

An Outline Study Of



# **Romans**



by  
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## INTRODUCTION

The Apostle Paul wrote thirteen of the twenty-seven documents of the New Testament. Romans is the first of them in our Bibles, but was not the first one written. He wrote Romans rather late in his career and it is the product of his mature thought. We know nothing about him outside of the New Testament, but quite a lot from the New Testament. He was from the city of Tarsus in Cilicia, a region in what is today southeastern Turkey (Acts 22:3). Tarsus was an important city in the eastern Roman Empire and was well known for its university. He was a Hebrew (Aramaic) speaker as well as a fluent speaker of Greek. Though he was born in Cilicia, he was "brought up" in Jerusalem (Acts 22:3). Paul's mentor was Gamaliel the younger. Gamaliel the elder was a greatly respected Rabbi and his son was as greatly respected as his father. The Jews today hold both in high esteem (Acts 22:3, 5:33-40). Paul's Jewish credentials are listed in Galatians 1:13-14, Philippians 3:4-6. He was present at the stoning of Stephen and gave his assent. His conversion was abrupt and dramatic (Acts 9:1-9) and he tells about his commission to take the Gospel to the Gentiles (Acts 22:21). He summarized his ministry of more than twenty years in Romans in 15:19.

Romans is in the form of an epistle. We some times call them letters, but letters are a modern style of writing. An epistle begins with the name of the sender, followed by a

greeting to the recipients and the reason for writing. Then the burden of the message is given. This epistle of Paul's is a profound treatise. Here he details his message of salvation. In some ways it is the key to the understanding of the whole of the Bible. Master this "book" and you will not go wrong in understanding the rest of the New Testament. It is really not so difficult to understand because it is so systematic. Seven of Paul's epistles were written to churches to address problems, one was a thank you note and four were sent to individuals. Romans was not sent to a church, but to all the saints in Rome (ch 1:7) where there were a number of small groups of believers. There were Jewish groups who spoke "Hebrew," meaning Aramaic, and others who spoke Greek. There were some of an upper class, some of a lower class and there were the slaves. The Gospel advanced rapidly among the slaves because it gave them hope.

Paul wrote Romans when he came to "Greece" (Acts 20:1-3). He stayed at Corinth for three months collecting offerings to be sent to Jerusalem to relieve the poverty of the poor believers there. They had been rejected from the synagogues and economically boycotted. He did go to Jerusalem, but sent his epistle to Rome by Phoebe. His plan was to go from Jerusalem to Rome and from Rome to Spain, the "regions beyond."

The purpose of this letter was to introduce himself and his message because most of them did not know him, but he did have many friends who had moved to Rome as we see in chapter 16. He explained that because of God's grace to him he felt indebted to carry the message to all the Gentiles, Greek and non-Greek, the philosopher and the superstitious. He was not ashamed of the "offense of the cross" because it was the revelation and power of God.

# CHAPTER 1: 1-17

## **Paul introduces himself and his message**

Paul begins his epistle by introducing himself as a slave of Jesus Christ. His readers would know exactly what he meant by this because the whole economy of the Roman Empire was built on slavery. He meant he was in complete submission to Jesus. He was also a "called" apostle of Jesus Christ. The word apostle means one sent, a personal representative of the sender whether of an individual or a government. He was a called (summoned - Wuiest) apostle by Jesus to represent Him, the Gospel was his calling. His message is "the Gospel of God" long promised by the prophets. He quotes from the Old Testament forty times in these sixteen chapters. Jesus came (not was made) from the line of David (his humanity) and was declared the Son of God (his deity) by His resurrection from the dead. He praised the Roman saints for their widely known faith and expressed his desire to come to Rome.

The heart of his Gospel message is stated in verses sixteen and seventeen. He was not ashamed of this Gospel. For the unbelieving Jews, this message was about one who was cursed. For the Gentiles he was a shamed criminal, but for all who believe, the message itself is the power of God. The result is "the just shall live by faith!" This phrase is found four times in the scriptures. The prophet Habakkuk expresses the principle of faith in chapter 2 verse 4. Three times this verse is quoted in the New Testament, (Romans 1;17, Galatians 3:11, Hebrews 10:38). In Romans the principle of faith is The JUST shall live by faith: in Galatians the principle is "The just SHALL live by faith," and in Hebrews the principle is "BY FAITH the just shall live."

# PART ONE

## CONDEMNATION

### CHAPTER 1:18-3:20

#### **Sin's downward path chapter 1:18-32**

In the nineteenth psalm David sang "The heavens declare the glory of God" while his contemporaries in other nations were finding gods in the stars. Paul wrote in verse eighteen that "the judgment of God is revealed from heaven," and in verse nineteen "that which may be known of God (apart from revelation) is manifest to them for God has showed it to them." Indeed, many of the heathen understood the power, majesty and even the providence of God. The Stoic philosopher Epictetus said in his discourse on the nature of God and man, "O thou that understandest not thine own nature and liest under the wrath of God!"

The scripture is clear that mankind once had a knowledge of God, but had turned away from Him and are "without excuse." They became idolaters and corrupted the truth they knew. Then God gave them up to their own ways. The worst punishment God can give is to let one go his own way to the consequences of sin. One such result was "vile affections." "Women did change the natural use into that which is against nature" (lesbianism). "Men burned in their lust one to another" (gays). There were, and are, consequences of sin. The list is long in (verses 29-32). They knew better, but they didn't care, nor do they now. The immoral heathen "lies under the wrath of God." This is the sad story of sin's downward path.

## **The Moral Man chapter 2:1-16**

Not everyone is so immoral or wicked as Paul charges heathen society. Many people have high moral standards. They are honest, kind, helpful and are the kind of neighbor that one would like to have. They would look down in disgust at those described in chapter one. How does God judge them? The standard of God's judgment is the same for both. Paul charges the moral man with doing "the same things" not the same thing (the same deed), but "the same things" (sinful deeds). The principles of God's judgment are: TRUTH (vs:2); GOODNESS (vs:4); RIGHTEOUSNESS (vs:5); FAIRNESS (vs:6); and THE GOSPEL (vs:16).

