

[1.] That it is not at all hard or difficult. The way of justification and salvation has in it no such depths or knots as may discourage us, no insuperable difficulties attending it; but, as was foretold, it is a high-way, <sup>CRIB</sup>Isaiah 35:8. We are not put to climb for it — it is not in heaven; we are not put to dive for it — it is not in the deep. *First*, We need not go to heaven, to search the records there, or to enquire into the secrets of the divine counsel. It is true Christ is in heaven; but we may be justified and saved without going thither, to fetch him thence, or sending a special messenger to him. *Secondly*, We need not go to the deep, to fetch Christ out of the grave, or from the state of the dead: *Into the deep, to bring up Christ from the dead.* This plainly shows that Christ's descent into the *deep*, or into *hades*, was no more than his going into the state of the dead, in allusion to Jonah. It is true that Christ was in the grave, and it is as true that he is now in heaven; but we need not perplex and puzzle ourselves with fancied difficulties, nor must we create to ourselves such gross and carnal ideas of these things as if the method of salvation were

impracticable, and the design of the revelation were only to amuse us. No, salvation is not put at so vast a distance from us.

[2.] But it is very plain and easy: *The word is nigh thee*. When we speak of looking upon Christ, and receiving Christ, and feeding upon Christ, it is not Christ in heaven, nor Christ in the deep, that we mean; but Christ in the promise, Christ exhibited to us, and offered, in the word. Christ is nigh thee, for the word is nigh thee: nigh thee indeed: it is *in thy mouth, and in thy heart*; there is no difficulty in understanding, believing, and owning it. The work thou hast to do lies within thee: *the kingdom of God is within you*, <sup>(47)</sup>Luke 17:21. Thence thou must fetch thy evidences, not out of the records of heaven. *It is*, that is, it is promised that it shall be, *in thy mouth* (<sup>(28)</sup>Isaiah 59:21), *and in thy heart*, <sup>(38)</sup>Jeremiah 31:33. All that which is done for us is already done to our hands. Christ is come down from heaven; we need not go to fetch him. He is come up from the deep; we need not perplex ourselves how to bring him up. There is nothing now to be done, but a work in us; this must be our care, to look to our heart and mouth. Those that were under the law were to do all themselves, *Do this, and live*; but the gospel discovers the greatest part of the work done already, and what remains cut short in righteousness, salvation offered upon very plain and easy terms, brought to our door, as it were, in the word which is nigh us. It is in our mouth — we are reading it daily; it is in our heart — we are, or should be, thinking of it daily. Even *the word of faith*; the gospel and the promise of it, called the word of faith because it is the object of faith about which it is conversant, the word which we believe; — because it is the precept of faith, commanding it, and making it the great condition of justification; — and because it is the ordinary means by which faith is wrought and conveyed. Now what is this word of faith? We have the tenour of it, v. 9, 10, the sum of the gospel, which is plain and easy enough. Observe,

*First*, What is promised to us: *Thou shalt be saved*. It is salvation that the gospel exhibits and tenders — saved from guilt and wrath, with the salvation of the soul, an eternal salvation, which Christ is the author of, a Saviour to the uttermost.

*Secondly*, Upon what terms.

*a.* Two things are required as conditions of salvation: —

**(a.)** *Confessing the Lord Jesus* — openly professing relation to him and dependence on him, as our prince and Saviour, owning Christianity in the face of all the allurements and affrightments of this world, standing by him in all weathers. Our Lord Jesus lays a great stress upon this confessing of him before men; see <sup><416></sup>Matthew 10:32, 33. It is the product of many graces, evinces a great deal of self-denial, love to Christ, contempt of the world, a mighty courage and resolution. It was a very great thing, especially, when the profession of Christ or Christianity hazarded estate, honour, preferment, liberty, life, and all that is dear in this world, which was the case in the primitive times.

