

Rejection

by Wayne Goff

*“But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, ‘LORD, who has **believed** our report?’” (Rom. 10:16; Is. 53:1). Isaiah understood **rejection!** As God’s prophet, not everybody believed what Isaiah had to say! In Paul’s day, he understood Isaiah’s **rejection.** In my day, I understand their **rejection!** Perhaps prophets and preachers shouldn’t take it *personally*, but we do.*

When Samuel complained to the Lord that they had **rejected him** as their judge, Jehovah said to him: *“..for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them”* (1 Sam. 8:7). Did that make Samuel feel better? I doubt it. He still took the rejection *personally*, and when he realized that the people were snubbing God instead, that would have been even worse! However, there is a lesson here for both preacher and his audience. When you reject a sound sermon, then you are rejecting God, not the preacher.

So what was Isaiah to do when Israel rejected his message? Keep on preaching it! Paul wrote in Romans 10:17, *“So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.”* **So** is an adverb of *manner* -- *in this manner* faith comes! The one who rejects it is in trouble -- not the messenger, not the message, and certainly not God!

God does not intend to save the rebellious, stubborn, hard-hearted people. He intends to save those whose honest, sincere hearts are affected by the Gospel! *“For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe”* (1 Cor. 1:21). If that doesn’t work, then there is not much left to be done.

Romans 10:18 states further that the Gospel has been sent to the whole world. Everyone has the opportunity to believe and be saved, or not believe and be lost. It’s a sobering thought, isn’t it?

Robertson’s **Word Pictures in the New Testament** says: *“They heard, but they did not heed. Some disbelieve now (Rom. 3:3) as they did then”* (IV:390). Nothing has changed in the last three thousand years! Rejection of God’s Word is more prevalent than acceptance -- even by those who claim to be God’s people!

God tried to provoke Israel to jealousy in the saving of the Gentiles, and perhaps this caused a few to *reconsider* the message (Rom. 10:19-21). But by and large Israel was a *“disobedient and gainsaying people”* (Rom. 10:21). Shame on them, and on us, if we reject the whole counsel of God!

283901