There is a principle of Truth. The philosophy of today is "all things are relative." Einstein answered this well. He said if all things are relative to everything else then nothing is relative to anything. In order to have something relative there must be a constant to be relative to. In his special theory of relativity the constant is the speed of light. In God's judgment the constant is Truth.

The second principle is goodness. "O taste and see that the Lord is good" (Psalm 34:8). "He makes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the just and the unjust" (Matthew 5:45). God is good to all, even to those who hate Him! His goodness should lead all to repentance. Anything less is ingratitude.

The third principle is righteous judgment. "The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether" (Psalm 19:9). Everything He does is right. What a contrast to the fickleness of pagan gods and human judgment!

The fourth principle is fairness. God is fair. "He accepts no man's person" to pervert His judgment (Galatians 2:6). All are judged "according to his deeds." Is that what we want?

The fifth principle is the Gospel. Judged by any of the first four principles all mankind is guilty before God. Only in the Gospel is there hope!

There are four ways God judges mankind. The first is through the choices made. Good choices bring good consequences and bad choices bring bad consequences. This is God's retributive judgment. The results are appropriate to the choice (verses 7-9).

The second way is in one's conscience. Everyone knows what is wrong and what is right (verse 15). A good conscience is at peace. An accusing conscience should bring repentance.

The third way is in society. "Be sure your sin will find you out" (Numbers 32:23)! There is nothing that can be hidden. Every deed will sooner or later come to be known. There is no successful cover-up, whether by a private person or a president.

If none of these ways of correction is effective the fourth way is unavoidable. When men face God it is too late for repentance. The Moral Man also "lies under the judgment of God."

### **The Religious Man- chapter 2-17-3:20**

The Jews were a different people and only Judaism was worthy to be called a religion. They were chosen by God to be a nation different from all other nations (psalm 33:12). He gave them the Law (Torah) and that made them different. They had the oracles of God (ch 3:2) and the service of God ( ch 9:4). They were and are a moral people. But they became arrogant and boasted their superiority (vs 17-20). They boasted of the Law, but were guilty of breaking the Law (vs 23-25 & Isa.52:5). They rested in the Law, but the Law was not for rest. The Law was for doing. Rites are not righteousness. Circumcision, for example, was the sign of the

covenant. It was an obligation, not an accomplishment. Jewishness is not righteousness.

Having said this Paul acknowledges the advantage of Jewishness. As a nation they have a special relationship with God. They have the Word of God. They know the standard of His holiness. They have a godly heritage. Even so, they as well as the Gentiles need God's grace. But many did not believe. Does this affect the faithfulness of God? God forbid! God is faithful-vs 3-4. But if our unrighteousness by contrast shows His righteousness, is He unjust to punish? God forbid! He is the righteous judge of all. But if our sin brings God's abounding Truth, let us do evil that good may come? God's judgment on such is just. Thus the Jews also "lie under the judgment of God." There follows in verses 9-19 seven quotations from the Old Testament concerning Israel showing that they too are sinners. Therefor the Law (Torah) does not justify. Rather it showed the sinfulness of all.



# PART TWO

# JUSTIFICATION

## CHAPTER 3:21-5:21

### **Justification is by faith- chapter 3:21-31**

The doctrine of universal sin is the necessary first teaching of the Gospel. Verse 20 of this chapter quotes David in Psalm 143:2: "There shall no flesh be justified in His sight." Having made this point Paul now turns to how one may be "justified in His sight." There are seven words in this section that must be understood to follow Paul in his Gospel message. The first of these is **righteousness**. The "righteousness of God" does not refer to the righteousness of His person, but to the righteousness He bestows on all of those who come to Him in faith and is wholly unearned. It is a position of acceptance by God. The second word is **faith**. Faith is the belief in and commitment to the object of faith, Jesus Christ. It is only by faith in Him that this status of righteousness is bestowed. The third word is **justified**. In Paul's day the word justified was a legal term that was equivalent to our word acquitted. Justified is an act of God acquitting one of the guilt of sin and is received by faith. The fourth word is **grace**. We are justified freely, apart from the Law or any kind of work or effort on our part. The fifth word is **redemption**. Redemption means to retrieve, to recover, to free. Usually, as here, it entails a cost. The sixth word is **propitiation**. This is an unfamiliar, but very important term. It has a variety of uses in the New Testament, but the basic meaning is to bring God and man together. Sometimes it is translated as atonement. The seventh word is **remission**. In this passage the word translated remission means overlooking, or not considering our past sins. So God

by His grace freely bestows righteousness on all who have faith in Jesus, apart from works, because of Jesus' atoning sacrifice. We are redeemed from sin, our former sins not being considered. Thus God can be just and justify the sinner who has faith in Jesus.

### **The purpose of the Law**

If one is justified and in the state of righteousness by faith alone apart from the Law, then why was the Law given? The Law reveals God's nature and holiness showing the depravity of heathen gods and all who serve them. The work of the Law convicts men of sin (ch 2:13, 3:19). It is a standard that shows how far short of the standard mankind has come (ch 3:23).

### **This Blessedness-chapter 4:1-12**

The doctrine of justification by faith alone and its attendant state of righteousness before God is the very essence of the Christian Gospel. Abraham is here given as an example of this truth and its effects. After four thousand years he is universally revered. We read that he believed God (vs 3) and that he is the father of all they that believe (vs 11). None of Abraham's just works are recorded at this point and they were many. He was the head of a large clan that he led on a long migration up the Euphrates river valley to what is now Turkey, then south to Canaan. He had a successful military campaign; he interceded with God for Sodom and many other works. These are later mentioned as the works of **faith**. They resulted from his faith and show the greatness of his faith. Paul defines justification as being apart from works. It is apart from ordinances (circumcision, baptism) and apart from the Law. It is wholly and solely by God's grace alone. This is established by the facts that Abraham was justified **before** he was

circumcised and he lived four hundred years before the Law was given.

