

Romans 3:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the way of peace have they not known:

Analysis

And the way of peace have they not known. From Isaiah 59:8, *kai hodon eirēnēs ouk egnōsan* (καὶ ὁδὸν εἰρήνης οὐκ ἔγνωσαν, "and the way of peace they have not known"). *Eirēnē* (εἰρήνη, translating Hebrew *shalom*) encompasses wholeness, harmony, right relationships—with God, others, creation, and self.

Fallen humanity doesn't know—*ginōskō* (γινώσκω), experiential knowledge, not mere awareness—the path to peace. We are cosmic orphans, having rebelled against the Father of peace (Philippians 4:9). Every human attempt at peace through politics, philosophy, or religion fails because it doesn't address sin's root. Only Christ is our peace (Ephesians 2:14), reconciling us to God and thus making possible reconciliation with others. Apart from Him, we wander in enmity and strife.

Historical Context

Israel longed for messianic peace—the lion lying with the lamb, swords beaten into plowshares. Yet Isaiah condemned Israel for not knowing peace's path because they abandoned justice and righteousness. Paul applies this to all: Jew and Gentile alike are alienated from God's *shalom*.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How do you pursue false peace through conflict avoidance, compromise, or external solutions rather than gospel reconciliation?
2. What would it mean to truly "know" the way of peace that only Christ provides?
3. How does recognizing your inability to find peace drive you to the One who is our peace?

Interlinear Text

καὶ ὁδὸν εἰρήνης οὐκ ἔγνωσαν
And the way of peace they not have
G2532 G3598 G1515 G3756 G1097

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 59:8 (Peace): The way of peace they know not; and there is no judgment in their goings: they have made them crooked paths: whosoever goeth therein shall not know peace.

Romans 5:1 (Peace): Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

Luke 1:79 (Peace): To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.