

The Four-fold Folly of Israel¹

Rom. 10:1-3

Introduction:

- A. A reading of the Bible reveals the foolishness of ancient Israel.
 - 1. From the golden calf of Aaron to the crucifixion of Jesus.
 - 2. Their foolishness is much like human nature today.
- B. Paul sums up the folly of Israel in four points:

Discussion:

I. Their Misguided Zeal (“zeal ... not according to knowledge”)

- A. This was demonstrated by two things:
 - 1. They rejected Christ, the apostles and their preaching.
 - 2. They persecuted the church (cf. Stephen; Acts 8:1-5)
- B. There are other examples of misguided zeal.
 - 1. Saul of Tarsus (Phil. 3:6; Acts 22:1-5; 1 Tim. 1:13)
 - 2. Judaizing Teachers (Gal. 4:17; cf. Acts 15:1)
 - 3. Cornelius (Acts 10:26).
 - 4. Peter (Matt. 17:4-5; 26:31-33).
- C. Zeal with knowledge is commanded (Gal. 4:18).
- D. Zeal without knowledge is dangerous (Hos. 4:6; Ill. Car with no steering nor brakes)

II. Their Miserable Ignorance (“ignorant of God’s righteousness”)

- A. God’s righteousness revealed in gospel – they rejected it. (Rom. 1:16-17).
- B. Ignorance is not bliss – one of greatest problems today.
 - 1. Caused Christ to be crucified (Acts 3:12-17; 1 Cor. 2:7-8).
 - 2. Causes to people to ignore God and His word (cf. Acts 17:23).
 - 3. Caused early Christians to suffer persecution (1 Tim. 1:13).
- C. Multitudes just as ignorant today!

III. Their Misdirected Goal (“going about to establish their own righteousness”)

- A. This is a natural results of ignorance of God’s righteousness.
 - 1. Man is naturally religious.
 - 2. If he does not know God’s way will establish his own (cf. Acts 17:23).
- B. Jews sought to establish own righteousness in several ways:
 - 1. Outward show (Matt. 23:5).
 - 2. Called attention to own goodness and faults of others (Lk. 18:9).
 - 3. Exalted own ways above God’s (Matt. 15:1-3).
 - 4. Making good deeds are known (Matt. 6:1-7).

IV. Their Misspent Lives (“not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God”)

- A. Those bent on establishing own righteousness will not submit to righteousness of God.
- B. O.T. shows stubbornness and rebellion of the Jews (cf. 1 Sam. 15:23).
- C. We submit by obeying the gospel (Psa. 119:117; Acts 10:34-35; Rom. 1:16-17; 2 Thess. 1:7-9)

Conclusion:

- A. How can we avoid the folly of Israel?
 - 1. An open heart and mind.
 - 2. Diligent study of God’s word.
- B. Will you submit right now to righteousness of God?

¹ Adapted from a sermon by Gary Kerr on the “Folly of Israel”