In the King James Version there are three words that translate the same Greek word: counted, reckoned and imputed. In other versions a single word is used, accounted or credited. This Greek word can be rightly translated by any of these words. For simplicity, the word credited is probably clearer. Paul chose a word from business. When you deposit a check into your account at a bank it is credited to your account. If someone were to deposit money into your account it would be credited to your account. This is what God does when a sinner repents and believes the Gospel. He credits the righteousness of God to the sinner's account and it is wholly of grace. In verse seven we see what is not credited to the sinner's account; iniquity and sin. Circumcision was a sign of God's covenant with Abraham. Baptism is a sign of the New Covenant for all "who walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham" ( vs 12). Truly this is a state of "blessedness."

### **The Strong In Faith - chapter 4:14-26**

God made a unilateral covenant with Abraham (Gen 12:1-3, 15:1-21 and 17:1-8). The only part Abraham had was to accept it by faith (Gen 15:6). This was 400 years before the Law was given to Israel. There are great differences between these two covenants. The Abrahamic covenant was unilateral. Abraham received it by faith alone. The Law was bilateral. Israel was commanded to keep it. Abraham's blessing was to be extended to the Gentiles; to "all the families of the earth" (Gen 12:7). The Law was given to Israel alone. The Law gave no promise, but a reward for keeping it (Deut. 32:46-47). The Law demanded righteousness, which no one had (ch 3:10), but faith receives "the gift of righteousness" (ch

5:17). Abraham was "strong in faith." All this was not written for Abraham's sake only, but for us also (vs 23-24).

### **The Justified Life - chapter 5:1-11**

Being justified by faith brings many very real results in our lives. The first mentioned is **peace**, the peace that God gives. We are reconciled to God (2 Cor 5:20) and are no longer rebels against Him. We enjoy the blessings of His **grace** and have **access** into His presence. By His grace we have a **standing** before Him. We rejoice in hope, glory (boast) in tribulations, learn patience, gain experience and have God's love within. All of this we receive by faith, apart from works.

### **The Assurance Of Justification**

All who are justified by faith are saved from the wrath of God by the death of Jesus. This is attested by several facts. When we were sinners, God loved us. When we were helpless, Christ died for us. Now we are justified by His blood, by how much more surely are we saved! When we were His enemies, He reconciled us. When He was rejected, He loved us. By how much more are we saved by "the power of His endless life" (Heb. 7;16)! Five times in this chapter we read the phrase "much more" showing us that all these blessings of justification are more than sufficient to save and keep us.

### **The Two Adams - chapter 5:12-21**

"The first man Adam became a living soul, the last Adam became a life-giving spirit" (I Corinthians 15:45). As a result of Adam's sin he and all his descendants became sinners. They are sinners by nature and sinners by choice. This is readily apparent. As a result of Christ's obedience

"many are made righteous." They are made righteous by the gift of **grace** received by faith.

By Adam's sin "sin entered the world" and the result of sin is death. Death is physical, moral and spiritual. When Adam sinned he died morally and spiritually and lost contact with God. No more did God come to walk with him "in the cool of the day." He lived physically for many more years, but then he died physically.

In contrast, by the "obedience of one" (Christ), the gift of life is given to all the justified. This gift of life is eternal, but it is not only for the future beyond here. It is also for "reigning in life" here and now! The provisions for reigning in life are always "much more!"

# PART THREE

## CHAPTERS SIX, SEVEN & EIGHT

### SANCTIFICATION

Sanctification is a difficult subject for many people and has been throughout the history of the Church. The word sanctification is from Latin. The English word is holiness. The Bible words, both in Hebrew and in Greek, mean separation. God separates the believer from the world and unto Himself. That is why the Bible calls them saints, holy ones. God separated Israel from the other nations of the world to be a people holy unto Him. God now separates believers from the world to be His holy people. This is called "provisional sanctification," and is wholly God's work. God took Israel out of Egypt in one night. It took Him forty years to take Egypt out of Israel. In like manner He takes the believer out of Adam at once when he believes. It takes time for Him to take Adam out of the believer. This is what Christian living is all about and is called "practical sanctification." It is the work of the Holy Spirit and takes time.

**Identified with Christ - chapter 6:1-14**

**"I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live" -**

**Galatians 2:20**

Chapter six was written to refute two objections to Paul's teaching of free grace apart from works of any kind. His reply to the first objection, that it promotes sin in the lives of believers, is in verse one. Verses 2 through 14 explain why

it does not promote sin, but is the way to overcome sin. All who are justified are identified with Christ. One of the definitions of identify is "to consider or treat the same as another." God identifies the believer with Christ in His death, burial and resurrection. He died for sin, we died to sin. This is a work of God that we accept by faith. "How shall we, that are dead to sin live any longer therein" (vs 2)? Water baptism is our testimony to this fact. "We have been planted together in the **likeness** of His death." We are buried by baptism into His death. We are then raised from the dead to a new life (vs 4). In chapter five we were identified with Adam in sin, but now we are identified with Christ the second Adam. "Our old man" is a corporate identity that includes all who are "in Adam" and all that we were in Adam. Just as we were identified with Adam, we are now identified with Christ and in Him we are now "one new man" (Ephesians 2:15).

### **Our Emancipation proclamation - Verse 7**

Paul concludes that since we are now dead with Christ because God so identifies us, we are freed from sin. Sin reigns over all humanity as a tyrant. Those who are still in the realm of sin can only sin. Since we are "dead with Christ," we live in the realm of "newness of life." We are no longer subject to the tyrant Sin. We do not have to sin. We do, but we don't have to. There are two words that are key to how we avoid sin. They are "**reckon**" and "**yield**." We reckon with God that we are dead to sin. We are no longer under the dominion of sin. We are now alive to God and we yield our bodies and minds to Him.

### **"No man can serve two masters" - Matthew 6:24**

Paul answers the second objection to his gospel of freedom from the law in verse 16. The charge was that it permits sin. As in verse one he writes God forbid, or may it never be.

