

Romans 10:21

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But to Israel he saith, All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people.

Analysis

But to Israel he saith, All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people—The tragic conclusion: Pros de ton Israēl legei, Holēn tēn hēmeran exepetasa tas cheiras mou pros laon apeithonta kai antilegonta (πρὸς δὲ τὸν Ἰσραὴλ λέγει, ὅλην τὴν ἡμέραν ἐξεπέτασα τὰς χεῖράς μου πρὸς λαὸν ἀπειθοῦντα καὶ ἀντιλέγοντα). Paul continues quoting Isaiah 65:2, picturing God with outstretched hands—a posture of appeal, invitation, and longing. Holēn tēn hēmeran (ὅλην τὴν ἡμέραν, "all day long") emphasizes persistent patience despite persistent rejection.

Apeithonta (ἀπειθοῦντα, "disobedient, unwilling to be persuaded") and antilegonta (ἀντιλέγοντα, "contradicting, opposing, gainsaying") describe Israel's double sin: passive disobedience and active opposition. God's hands remain stretched out—He does not withdraw His offer—but Israel continually refuses. This sets up Romans 11's question: Has God rejected His people? Answer: No—a remnant believes (11:1-6), and future restoration is promised (11:25-27). But chapter 10 ends on Israel's tragic stubbornness, broken only by sovereign grace.

Historical Context

Isaiah 65:2-7 indicted Judah's syncretism, idolatry, and covenant rebellion leading to Babylonian exile (586 BC). Jesus wept over Jerusalem (Luke 19:41-44) and pronounced judgment (Matt 23:37-39; 24:1-2). Stephen's martyrdom speech (Acts 7) chronicles Israel's history of rejecting God's messengers. In AD 70, Rome

destroyed Jerusalem and the temple—the ultimate "stretching out hands" to a disobedient people. Yet the gospel remains "to the Jew first" (Rom 1:16), and God's promises to Israel are irrevocable (Rom 11:29).

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How do you respond to God's outstretched hands—with obedience or gainsaying?
2. What does God's persistent appeal to disobedient Israel reveal about His character and patience?
3. How should this verse shape prayer for unbelieving Israel and confidence in God's plan for their future salvation?

Interlinear Text

πρὸς	δὲ	τὸν	Ἰσραὴλ	λέγει	Ὅλην	τὴν	ἡμέραν
to	But	G3588	Israel	he saith	All	G3588	day long
G4314	G1161		G2474	G3004	G3650		G2250
ἐξέπεντα	τὰς	χεῖρας	μου	πρὸς	λαὸν	ἀπειθοῦντα	
I have stretched forth	G3588	hands	my	to	people	a disobedient	
G1600		G5495	G3450	G4314	G2992	G544	
καὶ	ἀντιλέγοντα						
and	gainsaying						
G2532	G483						

Additional Cross-References

Proverbs 1:24 (Parallel theme): Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded;

Jeremiah 35:15 (Parallel theme): I have sent also unto you all my servants the prophets, rising up early and sending them, saying, Return ye now every man from his evil way, and amend your doings, and go not after other gods to serve them, and ye shall dwell in the land which I have given to you and to your fathers: but ye have not inclined your ear, nor hearkened unto me.

Nehemiah 9:26 (Parallel theme): Nevertheless they were disobedient, and rebelled against thee, and cast thy law behind their backs, and slew thy prophets which testified against them to turn them to thee, and they wrought great provocations.

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