**(b.)** *Believing in the heart that God raised him from the dead.* The profession of faith with the mouth, if there be not the power of it in the heart, is but a mockery; the root of it must be laid in an unfeigned assent to the revelation of the gospel concerning Christ, especially concerning his resurrection, which is the fundamental article of the Christian faith, for thereby he was declared to be the Son of God with power, and full evidence was given that God accepted his satisfaction.

**b.** This is further illustrated (v. 10), and the order inverted, because there must first be faith in the heart before there can be an acceptable confession with the mouth.

**(a.)** Concerning faith: It is *with the heart that man believeth*, which implies more than an assent of the understanding, and takes in the consent of the will, an inward, hearty, sincere, and strong consent. It is not believing (not to be reckoned so) if it be not with the heart. This is *unto righteousness*. There is the righteousness of justification and the righteousness of sanctification. Faith is to both; it is the condition of our justification (<sup><418></sup>Romans 5:1), and it is the root and spring of our sanctification; in it is begun; by it it is carried on, <sup><419></sup>Acts 15:9.

**(b.)** Concerning profession: It is *with the mouth that confession is made* — confession to God in prayer and praise (<sup><420></sup>Romans 15:6), confession to men by owning the ways of God before others, especially when we are called to it in a day of persecution. It is fit that God should be honoured with the mouth, for he made man's mouth (<sup><421></sup>Exodus 4:11), and at such a time has promised to give his faithful people a *mouth and wisdom*, <sup><422></sup>Luke 21:15. It is part of the honour of Christ that every tongue shall confess, <sup><423></sup>Philippians 2:11. And this is said to be *unto salvation*, because it is the performance of the

condition of that promise, <sup><102></sup>Matthew 10:32. Justification by faith lays the foundation of our title to salvation; but by confession we build upon that foundation, and come at last to the full possession of that to which we were entitled. So that we have here a brief summary of the terms of salvation, and they are very reasonable; in short this, that we must devote, dedicate, and give up, to God, our souls and our bodies — our souls in believing with the heart, and our bodies in confessing with the mouth. This do, and thou shalt live. For this (v. 11) he quotes <sup><336></sup>Isaiah 28:16, *Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed; ou kataischynthesetai.* That is,

**[a.]** He will not be ashamed to own that Christ in whom he trusts; he that believes in the heart will not be ashamed to confess with the mouth. It is sinful shame that makes people deny Christ, <sup><433></sup>Mark 8:38. He that believeth will not make haste (so the prophet has it) — will not make haste to run away from the sufferings he meets with in the way of his duty, will not be ashamed of a despised religion.

**[b.]** He shall not be ashamed of his hope in Christ; he shall not be disappointed of his end. It is our duty that we must not, it is our privilege that we shall not, be ashamed of our faith in Christ. He shall never have cause to repent his confidence in reposing such a trust in the Lord Jesus.

## <sup><512></sup>ROMANS 10:12-21

### IMPORTANCE OF PREACHING THE GOSPEL

The first words express the design of the apostle through these verses, that there is no difference between Jews and Gentiles, but they stand upon the same level in point of acceptance with God. In Jesus Christ there is neither Greek nor Jews, <sup><511></sup>Colossians 3:11. God doth not save any nor reject any because they are Jews, nor because they are Greeks, but doth equally accept both upon gospel terms: *There is no difference.* For the proof of this he urges two arguments: —

**I.** That God is the same to all: *The same Lord over all is rich unto all.* There is not one God to the Jews who is more kind, and another to the Gentiles who is less kind; but he is the same to all, a common father to all



mankind. When he proclaimed his name, *The Lord, the Lord god, gracious and merciful*, he thereby signified not only what he was to the Jews, but what he is and will be to all his creatures that seek unto him: not only good, but rich, plenteous in goodness: he hath wherewith to supply them all, and he is free and ready to give out to them; he is both able and willing: not only rich, but rich unto us, liberal and bountiful in dispensing his favours *to all that call upon him*. Something must be done by us, that we may reap of this bounty; and it is as little as can be, we must call upon him. He will for this be enquired of (<sup>3657</sup>Ezekiel 36:37), and surely that which is not worth the asking is not worth the having. We have nothing to do but to draw out by prayer, as there is occasion.