Does the Law restrain sin? Has it ever? Of course not! His argument in verses 16 to 23 is similar to his response to the first objection. We in our identification with Christ died to the Law. His analogy here is that of masters and slaves. There are two masters, sin and righteousness. We were slaves to sin. We are now slaves to righteousness. We do not have to obey the old master, sin. We obey the new master, righteousness. Again we have the two words, reckon and yield. We reckon that we are dead to sin. We do not yield our members (bodies and minds) to sin, but unto righteousness. Thus we become the servants (slaves) of God and have "fruit unto holiness." His conclusion is that sin's "wages" are deadly, but God's free gift is eternal life.

### **Freed from the Law - chapter 7:1-6**

#### **Christ "nailed (the Law) to His cross"- Colossians 2:14**

Chapter six leaves two thorny matters to be resolved; our relation to the Law and our own enigmatic experience. These matters puzzled Paul as a new Christian also. He is letting us in on his own experience. Law has authority over one as long as he lives in its jurisdiction. Paul uses the law of marriage as an example. Our marriage vows state "so long as you both shall live." Death severs that bond and its obligations. The Law was for this life. In His death Christ abolished the bond of the Law. A key phrase in this chapter is "when we were **in** the flesh." This phrase refers to the old life. Believers are no longer **in** the flesh. We may walk after the flesh, as we shall see, but we now live in "fullness of spirit" (vs 6). The Law is very much misunderstood. It cannot sanctify any more than it can justify. It can only condemn.

### **Paul the legalist – Verses 7-12**

Paul, like his father before him, was a Pharisee. Many years after his dramatic conversion and years of missionary



service he declared to the Jewish counsel "I am a Pharisee" (Acts 23:6). Not all Pharisees were hypocrites. Some, as Nicodemus, were sincere. Even when Paul was persecuting Christians he was not a hypocrite. After his encounter with Jesus on the Damascus road his zeal was redirected. As a new convert he was still "zealous for the Law." In verses 7-12 he describes his inner turmoil. He discovered that instead of curbing sinfulness, the Law increased sinful deeds. Tell a small child "don't do that" and see what he will do. The Law reveals what is good and what is sinful. He came to see that it stimulates sin like a child's response to "don't!" Paul now realized that his desire to excel in "the Jews' religion" (Galatians 1:13) was really lust for personal recognition and thus a violation of the commandment "Thou shall not covet." There was nothing wrong with the Law. The Law is holy, just and good. The fault was the self-promoting desire of his sinful human (Adamic) nature. The purpose of the Law is to make this clear.

### **Two natures - verses 13-25**

Paul found a problem he did not anticipate and could not understand. The problem was not with the Law, but with himself. The Law is holy, just and good. The Law is spiritual and he was "carnal." He realized that "I do not do what I want to do and I do the very thing I hate." He well knew God's Law, He knew God's will, but he didn't do it. This is the experience of new Christians and many who have long known the Lord. Often their conclusion is "I cannot live the Christian life." The result is despair. Happily, Paul found the solution to this problem. Twenty times in verses 14 to 22 we find the pronoun "I." In these verses are two different I's. There is the I that would do God's will and there is the I that does not do God's will and they are both Paul! He realized that there are two different principles within himself: the law of the mind

that would do God's will, and the principle of present sin. This brings a struggle within that is on going. A believer has a new nature begotten of God and also a nature inherited from Adam and these two are contrary to each other. But there is a way of victory over the Adamic nature. It is to reckon sin in the flesh to be dead and yield to the Holy Spirit to serve God. A Christian at odds with himself is both miserable and a failure. Understanding this duality is half of the struggle for victory "through Christ Jesus our Lord." The next chapter shows the happy life when this struggle is resolved.

### **No condemnation - chapter 8:1-4**

The word "therefore" in verse one announces a conclusion based on the preceding chapters. In Part one Paul establishes the fact that all mankind is under the condemnation of God because "there is none righteous, no, not one" (ch 3:10).

In Part Two he declares that God, by His grace freely justifies all who will come to Him by faith in Jesus. They are no longer "in Adam." They are "in Christ" and for them "there is no condemnation." They will never be condemned as sinners!

In chapter seven there are two I's, and both are Paul. Two laws, or principles, are involved here. "The law of sin and death" governs all mankind. The law of "the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" is the principle for all who are "in Christ" and it frees us from the law of sin and death. God sent his Son in the **likeness** of sinful flesh, truly human, but not sinful. He came to be an **offering** for sin. In the Old Testament the word sin and the phrase sin offering are the same word. Paul wrote in Greek, but he used the word sin in the Hebrew sense. As a sin offering, He in the flesh (his body) condemned (or judged) sin. The Law of Moses demanded righteousness, but could not produce righteousness. But the Holy Spirit produces

righteousness in (not by) us as we "walk after the Spirit" and "not after the flesh." In Paul's day the word **walk** was used to mean lifestyle and the word **after** as used here meant controlled. When we yield ourselves to the Holy Spirit in our daily life he controls our lives and produces the righteousness within us. This is true and practical sanctification, which is passive, not active. We need no method for sanctification. We do not need a list of do's and don'ts because this holiness comes from within as we are controlled by the Spirit.

### **The flesh and the Spirit – Verses 5-11**

Though it may not be readily apparent, the Christian is greatly different from the world. This is because there are two modes of being, flesh and Spirit. They who "**are** in the flesh" are all who are in Adam. They who "**are** in the Spirit" are all who are in Christ. They who are in the flesh have the mind-set of the flesh and are only concerned about fleshly things. They live in spiritual death. They who are in the Spirit have the mind-set of the Spirit and are concerned about spiritual things. They live in spiritual life and peace. The carnal (fleshly) mind is hostile to God and cannot please Him. "But we (believers) are not in the flesh." We are in the Spirit and the Spirit of God, himself, the Spirit of Christ and the Holy Spirit dwell within. What a beautiful truth, the Trinity of God resides within.

