

THE REJECTION OF ISRAEL: GOD'S RIGHT TO SHOW MERCY AND JUSTICE AS HE WILLS ROMANS 09:25–33

Introduction

This passage discusses the question: Why has Israel been rejected by God as His primary mission force to the world (vv. 25-33)?

Romans 09:25–33 The Chosen People, Israel, is Rejected by God

God has identified *the chosen* long ago in prophecy. “Salvation is from the Jews” (John 4:22). Israel was the chosen people of God, chosen to be God’s witnesses to carry the message of salvation to the world (see John 4:22 for the reasons that God chose Israel). However, Israel failed and kept the message to itself and excluded all other peoples. Israel even took the lead in killing God’s Son, Jesus Christ. This is the whole point of these verses, to point out how *the chosen* people of God come from all nations of the earth. This fact is clearly seen even in the Jewish prophets. “The chosen” are identified in six different statements which are irrefutable to the open and honest mind. (See *Israel*, Mat 21:43.)

1. The chosen people of God are from other nations as well as from Israel. The Jewish prophet Hosea predicted this fact. Note the three things Hosea said about the Gentiles. The Gentiles...
 - will be called “God’s people.” They are the very ones who were not called God’s “people” (Hos 2:23).
 - will be called “My loved one.” They are the very ones who were not called “My loved one” (Hos 2:23).
 - were in a place where it was said that they were not God’s people. The Gentiles were in the very place where they were to be called the children of God (Hos 1:10).

Thought 1. History has always proven that the Gentiles are as morally depraved and self-righteous as people can be. But despite all, God in His glorious mercy has thrown open the door of salvation to the Gentiles as well as to the Jews. No matter how self-righteous or morally evil a person has been, God reaches out to that person. Neither the most depraved corruption nor the most humanistic self-righteousness can keep God from forgiving a person if that person truly believes in His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ (v. 33).

Acts 10:43 “All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.”

Rom 1:16 I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.

Rom 10:13 For, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."

Gal 3:26-28 You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For all of you who were baptised into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

1 John 5:1 Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves the father loves his child as well.

2. The chosen are the small remnant of Israel. The great prophet Isaiah predicted this.
 - a. Isaiah predicted that only a few among Israel would truly believe and love God supremely. The nation would be a great people whose numbers would be as the sand of the sea, but only a *remnant* would be saved (v. 27). Note that God would have to fulfil His Word by cutting short His dealings with Israel. That is, so many in Israel would be so sinful, they would be a threat to destroying everyone. Therefore, God would have to cut His work short in dealing with Israel in order to assure a remnant of believers and to fulfil His word to Abraham (see Isa 10:22-23).
 - b. Isaiah also predicted that God would leave a seed, a small remnant of believing descendants, in Israel (Isa 1:9). Note that Israel's wickedness is compared to Sodom and Gomorrah's. Israel has suffered a fate just as terrible as Sodom and Gomorrah, perhaps worse because the nation's sufferings have been the epitome of severity down through the centuries. But note: God has saved a remnant through it all. There are Jews who have trusted God's Son, even Jesus Christ of Nazareth (see Rom 11:27-29).

Rom 11:1, 4 I ask then: Did God reject his people? By no means! I am an Israelite myself, a descendant of Abraham, from the tribe of Benjamin. And what was God's answer to him? "I have reserved for myself seven thousand who have not bowed the knee to Baal."

3. The chosen are the pursuers of righteousness by faith (see *Righteousness*, Rom 1:17). Note the contrast between this point and the next. The most unlikely thing happened.
 - => The Gentiles who have always been so base and self-righteous have all of a sudden turned to God for righteousness, even the righteousness of faith.
 - => The Jews who have always been so God-centred and religious have missed God's righteousness, even the righteousness of faith in Christ.

Mark 7:6 He replied, "Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you hypocrites; as it is written: 'These people honour me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me.'"

Rom 10:3-4 Since they did not know the righteousness that comes from God and sought to establish their own, they did not submit to God's righteousness. Christ is the end of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes.

1 Cor 1:30 It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God — that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption.