**II.** That the promise is the same to all (v. 13): *Whoever shall call* — one as well as another, without exception. This extent, this undifferencing extent, of the promise both to Jews and Gentiles he thinks should not be surprising, for it was foretold by the prophet, <sup>493</sup>Joel 2:32. Calling upon the name of the Lord is here put for all practical religion. What is the life of a Christian but a life of prayer? It implies a sense of our dependence on him, an entire dedication of ourselves to him, and a believing expectation of our all from him. He that thus calls upon him shall be saved. It is but ask and have; what would we have more? for the further illustration of this he observes,

**1.** How necessary it was that the gospel should be preached to the Gentiles, v. 14, 15. This was what the Jews were so angry with Paul for, that he was the apostle of the Gentiles, and preached the gospel to them. Now he shows how needful it was to bring them within the reach of the forementioned promise, an interest in which they should not envy to any of their fellow-creatures.

**(1.)** *They cannot call on him in whom they have not believed.* Except they believe that he is God, they will not call upon him by prayer; to what purpose should they? The grace of faith is absolutely necessary to the duty of prayer; we cannot pray aright, nor pray to acceptation, without it. He that comes to God by prayer must believe, <sup>816</sup>Hebrews 11:6. Till they believed the true God, they were calling upon idols, O Baal, hear us.

**(2.)** *They cannot believe in him of whom they have not heard.* some way or other the divine revelation must be made known to us, before we can receive it and assent to it; it is not born with us. In hearing is included

reading, which is tantamount, and by which many are brought to believe (<sup>418B</sup>John 20:31): *These things are written that you may believe.* But hearing only is mentioned, as the more ordinary and natural way of receiving information.

(3.) *They cannot hear without a preacher;* how should they? Somebody must tell them what they are to believe. Preachers and hearers are correlates; it is a blessed thing when they mutually rejoice in each other — the hearers in the skill and faithfulness of the preacher, and the preacher in the willingness and obedience of the hearers.

(4.) *They cannot preach except they be sent,* except they be both commissioned and in some measure qualified for their preaching work. How shall a man act as an ambassador, unless he have both his credentials and his instructions from the prince that sends him? This proves that to the regular ministry there must be a regular mission and ordination. It is God's prerogative to send ministers; he is the Lord of the harvest, and therefore to him we must *pray that he would send forth labourers,* (<sup>408B</sup>Matthew 9:38. He only can qualify men for, and incline them to, the work of the ministry. But the competency of that qualification, and the sincerity of that inclination, must not be left to the judgment of every man for himself: the nature of the thing will by no means admit this; but, for the preservation of due order in the church, this must needs be referred and submitted to the judgment of a competent number of those who are themselves in that office and of approved wisdom and experience in it, who, as in all other callings, are presumed the most able judges, and who are empowered to set apart such as they find so qualified and inclined to this work of the ministry, that by this preservation of the succession the name of Christ may endure for ever and his throne as the days of heaven. And those that are thus set apart, not only may, but must preach, as those that are sent.

2. How welcome the gospel ought to be to those to whom it was preached, because it showed the way to salvation, v. 15. For this he quotes (<sup>251E</sup>Isaiah 52:7. The like passage we have, (<sup>3015</sup>Nahum 1:15, which, if it point at the glad tidings of the deliverance of Israel out of Babylon in the type, yet looks further to the gospel, the good news of our salvation by Jesus Christ. Observe,

(1.) What the gospel is: It is *the gospel of peace;* it is the word of reconciliation between God and man. *On earth peace,* (<sup>414A</sup>Luke 2:14. Or, peace is put in general for all good; so it is explained here; it is *glad*

*tidings of good things*. The things of the gospel are good things indeed, the best things; tidings concerning them are the most joyful tidings, the best news that ever came from heaven to earth.