### **The mature Christian - vs 12-17**

Victory over the flesh opens a grand fullness of Christian living. We have a new life in the Spirit and we live it by the power of the Spirit within. We are all debtors (I Cor 4:7), but our obligation is not to the flesh to let it control our lives. Our obligation is to the Holy Spirit, to mortify (make dead) the deeds (habits) of the body. Carnal living is the way of sin and death (I Cor 11:30), while a life controlled by the

Spirit is life and peace. These are two very different qualities of life. When our lives are controlled by the Spirit He directs our lives, He leads and we follow. "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the **sons** of God"(vs 14). This is the state of maturity. Everyone who is "justified" is a child of God and the Spirit gives the assurance that this is so. Every child of God is "heir of God" and has an intimate relation with him as **Abba**, the familiar Hebrew word for father. But there is more for the Christian who faithfully suffers "with Him" in whatever circumstance; to be a joint-heir with Christ.

### **The hope of our salvation - vs.18-30**

We must not become occupied with life's sorrows, but with our glorious future. Paul certainly lived with sorrows and pain, but he deemed all his sufferings unworthy of comparison with the glory of our future. We Christians are the only people for whom the future is bright! The coming glorious future includes all of creation and includes the "redemption of our bodies" to be transformed to be "like unto His glorious body" (Phil 3:21). This hope is not wishful, it is sure. The word hope means that for which we wait. While we await the glory of this future, the Holy Spirit is with us and in us; He intercedes on our behalf. Thus we have the assurance that "all things" are working for our good. There are five words that have often been misunderstood: **foreknow**, **predestinate**, **called**, **justified** and **glorified**. Together they outline God's plan for us. Before time began He knew us (II Tim 2:19); He planned our lives before we were born; He called us by the Gospel; He justified us when we responded in faith and our future is to be like Jesus. With this sure knowledge we can live confidently.

### **God is for us - vs 31-39**

We belong to God: what can go wrong? "If God be for us, who can be against us?" The word if does not express doubt; it means since. He has called us, He has justified us. He gave His Son for us. What more assurance do we need that we belong to Him forever? Who can charge us with sin since God has justified us? He has acquitted us from all of our sins. Who can find fault with Gods children to bring doubt about our relationship with Him? Who can condemn God's children when Christ, who died for us, is our advocate? Who or what can separate us from God's love? There is no person, power or circumstance that can affect our relationship with our Father. God's eternal purpose, Christ's sacrifice for us and the Spirit's working in our lives all bind us irrevocably to Him. We are forever secure "in Christ."

# PART FOUR

## DISPENSATION

### CHAPTERS NINE, TEN & ELEVEN

That there is no future for Israel as a nation in God's plan is a heresy that has persisted in the Church from the fourth century to the present. This is contrary to Paul's strong statement in chapter 11:1-2. It is also contradicted by the fact that the Jews, although scattered among the nations, have maintained an ethnic identity and have survived every attempt to destroy them. In chapter nine Paul discusses Israel's past, chapter ten is about Israel's present condition and chapter eleven shows their future.

#### **Paul's heartache - chapter 9:1-3**

Although "many thousands" of Jews believed (Acts 21:20), the nation as a whole was turning away from Christ and was increasingly hostile to believers. Paul knew these people personally (Acts 22:5) and he longed to minister the Gospel to them, but God sent him "far hence to the Gentiles" (Acts 22:18). Still he had "great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart" for them even though they hated him.

#### **Israel's advantages - vs 4-5**

The Jews, as a people had many advantages as God's chosen people. They were **Israelites**, descendants of the patriarchs: the **adoption** (Ex 4:22-23, Hosea 11:1): **the glory**, the pillar of cloud and fire: **the covenants**, Abrahamic and Mosaic: **the Law**, a grand revelation of God: **the service of**

**God**, the ritual of the Tabernacle and Temple: the **many promises** made to Israel: **the patriarchs**, and **the Christ**.

### **God's sovereign choice - vs 6-13**

God's election of Israel to be His chosen people was both sovereign and to carry forward His purpose. But not all Israelites were among the elect. Time and again they forsook the covenant, became idolaters and persecuted the prophets. But there was always a faithful remnant. That is what Paul meant by "for they are not all Israel which are of Israel" (vs 6).

He also sovereignly elected persons. Both election and predestination are based on His foreknowledge (ch 8:29) and history has showed the elect were of faith and they who were not elected were not of faith. God promised Abraham a son by Sarah, but with advancing age that seemed impossible. So they arranged for a surrogate mother, Hagar, Sarah's slave. Hagar bore a son, Ishmael, but he was not the son God promised. At length, Sarah gave birth to a son, Isaac. God's choice was Isaac, not Ishmael. Again, when Rebeca gave birth to the twins Jacob and Esau, Jacob was chosen by God and not Esau. "It was said unto her, the elder shall serve the younger" (verse 12). This quotation is from Genesis 25:23 and was a prophecy. "Jacob have I loved and Esau have I hated" (verse 13) is quoted from Malachi 1:1-2 and is a thousand years later. The quotation from Malachi refers to the two nations Israel (Jacob) and Edom (Esau). From their beginning Edom was always the enemy of Israel.

### **The Called and the Hardened - vs14-24**

#### **Moses and Pharaoh**

This section is a hard section for many because it is misunderstood. Rightly understood it is a comfort and a blessing. God's election is not capricious nor is it arbitrary. Like predestination it is not based on God's sovereignty, but on

His foreknowledge (I Peter 1:2), and is altogether righteous and just. God is sovereign in His choices to further His purpose in dealing with mankind. The purpose of His choices in these verses is to "show mercy and compassion." He chose Moses to be the leader of His enslaved people to deliver the Israelites. He "raised up" Pharaoh to show His power and that "His name might be declared throughout the whole earth." This is quoted from Exodus 9:16. Pharaoh hardened his heart against the Israelites so God sent the plagues against Egypt and its gods. With each plague Pharaoh repented and the plague was removed. Then Pharaoh again hardened his heart. It was God's mercy in removing the plague that hardened his heart. So Pharaoh hardened his heart when God showed mercy and it was God's mercy that hardened his heart. God's power and Name was "declared throughout all the earth" as seen in Joshua 2:10 and I Samuel 4:8.