2 Cor 5:21 *God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*

Phil 3:9 *And be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ — the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith.*

2 Tim 3:5 *Having a form of godliness but denying its power. Have nothing to do with them.*

4. The chosen are not pursuers of righteousness by the works of the law — as Israel was (v. 31-32). Note that this begins to answer why God had to turn away from Israel as the primary mission force of His grace. Israel was zealous to secure righteousness, but failed because she sought righteousness by the law.

Mat 7:22-23 *“Many will say to me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?’ Then I will tell them plainly, ‘I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!’”*

Rom 3:20 *Therefore no one will be declared righteous in his sight by observing the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of sin.*

Gal 2:16 *Know that a man is not justified by observing the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ. So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by observing the law, because by observing the law no one will be justified.*

Eph 2:8-9 *For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith — and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God — not by works, so that no one can boast.*

Titus 3:4-5 *But when the kindness and love of God our Saviour appeared, he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit.*

5. The chosen are not those who stumble over the Stone, Christ Himself, as Israel has done (see Isa 8:14; 28:16). (see *Jesus Christ, Cornerstone*, Mat 21:42.)

Mat 11:6 *“Blessed is the man who does not fall away on account of me.”*

1 Cor 1:23 *But we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles.*

1 Pet 2:7-8 *Now to you who believe, this stone is precious. But to those who do not believe, “The stone the builders rejected has become the capstone,” and, “A stone that causes men to stumble and a rock that makes them fall.” They stumble because they disobey the message — which is also what they were destined for.*

6. The chosen are the persons who believe in Christ. (See *Believe*, Rom 10:16-17.)

John 3:15 *That everyone who believes in him may have eternal life.*

John 5:24 *"I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life."*

John 11:25 *Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies."*

John 12:46 *"I have come into the world as a light, so that no one who believes in me should stay in darkness."*

John 20:31 *But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.*

Rom 10:9-10 *That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved. ■*

MATHEW 21:42 JESUS CHRIST, HEAD CORNERSTONE

*Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the Scriptures: 'the stone the builders rejected has become the capstone; the Lord has done this, and it is marvellous in our eyes.'" **Mathew 21:42***

Christ is the Head cornerstone (Luke 2:34). This is a quotation from Psa 118:22-23 which was recognized as a Messianic prophecy. The Messiah was to be the Head Cornerstone who was to begin building the Kingdom of God and who was to support all other stones or leaders who came later. The religious leaders standing around Christ would know that He was referring to the Messiah (Isa 28:16; Dan. 2:34; Zee 3:9).

But note the prophecy: the stone is to be rejected at first. It is considered unsuitable, useless for the building, so the builders do not allow the stone to be a part of the building. It is cast aside and treated as undesirable.

However, the great Architect overrules the builders. He raises the stone from the graveyard of rejected stones and exalts it to the position of Head cornerstone, the stone which supports all other stones and which holds the building of God's kingdom together (Phil 2:9-11; Eph 2:20.)

The symbolism of the Head cornerstone says at least two significant things.

1. The cornerstone is the first stone laid. All other stones are placed after it. It is the *pre-eminent* stone in time. So it is with Christ; He is *the first* of God's new movement.

=> Christ is the *Author* of salvation. All others are the readers of the story.

Heb 2:10 *In bringing many sons to glory, it was fitting that God, for whom and through whom everything exists, should make the author of their salvation perfect through suffering.*

=> Christ is the *Source* of eternal salvation, of our faith. All who trust and obey Him are partakers of that Source.

Heb 5:9 *And, once made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him.*

Heb 12:2 *Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.*

=> Christ is the *Alpha and Omega* — *the beginning and the end*. All others come after Him and are in between Him.

Rev 1:8 *“I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, “who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty.”* (see 21:6; 22:13)

=> Christ is the *Forerunner*, *the One who went before us* into the very presence of God. All others enter God's presence after Him.

Heb 6:19-20 *We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure. It enters the inner sanctuary behind the curtain, where Jesus, who went before us, has entered on our behalf. He has become a high priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek.*

2. The cornerstone is the supportive stone. All other stones are placed upon it and held up by it. They all rest upon it. It is the pre-eminent stone in position and power. So it is with Christ; He is the support and power, the Foundation of God's new movement.