(2.) What the work of ministers is: To preach this gospel, to *bring these glad tidings*; to *evangelize peace* (so the original is), to evangelize good things. Every good preacher is in this sense an evangelist: he is not only a messenger to carry the news, but an ambassador to treat; and the first gospel preachers were angels, <sup><473></sup>Luke 2:13, etc.

(3.) How acceptable they should therefore be to the children of men for their work's sake: *How beautiful are the feet*, that is, how welcome are they! Mary Magdalene expressed her love to Christ by kissing his feet, and afterwards by holding him by the feet, <sup><489></sup>Matthew 28:9. And, when Christ was sending forth his disciples, he washed their feet. Those that preach the gospel of peace should see to it that their feet (their life and conversation) be beautiful: the holiness of ministers' lives is the beauty of their feet. *How beautiful!* namely, in the eyes of those that hear them. Those that welcome the message cannot but love the messengers. See <sup><512></sup>1 Thessalonians 5:12, 13.

3. He answers an objection against all this, which might be taken from the little success which the gospel had in many places (v. 16): *But they have not all obeyed the gospel*. All the Jews have not, all the Gentiles have not; far the greater part of both remain in unbelief and disobedience. Observe, The gospel is given us not only to be known and believed, but to be obeyed. It is not a system of notions, but a rule of practice. This little success of the word was likewise foretold by the prophet (<sup><551></sup>Isaiah 53:1): *Who hath believed our report?* Very few have, few to what one would think should have believed it, considering how faithful a report it is and how well worthy of all acceptance, — very few to the many that persist in unbelief. It is no strange thing, but it is a very sad and uncomfortable thing, for the ministers of Christ to bring the report of the gospel, and not to be believed in it. Under such a melancholy consideration it is good for us to go to God and make our complaint to him. *Lord, who hath believed*, etc. In answer to this,

(1.) He shows that the word preached is the ordinary means of working faith (v. 17): *So then, ara* — *however*; though many that hear do not believe, yet those that believe have first heard. *Faith cometh by hearing*. It is the summary of what he had said before, v. 14. The beginning, progress,

and strength of faith, are by hearing. The word of God is therefore called *the word of faith*: it begets and nourishes faith. God gives faith, but it is by the word as the instrument. *Hearing* (that hearing which works faith) is *by the word of God*. It is not hearing the enticing words of man's wisdom, but hearing the word of God, that will befriend faith, and hearing it as the word of God. See <sup><3123></sup>1 Thessalonians 2:13.

(2.) That those who would not believe the report of the gospel, yet, having heard it, were thereby left inexcusable, and may thank themselves for their own ruin, v. 18, *to the end*.

[1.] The Gentiles have heard it (v. 18): *Have they not heard?* Yes, more or less, they have either heard the gospel, or at least heard of it. *Their sound went into all the earth*; not only a confused sound, but their *words* (more distinct and intelligible notices of these things) are *gone unto the ends of the world*. The commission which the apostles received runs thus: *Go you into all the world — preach to every creature — disciple all nations*; and they did with indefatigable industry and wonderful success pursue that commission. See the extent of Paul's province, <sup><659></sup>Romans 15:19. To this remote island of Britain, one of the utmost corners of the world, not only the sound, but the words, of the gospel came within a few years after Christ's ascension. It was in order to this that the gift of tongues was at the very first poured so plentifully upon the apostles, Acts 2. In the expression here he plainly alludes to <sup><3904></sup>Psalms 19:4, which speaks of the notices which the visible works of God in the creation give to all the world of the power and Godhead of the Creator. As under the Old Testament God provided for the publishing of the work of creation by the sun, moon, and stars, so now for the publishing of the work of redemption to all the world by the preaching of gospel ministers, who are therefore called *stars*.

[2.] The Jews have heard it too, v. 19-21. For this he appeals to two passages of the Old Testament, to show how inexcusable they are too. *Did not Israel know* that the Gentiles were to be called in? They might have known it from Moses and Isaiah.