### **The potter and the pots**

The apostle surely had Jeremiah 18:1-10 in mind as he penned these words. The prophet likened the potter to God and Israel as the clay. As the potter had complete control of the clay, so God has complete control of Israel's future. Here Paul uses the same metaphor concerning not only Israel, but also of individuals. No one has the right to question God or complain. Paul writes of "vessels of wrath" (they who are not of the elect) and "vessels of mercy" (they who are of the elect). The principle that applies to peoples also applies to persons. In 2 Timothy 2:20 Paul writes of "vessels to honor" and "vessels to dishonor." The former might be a vase for flowers to set on the mantel and the latter for a garbage container. In this metaphor we, unlike pottery, have the ability to "purge ourselves" from sin and error to be "vessels of honor."



### **Israel's remnant of faith - vs 25-33**

Paul saw his nation turning more and more away from Christ and he grieved for them. He knew that disaster was sure to come. Verses 25 and 26 are quoted from Hosea 2:23. Hosea was a prophet in the northern kingdom of Israel in the eighth century B. C. He warned that God's judgment of Israel was near because of their idolatry and rejection of the covenant. Hosea 1:9-10 reads "ye are not my people," but also that they are "the sons of the living God." The kingdom would be destroyed, but in a future time it would be restored. The quotation in verses 27 and 28 is from Isaiah 10:22-23 and verse 29 is from Isaiah 1:9. Isaiah was contemporary with Hosea and prophesied in Jerusalem. He saw Judah going the same way as Israel and foresaw their destruction also, but there would be a very small remnant true to God. Again in Paul's day his nation was turning away from Christ while many Gentiles were coming to Christ. But, as in the past, there was a remnant of Jews by faith. There will always be a faithful remnant of Jews until the spiritual restoration of the nation. The Old Testament quotations in verse thirty three are from Isaiah 8:14 and 28:16. The stumbling stone is Christ whom the Gentiles were receiving by faith. The Jews, for the most part, were depending on the works of the Law. Righteousness cannot be obtained by works, but only by faith.

### **God and Israel today - chapter ten**

In this chapter Paul quotes ten different passages from the Old Testament. By studying all of his Old Testament quotations in this section (chapters nine, ten, and eleven) we find the Christian way of using the Old Testament.

### **Christ, the stumbling stone - vs 1-4**

Israel is still God's chosen people **as a nation**, but as individuals they must come to Him the same way the Gentiles were coming to Him. This was their problem: God was their God and Gentiles must come their way, by the Law. This was their stumbling stone. Paul says they sought God's acceptance by works of the Law. But the only way one is accepted by God is **by faith in Christ** apart from the Law. Verse four reads: "Christ is the end of the Law for everyone who believes." The Greek word for end is telos. Telos does not mean end in the sense of purpose, or reason for being. It means end in the sense of coming to an end, to cease. This is still the stumbling stone for Jews.

### **The righteousness of faith - vs 5-10**

Paul describes legal righteousness in verse five as "the man which doeth those things (the commandments of the Law) shall live by them." This is quoted from Leviticus 18:5. In Paul's day the Jews took this to mean that if they kept all the commandments they would merit eternal life. An example of this idea is Matthew 19:6-20. This is not what Moses was saying. The Law was for life in the land of promise. If these laws were observed it would result in a happy and just society. Verses six and seven are quoted from Deuteronomy 30:11-14. Paul's point is that the "word of faith" (the Gospel message) is not transcendent, nor far off, it is very near and within. It is available to all who respond by faith and confession: "whosoever will." Both Jews and Gentiles are one in need. They are also one in faith. Verse eleven quotes Isaiah 28:16. All who believe are accepted, whether Jew or Gentile. Verse thirteen, quoted from Joel 2:32, is further assurance of acceptance by God. Verse fifteen, from Isaiah 52:7, describes the messengers who proclaim this message.

### **Israel's disobedience - vs 16-21**

The majority of the Jews in Paul's day were rejecting the Gospel message as they had rejected Isaiah's message (ch 53:1) seven hundred years earlier. The Apostle now states an important point concerning the Gospel. Faith comes by hearing (and believing) the Word of God. Verse 18 quotes Psalm 19:4 to show that God's revelation, both in nature and the Gospel, is universal.

### **Israel's future - chapter eleven**

"For the children of Israel shall abide many days without king or prince, without sacrifice or image, without ephod or teraphim. Afterward shall the children of Israel return and seek the Lord their God, and David their king and shall fear the Lord and His goodness in the latter days" (Hosea 3:4-5). Verse four describes Israel's condition today. Verse five shows how it will be when they turn to the Lord in the future.

### **The mystery of Israel - vss 1-14**

In Paul's day, as today, there were those who said that God was through with Israel, that the Church has replaced them. Nowhere in the Bible is it said that the Church has replaced Israel. In verses one and two Paul strenuously denies that Israel is repudiated by God. Their "casting off" is not permanent rejection. Psalm 94:14 plainly states "For the Lord will not cast off His people, nor forsake His inheritance." This is God's Promise. There has always been a remnant of Jewish believers; the "elect by grace." There was a remnant of seven thousand in Elijah's day (I Kings 19:18). There was a remnant of faith in Isaiah's day (Isaiah 29:10). There was a remnant of Jewish believers in Paul's time and there is a remnant today. The mystery of Israel is that God has blinded, or hardened, them for their rejecting Jesus. This is God's retributive

judgment. Verse eight quotes Isaiah 29:10 and verses nine and ten are from Psalm 69:22-23. The result of Israel's rejection is that God turned in favor to the Gentiles. Paul hoped this would make Israel jealous. The time is nearing when this blindness will be lifted.

