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Praying for the Jewish Community
10: 1-7

Praying for the Jewish community DIG: What is the key to understanding all of Chapter 10? Why do you think that all major English versions of the Bible translate the Greek word *telos* as "end," when it should be translated "goal," or "purpose?" Why do you think all major English versions of the Bible translate the Greek word *de* as "but," when it should be translated "moreover?" What does Paul mean by saying that Jews who obey the mitzvot in the Torah shall live by that righteousness? Why does Paul quote Deuteronomy 30?

REFLECT: Is your heart's deepest desire and prayer for the salvation of the Jewish people in your area? Their rabbis? Why? Why not? Who are you praying for? How can you be sure you are zealous for the right reasons? Are you attempting to do something your own way right now, apart from what God wants you to do? What is that called? What is the remedy? More Jews live outside Isra'el than in Isra'el; so we need to pray for the Jewish community in the world. Who can you help to understand these truths this week?

Paul prays for his fellow Jews because their zeal for the Torah is not based on a correct understanding. They do not understand that the righteousness of God is based on faith.



The paradox (10:1-2): O, [fellow Jews], my heart's deepest desire and my prayer to God for Isra'el is for their salvation; for I can testify to their zeal for God (see the commentary on **Galatians, to see link click Ao – God Set Me Apart from Birth and Called Me Through His Grace**)**.** Why does **non-Messianic Jewish zeal** for **God** go astray? Because **it is not based on correct understanding** (Greek: *epignosis*, meaning *full knowledge*) of **the Torah**. **Zeal** was not the problem, but **their zeal** was **not based on correct understanding** of the **salvation** issue**. They** were sincere, but **they** were, and still are, sincerely wrong. **Their** sincerity will not be enough to save **them**. **They** had a knowledge of **God**, but not a **correct understanding** of **Yeshua Messiah. This statement is the key to understanding all of Chapter 10.**

The curse of legalism (10:3-4): For, since they are unaware of God's way of making people righteous and instead seek to set up their own, they have not submitted themselves to God's way of making people righteous (10:3). Zeal is not the problem, but **their zeal is not based on a correct understanding** of the kind of **righteousness** that **ADONAI** is really after. And this we see beautifully in the Sermon on the Mount (see the commentary on **The Life of Christ Dn – What True Righteousness Look Like**). Because the Sermon on the Mount was showing that the Pharisees interpreted **righteousness** one way, it was **not a correct understanding**; or a *full* **understanding**. In other words, **their** sincerity will not be enough to save **them**. As in the past, today, observant **Jews** are sincere, but **they** are sincerely wrong. **They** refused to subject **themselves** to **God's righteousness**. This refusal exposed **their** disobedience.[262] The reasons for the statements in **verse 3** are explained in **verse 4**.

The evidence that non-Messianic Jews have not submitted themselves to God's way of making people righteous (10:3), which in itself shows that their zeal is not based on correct understanding (10:2), is that they have not grasped the central point of the Torah and acted on it. Had **they** seen that **trust in God** – opposed to self-effort, legalism, and mechanical obedience to a set of rules – is the route to the **righteousness** which **the Torah** itself not only requires, but offers **(9:30-32)**, then **they** would see that **the goal** (Greek: *telos*, meaning *the goal, and is reflected in the English word "teleology," the branch of philosophy dealing with goals the purposes*) **at which the Torah aims is the Messiah, who offers righteousness to everyone who trusts** in **Him (10:4). They** would also see that **Yeshua** offers this **righteousness** to **the Gentiles** as well (see **Cy – The Jealousy of the Gentile Believers**).

