

# THE BOOK ROMANS

## *“Grace & Peace to You”*

Voice of China and Asia

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### ROMANS- Lesson 2: **THIS LETTER**

ROM 1: 1 and 7 Paul, a servant of CHRIST JESUS, called to be an APOSTLE, set apart for the gospel of GOD...

<sup>7</sup> To all those in ROME who are loved by GOD and called to be saints:

Grace to you and peace from GOD our FATHER and the LORD JESUS CHRIST.

### A LETTER FROM PAUL

This Letter was specifically designed for the ROMAN CHURCH that. The copy received by that church was certainly treasured... copied... circulated... and recopied – from Church to Church / City to City.

About AD 96 CLEMENT, shows himself well acquainted with the LETTER TO THE ROMANS.

- CLEMENT was recognized as the “Bishop of Rome” from AD88 to AD99. He is probably the same CLEMENT mentioned in PHIL 4:3. His LETTER TO THE CHURCH OF CORINTH is the earliest document we have outside the NT. His Letter contains over 150 quotes from both Old and New Testaments. He was martyred by Domitian by being tied to an anchor (*early sign of the Christian Church*) and cast alive into the sea.
- He utilizes language, time and again, in the Letter which reflect precise knowledge and great familiarity with Paul’s LETTER. behalf of the ROMAN CHURCH
- The way in which he uses PAUL’S words and style suggests that he knew it by heart - he freely quotes or paraphrases within his own writings
- It could well be that it was read regularly at meetings of the ROMAN CHURCH from the time of its reception onwards
- It is clear from CLEMENT’S LETTER that by AD 96 some of Paul’s LETTERS had begun to circulate in other quarters than those to which they were sent in the first instance; Clement, for example, knows and quotes from 1 CORINTHIANS.
- Our oldest surviving Ms. of the Pauline LETTERS, dates from the end of the SECOND CENTURY.

### THE REAL PAUL: HIS PASSION FOR THE ROMAN CHURCH

It may seem strange, but we need to frame this LETTER by considering material found near the ending, CHAPTER 15. Here Paul bears his heart in regard to his plans, Jesus’ directions to him, and his contentment in his “call”.

ROM 15:14–16 I myself am satisfied about you, my brothers, that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge and able to instruct one another.

- *Full of Goodness...* - as we will see in his familiarity with so many who are in Rome, Paul is confident that the “good works OF Salvation” are in full display in the Church

- **Filled with all Knowledge...** - He is convinced they have been taught well, both by the Spirit and by godly ministers
- **Able to instruct...** - their knowledge was not “static” they were leading others into the stability that comes with instruction... - Compare the words of to the Hebrew Church: **HEB 5:12** *For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again...*”
- What Paul is going to present in his Letter is NOT to rebuke, or re-train... He wants to clarify the **“Gospel of God’s Grace”** as he has been Commissioned by Christ (Eph 3:1-13)

**ROM 15:15-16.** *But on some points, I have written to you **very boldly** by way of reminder, because of the grace given me by God <sup>16</sup> **to be a minister** of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles **in the priestly service** of the gospel of God, so that **the offering of the Gentiles** may be acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit.*

These clauses are full of the language of “priestly” worship:

- Paul is a **minister** (**leitourgos** – one who serves the “wants/demands” of another – i.e. God)
  - His proclamation of the gospel is a **‘priestly service’** (**hierourgeō**) – offering a **MESSAGE** NOT Blood
  - The Gentile converts are **the offering** (**prosphora**- offered w/o blood) which he presents to God
  - Sanctified by the Holy Spirit... - It was GOD who by the Spirit “set apart” the Gentiles for salvation... -
- ACTS 10:15-17** *As I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell on them just as on us at the beginning. <sup>16</sup> And I remembered the word of the Lord, how he said, John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.’ <sup>17</sup> If then God gave the same gift to them as he gave to us when we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could stand in God’s way?”*
- ACTS 15:8-9** *And God, who knows the heart, bore witness to them, by giving them the Holy Spirit just as he did to us, <sup>9</sup> and he made no distinction between us and them, having cleansed their hearts by faith.*
- ACTS 13:46-47** *And Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly, saying, “It was necessary that the word of God be spoken first to you. Since you thrust it aside and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we are turning to the Gentiles. <sup>47</sup> For so the Lord has commanded us, saying,*
- “I have made you a light **for the Gentiles**, that you **may bring salvation to the ends of the earth.**”*