=> Christ is the *Head Cornerstone (Capstone)*, the only true foundation upon which man can build. All who are not laid upon Him will crumble.

1 Cor 3:11 *For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ.*

=> Christ is the *Chief Cornerstone* upon which all others are fitly formed together. All who wish to be fitly formed together have to be laid upon Him.

Eph 2:20-22 *Built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.*

=> Christ is the *Living Stone* upon which all others are built. It is upon Him that we are built up into a spiritual house. All others have to be built upon Him if they wish to live and have their spiritual sacrifice accepted by God.

1 Pet 2:4-5 As you come to him, the living Stone — rejected by men but chosen by God and precious to him — you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. □

MATHEW 21:43 ISRAEL, GENTILES, CHURCH — NEW CREATION

*“Therefore I tell you that the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people who will produce its fruit.” **Mathew 21:43***

God shall take away His kingdom and give it to another nation. Christ gave a prophecy that dramatically affects world history: His vineyard or kingdom is going to be taken away from Israel and given to another people.

There are several important facts that need to be understood at this point in order to grasp the significance of the Lord's prophecy.

1. Israel was the nation of people raised up by God to be His witness to the world (John 4:22).

a. Israel bore up the name of God in the world.

Psa 76:1-2 In Judah God is known; his name is great in Israel. His tent is in Salem, his dwelling place in Zion.

b. Israel was given the very words of God, that is, the Word of God, the revelation of God to the world.

Rom 3:1-2 What advantage, then, is there in being a Jew, or what value is there in circumcision? Much in every way! First of all, they have been entrusted with the very words of God.

c. Israel was a greatly privileged people in spiritual things.

Rom 9:4-5 The people of Israel. Theirs is the adoption as sons; theirs the divine glory, the covenants, the receiving of the law, the temple worship and the promises. Theirs are the patriarchs, and from them is traced the human ancestry of Christ, who is God over all, forever praised! Amen.

d. Israel was given the glorious plan of salvation.

John 4:22 “You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews.”

e. Israel was given the glorious privilege of being God's witnesses upon the earth.

Isa 43:10 “You are my witnesses,” declares the Lord, “and my servant whom I have chosen, so that you may know and believe me and understand that I am he. Before me no god was formed, nor will there be one after me.”

2. Israel failed God in its God-given mission and failed God miserably. Therefore, God took His kingdom away from them. As Christ points out in this parable, they “took [God’s] servants, they beat one, killed another, and stoned a third” (v. 35-36). Then they committed the most atrocious crime of history: they rejected and killed God’s very own Son (v. 39). All through its history Israel was unfruitful except for a bright spot here and there. They opposed the reins of God upon their lives, and in the final step of rebellion, they rejected and opposed the gospel of Christ. Therefore, they forfeited their Godly privileges. The Kingdom of God was taken from them and given to another nation.

a. God turned from Israel because they killed His Son.

Mat 21:39, 41 So they took him and threw him out of the vineyard and killed him. “He will bring those wretches to a wretched end,” they replied, “and he will rent the vineyard to other tenants, who will give him his share of the crop at harvest time.”

b. God turned from Israel because they were unfruitful.

Mat 21:43 “Therefore I tell you that the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people who will produce its fruit.”

c. God turned from Israel because they sought after righteousness by law and not by faith.

Rom 9:31-33 But Israel, who pursued a law of righteousness, has not attained it. Why not? Because they pursued it not by faith but as if it were by works. They stumbled over the “stumbling stone.” As it is written: “See, I lay in Zion a stone that causes men to stumble and a rock that makes them fall, and the one who trusts in him will never be put to shame.”

d. God turned from Israel because they would not submit themselves to the righteousness of God.

Rom 10:2-3 For I can testify about them that they are zealous for God, but their zeal is not based on knowledge. Since they did not know the righteousness that comes from God and sought to establish their own, they did not submit to God’s righteousness.

e. God turned from Israel because they did not obey the gospel.

Rom 10:16 But not all the Israelites accepted the good news. For Isaiah says, “Lord, who has believed our message?”

f. God turned from Israel because they were a disobedient and obstinate people.