Dear Kind and Gracious Heavenly ***Father****, Praise* ***You*** *for* ***Your*** *great and merciful love! Thank* ***You*** *that* ***You*** *did not make the entrance into heaven, to be by works.* ***For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not from yourselves – it is the gift of God. It is not based on deeds, so that no one may boast (Ephesians 2:8-9). Your*** *holiness demands the payment for* ***sin*** *to be death.* ***Your*** *perfect wisdom knew that no person would ever be perfect* ***(Psalms 53:3; Romans 3:23)*** *and so in gracious love* ***You*** *planned for* ***Yeshua*** *to bear our* ***sins*** *in* ***His*** *body on the tree and all who* ***trust****/love/follow* ***Him****,* ***You*** *would credit* ***His righteousness*** *and be saved from eternal death.* ***He Himself bore our sins in His body on the tree, so that we, removed from sins, might live for righteousness. "By His wounds you were healed" (First Peter 2:24)****. Though* ***Yeshua's*** *blood was shed as the penalty for the* ***sins*** *of all* ***(John 3:16),*** *but only those who have faith/ love/* ***trust*** *in* ***You*** *receive* ***Your*** *gracious gift. Please open the hearts of those in my family and friends that know all about* ***You*** *and think that because* ***You*** *love everyone that you will let everyone into heaven. Please help them to choose to love* ***You, God,*** *as number one in their lives, instead of living for themselves. They are nice people but being nice cannot get anyone into heaven. Trusting* ***You*** *and confessing* ***You*** *as* ***Lord****, is what is important.* ***For if you confess with your mouth that Yeshua is Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart it is believed for righteousness, and with the mouth it is confessed for salvation (Romans 10:9-10).***

I am so grateful for you taking my place when ***You*** *died as* ***the Lamb of God*** *as our* ***sin*** *sacrifice.* ***He made the One who knew no sin to become a sin offering on our behalf, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God (Second Corinthians 5:21). You*** *are so worthy to be loved at all times, good and hard times. The hard trials on earth will soon be over. Great peace and joy in heaven will last for all eternity!* ***For I consider the sufferings of this present time not worthy to be compared with the coming glory to be revealed to us. (Romans 8:18).*** *I want to live my life in a way that pleases* ***You****! In* ***Yeshua's*** *holy name and power of* ***His*** *resurrection. Amen*

This truth is not unimportant, but central to the gospel and it cannot be compromised, even if the whole of Christian theology were to oppose it! While there is a recent and encouraging strand of modern Christian scholarship which acknowledges that **Paul** is neither anti-**Jewish** nor anti-**Torah**, very little of this has penetrated popular Christianity. To **Jews** with even a modest amount of **Jewish**

training, **the Torah** is correctly understood as a central and eternal element of **God's** dealing with mankind in general, and with **Jews** in particular: **How blessed are those who reject the advice of the wicked, don't stand in the way of sinners or sit where scoffers sit! Their delight is in ADONAI's Torah; in His Torah they meditate day and night. They are like trees planted by streams – they bear their fruit in season, their leaves never wither, everything they do succeeds (Psalm 1:1-3).** Therefore, the idea that **Christ has brought the Torah to an end** is for them both shocking, unreasonable and unacceptable. Fortunately, the idea is also untrue.

A major error made by all major English versions of the Bible, and by most commentators, is translating the Greek word *telos* as **end**, in the sense of **termination**. The word *telos* is used 42 times in the B'rit Chadashah, and is correctly translated *finish*, *cessation* or *termination* in only 5 instances. In the great majority of cases, it is correctly translated as either **aim, purpose,** or **goal. The Good News Translation** is typical of this error. It reads: **For Christ has brought the Law to an end, so that everyone who believes is put right with God.** Then why is *telos* regularly translated as end or **termination**? Because theology gets in the way of interpretation. Wrong theology that falsely understands **the Torah** as not offering **the righteousness** of **ADONAI** through **faith**; wrong theology that denigrates **YHVH's Torah**, and thereby both the **God** who gave **it** and **the Jewish people** revere **it**.

However, **Messiah** has not brought **the Torah to an end**, nor is **He the termination** of **the Torah** as a way to **righteousness**. **The Torah** continues. **It** is eternal. **God's Torah**, properly understood, is the very teaching which **Yeshua** upholds (see the commentary on **The Life of Christ Dg – The Completion of the Torah**). **It** remains the only way to **righteousness** – although it is the Messiah through whom **the Torah's righteousness** comes. It is true that whoever comes to **Yeshua** for **salvation** ends his self-effort. But this verse doesn't speak of ending anything! It says that the great sweep of **God's** promise in giving **the Torah** as a means of **righteousness** achieves that **goal** and **completion** in the coming of **the Messiah**.[263]

Righteousness that comes from the Torah (10:5): For Moshe writes about the righteousness grounded in the Torah that the person who does these things will attain life through them (Romans 10:5). Paul is writing with Pharisees and legalists in mind, and also remembering **his** own experience as a Pharisee, and **his** conviction, no doubt, is that this road of legalism leads nowhere