### **The mystery tree – vs 15-25**

Though rejected by God, Israel remains His chosen people. The Greek word translated “casting away” in verse fifteen is a different word than the word used in verse one. Paul makes it clear that this is not permanent; they will be received in the future. The nation of Israel is still holy in the sense that they are still a people separate from all other nations. No matter where the Jews have lived among the nations, they have never assimilated. Paul uses two analogies to explain this matter.

The first is the law of the first fruits (Numbers 15:19-21). If the first-fruit of the dough be holy, the whole lump of dough is also holy. The first-fruit is the Patriarchs. The lump of dough is the whole nation, collectively. The second analogy is the mystery olive tree. The tree is Israel. The roots are the Patriarchs. The branches are the people of Israel. The branches broken off are Jews who do not have faith. The Gentiles are taken from the wild olive tree and grafted into the tame olive tree. The paradox is that the wild olive branches, contrary to nature, produce good fruit and the broken off branches can be grafted back into the tree and live to bear fruit. The Gentiles are not to boast against the broken off branches because they also live by faith. The Church has often boasted against the Jews. When “the fullness of the Gentiles” is complete and “the times of the Gentiles” be fulfilled (Luke 21:24). The mystery of Israel will be resolved.

### **Israel's fullness – vs 25-36**

Because Israel, as a nation, rejected Christ, God turned to bless the Gentiles with the Gospel. By this He meant to challenge the Jews to jealousy. The result was enmity toward Christ that has lasted for two thousand years, so far. Paul writes of “the fullness of Israel” in verse eleven and “the fullness of the Gentiles” in verse twenty five. The opposite of fullness is diminishment. These terms have to do with God’s dispensational treatment of peoples. In this age the Gentiles enjoy the fullness of the blessings of the Gospel and Israel is diminished. When the “fullness of the Gentiles is complete” the age of the church will close and “all Israel will be saved” (verse 26). Then they will enjoy the fullness of blessing in the New Covenant. This certainly contradicts the teaching that there is no future for Israel in God’s plan. History has vindicated Paul’s view of Israel. He ends with a beautiful doxology quoting Isaiah 40:13.

# **PART FIVE**

## **CONSECRATION**

### **CHAPTERS TWELVE, THIRTEEN, FOURTEEN & FIFTEEN**

#### **Serving the Lord – Chapter 12:1-2**

Only now, after eleven chapters of doctrine and instruction, does Paul begin to exhort his readers to live consecrated Christian lives. One cannot live a consistent Christian life without knowing how to do so. In the first two verses of chapter twelve he states a few principles that require four chapters to explain and apply.

#### **The Christian's sacrifice**

The word “beseech” in verse one of chapter twelve is a strong word in English as is the Greek word that Paul used. Under the Mosaic Covenant an animal was slain in sacrifice on behalf of the worshiper. It is very different under the New Covenant. The believer is to present his own body as a continuous sacrifice. A Sunday School song says it thus: “Be careful little eyes what you see - Be careful little ears what you hear- Be careful little hands what you do- Be careful little feet where you go-.” The Christian's worship service is not in ritual or irrational emotion, but in a continuous sacrifice of life. Such a life is well pleasing to God. The word “reasonable” in verse one has changed its meaning somewhat over the years. The word rational better expresses Paul's thought. Paul says a lot about the mind in his writings. The mind directs our worship.

## **The Christian's life**

The word “conform” means to squeeze into a mold and the word “transform” means to change from within. We are not to let the world determine how we live nor to set our agenda. The renewing of the mind has not to do with mental powers, but is a continual work of the Holy Spirit in our spiritual outlook. Paul challenges us to “prove” to ourselves that God’s will is entirely good, that it is well pleasing to Him and is complete, covering every aspect of life. The words good, acceptable (well pleasing) and perfect (complete) are not three degrees of God’s will, but are three adjectives describing His will. Now we see how the Christian serves the Lord in the Church, among brethren, among sinners, as citizens and around weaker brothers.

### **Living is worship – vss 3:21**

#### **In the church**

First, he charges each person to have a realistic view of himself: not to think too highly of oneself, nor to depreciate one’s own worth. We are all one body, a corporate union, and as in the human body every member has its place and is important. He lists seven different abilities that the Holy Spirit imparts as He sees fit. The first is prophecy, speaking under the direct influence of the Holy Spirit. Ministry is various forms of service rendered to the group or to individuals. Teaching is the ability to clearly explain and apply truth. Exhorting is speaking encouragingly to individuals or the group. Giving is to selflessly minister to the needy or to the cause with one’s substance or effort. Ruling is the exercise of recognized authority on behalf of the group. Showing mercy is more than an attitude, it involves the active addressing of needs.

### **In daily living**

Moses gave his ten commandments in the Law. Paul here gives twice ten imperatives for Christian behavior. Foremost is love as “kindly affectioned.” To cultivate these imperatives is our obligation. There is no separation of life into secular and sacred. All of a Christian’s life is sacred. Verse nineteen quotes Deuteronomy 32:35, and verse 20 Quotes Proverbs 25:21.

### **Law & Order and the Christian – Chapter thirteen**

Civil disobedience is a teaching of Emerson and Thoreau, not the Bible. Paul teaches submission to “the powers that be” and he gives four good reasons for doing so. The first reason is because God has ordained human government to maintain peace and all governments rule by His will. Paul calls them God’s ministers (servants). The second reason to submit to authority is because of the consequences of not submitting, “he beareth not the sword in vain.” The third reason is “for conscience sake.” Give fear (respect) to whom fear is due, honor to whom honor is due and, yes, taxes to whom tax is due. The fourth reason is that we live by a higher law than the civil code, the law of love. This law requires that we owe nothing to anyone, yet we are obligated to love our neighbor as ourselves whether believer or unbeliever. Paul finishes this chapter rather poetically, “put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ.” You have probably heard the phrase “he’s all wrapped up in her.” This is exactly what Paul means. Become all wrapped up in Jesus! Put him on as a garment. His life is your life. His will is your will.

