

Romans 10:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is,
that they might be saved.

Analysis

Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved—Paul's *eudokia* (εὐδοκία, "good pleasure, heart's desire") and *deēsis* (δέησις, "petition, supplication") express both emotional longing and intercessory prayer for his kinsmen's salvation. Despite Israel's rejection of Christ (9:30-33), Paul models Christ-like love for enemies and persistent intercession for the lost. This verse introduces Romans 10's exploration of Israel's stumbling: they pursued righteousness but missed Christ, the goal and fulfillment of the law.

The apostle's pastoral heart mirrors Moses' willingness to be blotted out for Israel (Ex 32:32) and anticipates his statement in Romans 11:14 that he magnifies his ministry to provoke Israel to jealousy. Paul's theology never becomes abstract—doctrine fuels doxology and intercession. His prayer demonstrates that divine sovereignty (chapter 9) does not nullify human responsibility to pray and evangelize.

Historical Context

Paul wrote Romans around AD 57 from Corinth, addressing a mixed congregation of Jewish and Gentile believers. The Jerusalem temple still stood, and many Jews continued in unbelief despite witnessing the explosive growth of the church. Paul's own missionary experience included regular synagogue rejection (Acts 13:46; 18:6; 28:25-28), yet he maintained love for his people and hope for their future restoration (Rom 11:25-27).

Related Passages

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. How does Paul's prayer for those who rejected him challenge your attitude toward people who oppose the gospel?
2. What does it mean to have both doctrinal conviction about God's sovereignty and genuine emotional longing for the lost?
3. For whom do you need to pray persistently with *eudokia* (heart's desire), not merely duty?

Interlinear Text

Ἀδελφοί ἡ μὲν εὐδοκία τῆς ἐμῆς καρδίας καὶ ἡ
Brethren G3588 **that** G3303 **desire** G2107 **my** G1699 **heart's** G2588 **and** G3588
G80 G3303 G2107 G1699 G2588 G2532
δέησις ἡ πρὸς τὸν θεὸν ὑπὲρ τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ ἐστὶν εἰς
prayer G3588 **to** G4314 **God** G2316 **for** G5228 **Israel** G2474 **is** G2076 G1519
G1162 G4314 G2316 G5228 G2474 G2076
σωτηρίαν
they might be saved
G4991

Additional Cross-References

John 5:34 (Salvation): But I receive not testimony from man: but these things I say, that ye might be saved.