(see the commentary on **Galatians Bi – All Who Rely on the Deeds of the Law are Under a Curse**). Furthermore, **Paul** writes that **Abraham** was given a **righteous** standing before **ADONAI** in **faith**, not legalistic observance of **the Torah** (see **Bd – Justification in the TaNaKh**). So, when **Paul** quotes **Moses** by saying that **Jews** who obey the mitzvot **in the Torah shall live by that righteousness (Leviticus 18:5), he** does not mean that **they** would be given eternal life as a result of legalistic works.[264] **He** is applying those words, not to the impossible, hopeless task which people think they can earn a right standing before **Ha'Shem** by their own works, but to the achievement of **the** one **Man** who has fulfilled all the requirements of **the Torah**. Among mankind, only **Messiah** has obeyed **the Torah** perfectly. And so, by virtue of **His** obedience, **He** also won a **righteous** status and eternal life for all those who have **faith/trust/belief** in **Him**.[265]

Righteousness that comes from Faith (10:6-7): Understanding the first word in **10:6, Moreover** (Greek: *de*), is crucial**.** Conjunctions are little words that are easily ignored, but in a closely reasoned argument, they can be of vital importance, even to the point of changing its entire meaning. This is such an instance. The Greek conjunction *de*, used here, can be confusing because it can have any one of three very different meanings.

(1) *And, moreover,* or *furthermore,* implying that what follows, continues the thought already begun. For example, "I love you, *and* I will always love you.

(2) But, *rather, in contrast to,* or *on the contrary,* implying that what follows is different from, and contrasts with the preceding thought. For example, "I love you, but you don't love me."

(3) But, or *but only if,* implying that what follows is not in contrast with the preceding thought, but does limit, condition or modify it in some way. For example, "I love you, but I need you to return my love."

Again, erring for the same reason in **10:4**, namely, deep rooted antisemitism, all major English translations and most commentators translate *de* as **but**, in the sense of *in contrast to*. This makes **10:6-7** *in contrast to* **10:5** instead of continuing, or modifying its thought. Thus, **the righteousness grounded in the Torah** says one thing **(10:5)**, *but, in contrast to it,* **righteousness grounded** in **trusting**, or **faith**, says something else **(10:6-7).** Wrong. This interpretation, like the one in **10:4** speak of bringing **the Torah to an end**, is antisemitic, even if today it

unintentionally is so. It flows out of the Christian theology which mistakenly minimizes the importance of **the Torah**. The main reason **10:6-7** should be seen as explaining **10:5**, and not starting something new, is that the quotation from **Deuteronomy 30:11-14** below (which **Paul** uses to make **his** point, is from **the Torah itself**; the very **Torah** that is wrongly understood to teach legalism), **Paul** quotes from **the Torah** in order to show that **the righteousness grounded in trusting (10:6)** is *exactly the same* as **the righteousness grounded in the Torah (10:5).**[266]

Moreover, the righteousness grounded in trusting says: **Do not say in your heart, "Who will ascend to heaven?" – that is, to bring the Messiah down – or, "Who will descend into sh'ol?" – that is, to bring the Messiah up from the dead (10:6-7).** This is a quote from **Deuteronomy 30** where **Moshe** explains the nearness of **God's righteous** living (see the commentary on **Deuteronomy Fq – Choose Life**). And **Moshe** says that one does not need to go up **to heaven to bring [God's Word] down**, or go down **into sh'ol to bring [God's Word] up**. **The righteousness of God** is **near** and accessible. But the point that **Moses** was making is now applied to **Messiah** by **Paul**. To attain **His** kind of **righteousness**, one does not need to **go up to heaven or down to sh'ol** because **His** kind of **righteousness** is not based on human deeds. In other words, one does not need to initiate the incarnation and **bring Yeshua down** from **heaven**, because that has already been done (see my commentary on **The Life of Christ Aq – The Birth of Jesus**); nor does one need to initiate the resurrection and **bring Messiah up** from **sh'ol**, because that has already been done **(Psalm 16:10; Matthew 12:39-40; John 2:19-22; Ephesians 4:8-9; First Peter 3:18-19)**.[267] Therefore, **Paul** quotes **Deuteronomy** to prove that **the Torah** itself teaches that **righteousness** requires **faith**.