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## **The Stumbling Stone**

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**Romans 9:19-33** <sup>19</sup>One of you will say to me, “Then why does God still find fault? For who can resist His will?” <sup>20</sup>But who are you, O man, to talk back to God? Shall what is formed say to Him who formed it, “Why did You make me like this?” <sup>21</sup>Does not the potter have the right to make from the same lump of clay one vessel for special occasions and another for common use? <sup>22</sup>What if God, intending to show His wrath and make His power known, bore with great patience the vessels of His wrath, prepared for destruction? <sup>23</sup>What if He did this to make the riches of His glory known to the vessels of His mercy, whom He prepared in advance for glory—<sup>24</sup>including us, whom He has called not only from the Jews, but also from the Gentiles? <sup>25</sup>As He says in Hosea: “I will call them ‘My People’ who are not My people, and I will call her ‘My Beloved’ who is not My beloved,” <sup>26</sup>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.’” <sup>27</sup>Isaiah cries out concerning Israel: “Though the number of the Israelites is like the sand of the sea, only the remnant will be saved. <sup>28</sup>For the Lord will carry out His sentence on the earth thoroughly and decisively.” <sup>29</sup>It is just as Isaiah foretold: “Unless the Lord of Hosts had left us descendants, we would have become like Sodom, we would have resembled Gomorrah.” <sup>30</sup>What then will we say? That the Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, have obtained it, a righteousness that is by faith; <sup>31</sup>but Israel, who pursued a law of righteousness, has not attained it. <sup>32</sup>Why not? Because their pursuit was not by faith, but as if it were by works. They stumbled over the stumbling stone, <sup>33</sup>as it is written: “See, I lay in Zion a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense; and the one who believes in Him will never be put to shame.” (BSB)

### **I. Here are the details of this passage.**

- A.** God’s sovereignty, His holiness and His love seem **irreconcilable**. V. 19-24
- B.** There is Old Testament prophecy regarding the **adoption** of Gentiles as children of God. V. 25-26
- C.** There is prophecy that a **remnant** of Israel will be saved. V. 27-29
- D.** **Faith** is the key to salvation, not genealogy, or works. V. 30-31a
- E.** Jesus Christ is the only way to have a **relationship** with God. V. 31b-32

### **II. How can we apply these truths?**

- A.** We must learn how to **answer** the primary question of how can a loving God punish people for their sins.
  - 1.** God has given us **free will**. **Joshua 24:14-15** Now, therefore, fear the LORD and serve Him in sincerity and truth; cast aside the gods your fathers served beyond the Euphrates and in Egypt, and serve the LORD. But if it is displeasing in your sight to serve the LORD, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your fathers served beyond the Euphrates, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living. As for me and my house, we will serve the LORD!” (BSB)
  - 2.** He is a **holy** God.
  - 3.** He is a **sovereign** God.
  - 4.** He has provided a way of salvation for **everyone**.
  - 5.** Mankind’s obsession with **independence** is what keeps him from receiving it.
- B.** We must **live** by faith and not by sight.
- C.** We must return to an **emphasis** on Jesus Christ and not church attendance.