Rom 10:21 But concerning Israel he says, “All day long I have held out my hands to a disobedient and obstinate people.”

g. God turned from Israel because of unbelief.

Rom 11:20-22 *Granted. But they were broken off because of unbelief, and you stand by faith. Do not be arrogant, but be afraid. For if God did not spare the natural branches, he will not spare you either. Consider therefore the kindness and sternness of God: sternness to those who fell, but kindness to you, provided that you continue in his kindness. Otherwise, you also will be cut off.*

3. Israel as a nation was never saved. Not all citizens believed in God. When God chose Israel to be His people, He did not mean *national salvation*. God knew that not all the citizens of Israel would believe. Not all citizens of any nation believe. What God meant, very simply, was that Israel as a nation was to be the *primary recipient and messenger* of His Kingdom and gospel. Salvation was never a national matter, not a matter of race or heritage. It was always a matter of personal belief. There was never a moment in Israel's history when every Jew believed in the promises of God.

Rom 9:6-8 *It is not as though God's word had failed. For not all who are descended from Israel are Israel. Nor because they are his descendants are they all Abraham's children. On the contrary, "It is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned." In other words, it is not the natural children who are God's children, but it is the children of the promise who are regarded as Abraham's offspring.*

Rom 9:27, 29 *Isaiah cries out concerning Israel: "Though the number of the Israelites be like the sand by the sea, only the remnant will be saved." It is just as Isaiah said previously: "Unless the Lord Almighty had left us descendants, we would have become like Sodom, we would have been like Gomorrah."*

Rom 2:28-29 *A man is not a Jew if he is only one outwardly, nor is circumcision merely outward and physical. No, a man is a Jew if he is one inwardly; and circumcision is circumcision of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the written code. Such a man's praise is not from men, but from God.*

Rom 4:13 *It was not through law that Abraham and his offspring received the promise that he would be heir of the world, but through the righteousness that comes by faith.*

Rom 4:3-8 *What does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness." Now when a man works, his wages are not credited to him as a gift, but as an obligation. However, to the man who does not work but trusts God who justifies the wicked, his faith is credited as righteousness. David says the same thing when he speaks of the blessedness of the man to whom God credits righteousness apart from works: "Blessed are they whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord will never count against him."*

4. Israel did, however, always have a remnant, a small number of genuine believers (Rom 11:1-10; see 9:27-29).

Rom 9:27, 29 *Isaiah cries out concerning Israel: "Though the number of the Israelites be like the sand by the sea, only the remnant will be saved." It is just as Isaiah said previously: "Unless the Lord Almighty had left us descendants, we would have become like Sodom, we would have been like Gomorrah."*

Rom 11:1-5 *I ask then: Did God reject his people? By no means! I am an Israelite myself, a descendant of Abraham, from the tribe of Benjamin. God did not reject his people, whom he foreknew. Don't you know what the Scripture says in the passage about Elijah — how he appealed to God against Israel: "Lord, they have killed your prophets and torn down your altars; I am the only one left, and they are trying to kill me." And what was God's answer to him? "I have reserved for myself seven thousand who have not bowed the knee to Baal." So too, at the present time there is a remnant chosen by grace.*

5. God turned to a new nation and gave His kingdom to them.

Mat 21:43 *"Therefore I tell you that the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people who will produce its fruit."*

Rom 9:25-26 *As he says in Hosea: "I will call them 'my people' who are not my people; and I will call her 'my loved one' who is not my loved one," and, "It will happen that in the very place where it was said to them, 'You are not my people,' they will be called 'sons of the living God.'"*

Rom 9:30-33 *What then shall we say? That the Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, have obtained it, a righteousness that is by faith; but Israel, who pursued a law of righteousness, has not attained it. Why not? Because they pursued it not by faith but as if it were by works. They stumbled over the "stumbling stone." As it is written: "See, I lay in Zion a stone that causes men to stumble and a rock that makes them fall, and the one who trusts in him will never be put to shame."*

Rom 10:20 *And Isaiah boldly says, "I was found by those who did not seek me; I revealed myself to those who did not ask for me."*

Rom 11:30 *Just as you who were at one time disobedient to God have now received mercy as a result of their disobedience.*

6. God's new people or nation was to be a new creation; that is, it was not to be an existing people or nation. Just as God had created Israel to be a new nation through one man, Abraham, so God was to create another new people through one Man, Jesus Christ.