*First*, One is taken from <sup><6521></sup>Deuteronomy 32:21, *I will provoke you to jealousy*. The Jews not only had the offer, but saw the Gentiles accepting it and benefitted by that acceptance, witness their vexation at the event. They had the refusal: *To you first*, <sup><4036></sup>Acts 3:26. In all places where the apostles came still the Jews had the first offer, and the Gentiles had but their leavings. If one would not, another would. Now this provoked them

to jealousy. They, as the elder brother in the parable (Luke 15) envied the reception and entertainment of the prodigal Gentiles upon their repentance. The Gentiles are here called *no people*, and *a foolish nation*, that is, not the professing people of God. How much soever there be of the wit and wisdom of the world, those that are not the people of God are, and in the end will be found to be, a foolish people. Such was the state of the Gentile world, who yet were made the people of God, and Christ to them the wisdom of God. What a provocation it was to the Jews to see the Gentiles taken into favour we may see, <sup><4435></sup>Acts 13:45; 17:5, 13, and especially <sup><4422></sup>Acts 22:22. It was an instance of the great wickedness of the Jews that they were thus enraged; and this in Deuteronomy is the matter of a threatening. God often makes people's sin their punishment. A man needs no greater plague than to be left to the impetuous rage of his own lusts.

*Secondly*, Another is taken from <sup><2351></sup>Isaiah 65:1, 2, which is very full, and in it Esaias is very bold — bold indeed, to speak so plainly of the rejection of his own countrymen. Those that will be found faithful have need to be very bold. Those that are resolved to please God must not be afraid to displease any man. Now Esaias speaks boldly and plainly,

**a.** Of the preventing grace and favour of God in the reception and entertainment of the Gentiles (v. 20): *I was found of those that sought me not*. The prescribed method is, Seek and find; this is a rule for us, not a rule for God, who is often found of those that do not seek. His grace is his own, distinguishing grace his own, and he dispenses it in a way of sovereignty, gives or withholds it at pleasure — anticipates us with the blessings, the riches choicest blessings, of his goodness. Thus he manifested himself to the Gentiles, by sending the light of the gospel among them, when they were so far from seeking him and asking after him that they were following after lying vanities, and serving dumb idols. Was not this our own particular case? Did not God begin in love, and manifest himself to us when we did not ask after him? And was not that a time of love indeed, to be often remembered with a great deal of thankfulness?

**b.** Of the obstinacy and perverseness of Israel, notwithstanding the fair offers and affectionate invitations they had, v. 21. Observe,

**(a.)** God's great goodness to them: *All day long I have stretched forth my hands*.

**[a.]** His offers: *I have stretched forth my hands*, offering them life and salvation with the greatest sincerity and seriousness that can be, with all possible expressions of earnestness and importunity, showing them the happiness tendered, setting it before them with the greatest evidence, reasoning the case with them. Stretching forth the hands is the gesture of those that require audience (<sup><426></sup>Acts 26:1), or desire acceptance, <sup><312></sup>Proverbs 1:24. Christ was crucified with his hands stretched out. *Stretched forth my hands* as offering reconciliation — come let us shake hands and be friends; and our duty is to give the hand to him, <sup><408></sup>2 Chronicles 30:8.

**[b.]** His patience in making these offers: *All day long*. The patience of God towards provoking sinners is admirable. He waits to be gracious. The time of God's patience is here called a day, lightsome as a day and fit for work and business, but limited as a day, and a night at the end of it. he bears long, but he will not bear always.

**(b.)** Their great badness to him. They were a *disobedient gainsaying people*. One word in the Hebrew, in Isaiah, is here well explained by two; not only disobedient to the call, not yielding to it, but gainsaying, and quarrelling with it, which is much worse. Many that will not accept of a good proposal will yet acknowledge that they have nothing to say against it: but the Jews who believed not rested not there, but contradicted and blasphemed. God's patience with them was a very great aggravation of their disobedience, and rendered it the more exceedingly sinful; as their disobedience advanced the honour of God's patience and rendered it the more exceedingly gracious. It is a wonder of mercy in God that his goodness is not overcome by man's badness; and it is a wonder of wickedness in man that his badness is not overcome by God's goodness.