**ROM 15:17–19a** *In Christ Jesus, then, I have reason to be proud of my work for God. <sup>18</sup> For I will not venture to speak of anything except **what Christ has accomplished through me** to **bring the Gentiles to obedience** –*

- **What Christ has accomplished through me...** - Paul is “confidently satisfied” with what CHRIST has done through him... **False teachers point to themselves**
- **Bring the Gentiles to obedience...** - See Acts 13 / Gen. 49:10

by **word and deed**, <sup>19</sup> by the **power of signs and wonders**, by the **power of the Spirit of God** –

- **Word and Deed...** - (**Logos / Ergon**) – *what we spoke... what we lived... -*
- **Power of Signs and Wonders...** - (**Semeion / Teras**) – *unusual event that “authenticates” to something specific... - something startling or amazing that holds the attention... -*
- **Power of the Spirit of God...** - As they spoke / worked / demonstrated signs and wonders ... it was the SPIRIT of God that was operating AND working in the lives of those who heard / observed

**ROM 15:19B** *“...so that from Jerusalem and all the way around to Illyricum I have fulfilled the ministry of the gospel of Christ...*

- **From Jerusalem...** - as in Jesus words in Acts 1, so it was that Jerusalem was a “hub” of the spread of the Gospel. It is significant that Paul does not use Antioch... for there are NOT 2 distinct messages  
The message WAS to have Jerusalem as its CENTER... ISAIAH 2:3B “...and many peoples shall come, and say: ‘Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob, that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths.’ For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. [repeated in MICAH 4:2B]
- **To Illyricum...** - The western coast of the Greek Peninsula – No record of Paul traveling there, but as he spent about 2 years in Corinth, it probably occurred then
- **Fulfilled the ministry of the Gospel...** - God said... I did... completely... to the present limit...  
ACTS 9:15 But the Lord said to him, “Go, for he is a chosen instrument of mine to carry my name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel.”

ROM 15:20 ...and thus I make it my ambition to preach the gospel, not where Christ has already been named, lest I build on someone else's foundation...

- **Make it my ambition...** - “to love the honor of accomplishing what has been given...” -
- **Preach the Gospel...** - “euangellizo” – PresMid indicates he IS and will continue to do so...
- **Lest I build on someone else's foundation...** - Paul was not concerned about conflict, but that his MISSION was to REACH the unsaved... THEN secondarily to help to educate / correct / protect them

ROM 15:22–24 This is the reason why I have so often been hindered from coming to you. <sup>23</sup> But now, since I no longer have any room for work in these regions, and since I have longed for many years to come to you, <sup>24</sup> I hope to see you in passing as I go to Spain, and to be helped on my journey there by you, once I have enjoyed your company for a while.

- **Hindered from coming...** - “to cut the road” – Jesus Opened and Closed as HE chose... Paul followed
- **Hope to see you in passing...** - This WAS the plan AS God had given to him...
- **Helped on my journey...** - He would need their assistance

ROM 15:25-29 At present, however, I am going to Jerusalem bringing aid to the saints. <sup>26</sup> For Macedonia and Achaia have been pleased to make some contribution for the poor among the saints at Jerusalem. <sup>27</sup> For they were pleased to do it, and indeed they owe it to them. For if the Gentiles have come to share in their spiritual blessings, they ought also to be of service to them in material blessings. <sup>28</sup> When therefore I have completed this and have delivered to them what has been collected, I will leave for Spain by way of you. <sup>29</sup> I know that when I come to you, I will come in the fullness of the blessing of Christ.

- We will look deeper into the basis for and purpose of Paul's “offering to the saints in Jerusalem” when we get to CHAPTER 15