The Four-fold Folly of Israel
Rom. 10:1-3

Introduction:
A. A reading of the Bible reveals the foolishness of ancient Israel.
   1. From the golden calf of Aaron to the crucifixion of Jesus.
   2. Their foolishness is much like human nature today.
B. Paul sums up the folly of Israel in four points:

Discussion:
I. Their Misguided Zeal (“zeal ... not according to knowledge”)
A. This was demonstrated by two things:
   1. They rejected Christ, the apostles and their preaching.
   2. They persecuted the church (cf. Stephen; Acts 8:1-5)
B. There are other examples of misguided zeal.
   1. Saul of Tarsus (Phil. 3:6; Acts 22:1-5; 1 Tim. 1:13)
   2. Judaizing Teachers (Gal. 4:17; cf. Acts 15:1)
   4. Peter (Matt. 17:4-5; 26:31-33).
C. Zeal with knowledge is commanded (Gal. 4:18).
D. Zeal without knowledge is dangerous (Hos. 4:6; Ill. Car with no steering nor brakes)

II. Their Miserable Ignorance (“ignorant of God’s righteousness”)
A. God’s righteousness revealed in gospel – they rejected it. (Rom. 1:16-17).
B. Ignorance is not bliss – one of greatest problems today.
   1. Caused Christ to be crucified (Acts 3:12-17; 1 Cor. 2:7-8).
   2. Causes to people to ignore God and His word (cf. Acts 17:23).
   3. Caused early Christians to suffer persecution (1 Tim. 1:13).
C. Multitudes just as ignorant today!

III. Their Misdirected Goal (“going about to establish their own righteousness”)
A. This is a natural results of ignorance of God’s righteousness.
   1. Man is naturally religious.
   2. If he does not know God’s way will establish his own (cf. Acts 17:23).
B. Jews sought to establish own righteousness in several ways:
   1. Outward show (Matt. 23:5).
   2. Called attention to own goodness and faults of others (Lk. 18:9).
   3. Exalted own ways above God’s (Matt. 15:1-3).
   4. Making good deeds are known (Matt. 6:1-7).

IV. Their Misspent Lives (“not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God”)
A. Those bent on establishing own righteousness will not submit to righteousness of God.
B. O.T. shows stubbornness and rebellion of the Jews (cf. 1 Sam. 15:23).
C. We submit by obeying the gospel (Psa. 119:117; Acts 10:34-35; Rom. 1:16-17; 2 Thess. 1:7-9)

Conclusion:
A. How can we avoid the folly of Israel?
   1. An open heart and mind.
   2. Diligent study of God’s word.
B. Will you submit right now to righteousness of God?

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1 Adapted from a sermon by Gary Kerr on the “Folly of Israel”