Two things need to be noted about God's new people or nation.

- a. The land or inheritance of this new nation is not of this earth but of heaven. The inheritance is of the spiritual dimension of being; it is heavenly and eternal. It is not of the physical dimension of being; it is not worldly and temporal.
- b. The citizens of this new nation are people from all earthly nations who truly believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. When a person from any nation of the earth believes in Christ, God takes that person and gives him a new birth spiritually. (John 3:3-17; 1 Pet 1:23; 1 John 5:1, 4-5). The person becomes a new creature and a new man (2 Cor 5:17; Eph 4:24; Col. 3:10).

All believers counted together are said to comprise...

- the citizens of the new people or nation (Eph 2:19; 1 Pet 2:9).
 - the family and household of God (Eph 2:19; 5:1, 8; see Rom 8:16-17).
 - a new body of believers (1 Cor 12:12-14; Eph 2:16).
 - a holy temple (Eph 2:21-22).
 - a new race (Eph 4:17).
 - a spiritual house (1 Pet 2:5).
 - a holy priesthood (1 Pet 2:5).
 - a chosen people (1 Pet 2:9).
 - a royal priesthood (1 Pet 2:9).
 - a peculiar people, a people belonging to God (1 Pet 2:9).
 - the people of God (1 Pet 2:10).
 - strangers, aliens and pilgrims on earth (1 Pet 2:11).
7. God is going to restore Israel; that is, He is going to have mercy upon Israel and turn them from ungodliness. Why? That He might have mercy upon all, both Gentile and Jew (Rom 11:32). □

Why did Israel have an incomplete and incorrect knowledge of God? There are three reasons.

1. Israel was ignorant of God's righteousness. They failed to understand...

- God's true nature: His holiness and perfection, and the utter necessity to be perfect in order to be acceptable to Him and given the right to live in His presence.
- Man's true nature: his sin and desperate need for *perfect* righteousness in order to be acceptable to God and given the right to live in God's presence.
- God's love: His love in sending His Son to save man by providing a perfect righteousness for him.

Very simply, Israel was ignorant of God's method of justification, ignorant as to how a man really becomes acceptable to God.

Eph 4:18 *They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts.*

Jer 5:4 *I thought, "These are only the poor; they are foolish, for they do not know the way of the Lord, the requirements of their God."*

Micah 4:12 *But they do not know the thoughts of the Lord; they do not understand his plan, he who gathers them like sheaves to the threshing floor.*

2. Israel went about establishing its own way of righteousness. They sought to make themselves acceptable to God through...

- rituals
- ceremonies
- laws
- works

They sought to save themselves by being as religious as they could. They felt God would never reject them if they did the best they could. Therefore, they drew up every rule and regulation they could to make themselves *religiously good* and acceptable, and they worked and worked to follow the rules and regulations. They sought to build their own way and route to God.

Mark 7:6 *He replied, "Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you hypocrites; as it is written: 'These people honour me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me.'"*

2 Cor 10:12 *We do not dare to classify or compare ourselves with some who commend themselves. When they measure themselves by themselves and compare themselves with themselves, they are not wise.*

Job 9:20 *Even if I were innocent, my mouth would condemn me; if I were blameless, it would pronounce me guilty.*

Prov 20:6 *Many a man claims to have unfailing love, but a faithful man who can find?*

Prov 30:12 *Those who are pure in their own eyes and yet are not cleansed of their filth.*

3. Israel refused to submit themselves to the righteousness of God. Very simply, they refused to accept Jesus Christ, who is God's righteousness.

Thought 1. Note a crucial point. Zeal and sincerity are not enough in seeking God. No person or group of people could be any more zealous or sincere in seeking God than the Jews. But something else is always needed; zeal and sincerity always require one other ingredient: accurate and complete knowledge. Zeal and sincerity by themselves cannot reach a destination. A person can be as zealous and sincere as possible and still be on the wrong road and never reach his destination. To reach his destination, he must know the right road.