### **Matters of conscience – chapter 14:1-12**

Some things are matters of doctrine or sound teaching, but others are matters of conscience or opinion. It is important to discern the difference. Paul’s concern is for believers who



are “weak in the faith.” By this he means those who do not have the assurance of Christian liberty. These brethren are to be accepted without arguing when the matters are not essential for sound doctrine. In Paul’s day there were Gentiles who had scruples about eating meat. They were not vegetarians in the modern sense; their problem was that the butcher shops were in idol temples. The flesh of sacrificed food animals had been offered to idols and then sold in the “shambles” (public markets). Paul knew that “an idol is nothing” (I Cor. 8:4), but for some this was a matter of conscience. Then there were Jewish believers who continued to observe Jewish festivals and holy days. They observed them as cultural and national celebrations as Paul did when he was among them. An example for today is the observance of Lent. In neither case should they be judged (criticized) by those who are “strong in the faith” concerning Christian liberty. In verses seven and eight we are told no one lives to himself, we are all dependent on the Lord in life or in death. We are also interdependent on each other. The poet John Donne wrote “No one is an island, entire of itself.” Christians are a community and we need each other. Since each will give account before the Judgment seat of Christ “let us not therefore judge (criticize) one another any more.”

### **The Christian attitude – vs 13-23**

Since there will always be matters of conscientious differences of opinion, we must always have a charitable attitude toward those with reservations concerning what foods to eat and what to avoid. The terms “clean” and “unclean” do not refer to sanitation, but to what is permitted and what is not permitted. The Law had many restrictions concerning diet. Paul wrote “I know (the head) and am persuaded (the heart) that nothing is unclean (forbidden) of itself,” because “The kingdom of God is not in food and drink.” However, we must

not violate the conscience of those who do not have this assurance. He states an important principle, “Let not your good (liberty) be evil spoken of.” It is our responsibility “to follow after those things that make for peace and to edify (build up) one another, not to tear down with criticism. Some things, not sin, may become sin. Acting against conscience is sin. Also, influencing others to act against conscience is sin.

### **Caring for the weak – chapter 15:1-3**

Maturity brings with it responsibility. We who are “strong” in the faith are obligated to “weaker” brethren to bear (carry) the burden of their scruples. Rather than being critical we should consider their good over our liberty. Paul quotes Psalm 69:9 to show Jesus’ selfless life as our example.

### **The Christian and the “scriptures” - vs 4**

It is important to have a knowledge of the Old Testament. Paul quotes from these “scriptures” fifty one times in this epistle. We can profit from the triumphs and failures of Israel and find comfort and hope as we read how God dealt with them.

### **Paul’s prayer for them – vs 5-7**

Paul prayed that God would give them patience with one another and comfort in fellowship, that they be like-minded with Christ as the example, that differences of opinion would not divide them, but that they would welcome all believers. This plea is certainly appropriate for us today.

### **Jesus and Paul – vss 8-21**

The ministry of Jesus was to Israel (Matt, 10:5) to confirm the promises given by the prophets. The word minister in verse eight is deacon in the Greek. A deacon was one who freely offered his services. Jesus freely offered Himself as “the servant of the Lord” (Isaiah 52:13). Paul

quotes from the Law (Deut. 32:43), the Prophets (Isaiah 11:10, and Psalms 18:49, 117:1) to show that the Gentiles would participate in the blessings of Abraham.

Paul was “the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles.” The word minister in verse sixteen means “a ministering priest,” laboring to bring the Gentiles as an offering to God. The extent of his labors is astonishing. He had already evangelized Syria, Asia Minor, Greece and Illyricum (Albania) and intended to go to Spain. He purposed to go “where Christ was not named.” He quotes Isaiah 52:15 to say that the Gentiles would respond whereas the Jews did not (Isaiah 53:1). But there was another matter he had to attend to before he could go to either Rome or Spain.

### **Personal notes – vss 22-33**

Paul was at Corinth when he wrote this epistle (Acts 20:1-2). He had completed his work in the East and was anxious to go “to the regions beyond” (2 Cor 10:16) where “Christ is not named” (Rom. 15:20). But first he must complete the task of taking relief offerings to Jerusalem. Together with representatives of the Gentile churches he had planted, they were collecting money for the poor believers in Judea who were in dire need. The eighth and ninth chapters of Second Corinthians relate this matter where we find two great principles for Christian giving. First, “For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, not according to that he hath not” (8:12). Second, “Every one according as he purposes in his heart so give” (9:7). When they had delivered this offering to Jerusalem he would travel west by way of Rome to Spain, Gaul and Africa. The Book of Acts tells how his plans were completely changed.

### **Paul’s request for prayer - vss 33-34**

In closing this epistle he felt the need of their prayers. His petitions are significant: deliverance from the unbelievers

in Judea, that the offering from the Gentiles be accepted, that he might go to Rome. He did not pray for his comfort!

# Farewell

## Chapter 16

The apostle closes this great epistle with three addenda of greeting and warning.

### **First postscript – vss 1-20**

Paul greets twenty-six persons by name whom he had known and worked with in the East who were now in Rome. Rome, the capital of the empire, drew people from all parts for business or legal reasons. Apparently Phoebe had some business that required her to be in Rome so she would carry this epistle west while Paul and others would carry the relief offering east to Jerusalem to James and the apostles who were there. He calls Phoebe a deacon (servant) of the church at Cenchrea. Cenchrea was a sister city of Corinth. It is interesting that he calls Andronicus and Junia his kinsmen and that they were “in Christ” before he was. His warning about troublemakers and schismatics and teachers of false doctrine is as appropriate today as it was then.

### **Second postscript – vss 21-23**

Paul’s fellow workers, including Timothy, send greetings. Tertius, Paul’s scribe, wrote this epistle for him sent greetings. Galatians is the only letter that Paul personally wrote (Gal 6:11). His poor eyesight is probably the reason.

### **Third postscript – vss 24-27**

This is a doxology and prayer for them that “Paul’s Gospel” (his message) together with the preaching of Christ and the scriptures of the Old Testament would establish them. So ends this Gospel According To Paul.

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