1 Tim 2:4-5 Who wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.

II. *Romans 10:04 Jesus Christ, The Righteousness of God*

God's righteousness is Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is the One who puts an end (telos) to man having to seek righteousness through the law. Man no longer has to work and work to be acceptable to God, to work and work knowing full well that he is coming up ever so short of God's glory and demand. Man no longer has to live under the enslaving power of sin, under its guilt and shame and punishment. Man no longer has to live under the weight and pressure of failing and of being ever so unworthy and hopeless, lonely and alienated. Man can now be set free and know full well that he is acceptable to God. Man can now have a heart that swells with assurance and confidence, the perfect knowledge that he is God's and God is his. Man can know that he is accepted as righteous before God. How? Through the righteousness of Jesus Christ. "Christ is the end of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes." This means at least three things.

1. Christ *ended* the law in that He is the object toward which the law pointed. All the ceremonies, sacrifices, offerings and purifications — they all led and pointed toward Christ.

=> The law was the supervisor, the schoolmaster to bring us to Christ.

Gal 3:24-25 So the law was put in charge to lead us to Christ that we might be justified by faith. Now that faith has come, we are no longer under the supervision of the law.

Very simply, the law was never intended to be the way to become righteous and acceptable to God. The law was given to point and lead men to Christ, who is the righteousness of God.

=> The law was but a shadow of the real substance that was to come.

Col 2:17 These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ. (see Heb 9:9)

2. Christ *ended* the law in that He fulfilled and completed the law perfectly. He lived under the law and kept it perfectly. He was sinless, obeying every rule and requirement of the law. By fulfilling the law, Jesus Christ has become...

- the Ideal Man
- the Perfect Man
- the Representative Man

The law finds its perfection in Jesus Christ. He is the very embodiment of all that God wants man to be. Therefore, man no longer looks to the law for his righteousness. Man no longer looks to the law as the way to reach God and to secure God's favour. Man now looks to Jesus Christ and approaches God through Jesus Christ.

2 Cor 5:21 *God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*

1 Pet 1:18-19 *For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.*

3. Christ *ended* the law in that he destroyed the penalty and condemnation of the law against man. Christ took the sin of man upon Himself and bore the condemnation for man. Christ died for man; He bore the execution of being separated from God for man.

Eph 2:15 *By abolishing in his flesh the law with its commandments and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new man out of the two, thus making peace.*

Col 2:14 *Having cancelled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; he took it away, nailing it to the cross.*

However, note a critical point: Christ ends the law for righteousness *only to those who believe*. A man is justified, that is, counted righteous by God, only if he truly believes that Jesus Christ is the righteousness of God. (See Rom. 5:1; Law, Mt. 5:17. Also see Rom. 3:21-22; 8:2-4; *Christ Fulfills the Law*, Rom 8:3.)

Thought 1. Jesus Christ is the righteousness of God; He is the very embodiment of God's righteousness.

Rom 10:4 *Christ is the end of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes.*

1 Cor 1:30 *It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God – that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption.*

Phil 3:9 *And be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ – the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith.*

III. *Romans 10:05 God's Righteousness*

God's righteousness is opposed to man's righteousness, that is, opposed to man's way for reaching God. Man tries to reach God by law and works, by simply doing the very best he can. However, there is a terrible flaw in this approach. Moses was the first to point out the flaw: the man who lives by the law must keep the law, and keep it perfectly (see Lev. 18:5).

Rom 10:5 *Moses describes in this way the righteousness that is by the law: "The man who does these things will live by them."*

Gal 3:10 *All who rely on observing the law are under a curse, for it is written: "Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the Book of the Law."*

Gal 3:12 *The law is not based on faith; on the contrary, "The man who does these things will live by them."*

The point is this. There are only two ways to become righteous. A person can become righteous...

- by keeping the law perfectly, by never sinning in act, word or thought. If a person could keep the law perfectly — never sinning even once — he could be declared righteous.
- by trusting in the righteousness of a Person who has lived a sinless life and who stands before us as the Ideal Man, the Ideal Man who can represent us before God. (See *Justification*, Rom 5:1.) ■