

# THE BOOK ROMANS

*“Grace & Peace to You”*

**Voice of China and Asia**

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## **ROMANS- Lesson 4: PAUL AND THE GOSPEL OF GOD**

The opening *“sentence”* of **ROMANS** makes up the *first 7 verses*. It is a masterpiece of writing that was common in all **PAUL’S LETTERS**. The best way to see the relationship of each phrase is to *build an outline*.

### THE GOSPEL OF GOD

*Paul,* [verse 1]  
*a servant of CHRIST JESUS,*  
*called to be an Apostle,*  
*set apart for the GOSPEL OF GOD,*  
*which he promised beforehand* [verse 2]  
*through his prophets*  
*in the HOLY SCRIPTURES,*  
*concerning his SON,* [verse 3]  
*who was descended from David,*  
*according to the flesh*  
*and was declared to be the SON OF GOD in power* [verse 4]  
*according to the SPIRIT of holiness*  
*by his resurrection from the dead,*  
*JESUS CHRIST our LORD,*  
*through whom we have received grace and apostleship* [verse 5]  
*to bring about the obedience of faith*  
*for the sake of his name*  
*among all the nations,*  
*including you who are called to belong to JESUS CHRIST,* [verse 6]  
*To all those in Rome* [verse 7]  
*who are loved by GOD*  
*and called to be Saints:*  
*Grace to you and peace*  
*from GOD our FATHER*  
*and the LORD JESUS CHRIST.*

We will start at the end to identify the intended recipients of this Letter: *“The Saints in Rome.”*

## TO ALL IN ROME:

ROM 1:7 To all those in Rome who are loved by God and called to be saints:

### ROME:

- Greatest city of the day... Center of the largest Empire up to that day... Britain to the Sahara – All the Med Basin – Gaul (*France*) and Spain to Iraq (*Babylon*) and Saudi Arabian Penn – HELD in Suppression by Army

### THE SAINTS:

*“Loved by God and called to be Saints...”*

How did the Gospel reach this *“epicenter of darkness”* so as to develop into a Church filled with Believers who were of powerful grace and influence?

- Paul is writing this Letter from CORINTH during the 3 months (?) he spent there as he was collecting the offerings to take to the Church in JERUSALEM (winter 56-57AD).
- We have NO direct or reported evidence of ANY of the “12” having been to ROME prior to THIS time.
- We DO know of several who have come FROM there, and several who ARE there when Paul writes to the Churches in ROME.

SO... When did it start?

ACTS 2:5-11 *“Now there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, and devout men from every nation under heaven. <sup>6</sup> And at this sound the multitude came together, and they were bewildered, because each one was hearing them speak in his own language. <sup>7</sup> And they were amazed and astonished, saying, ‘Are not all these who are speaking Galileans?’ <sup>8</sup> And how is it that we hear, each of us in his own native language? <sup>9</sup> Parthians and Medes and Elamites and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, <sup>10</sup> Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from ROME, <sup>11</sup> both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabians—we hear them telling in our own tongues the mighty works of God.”*

As PAUL (and the other Apostles) traveled throughout the Empire, they encountered those who had “heard” the MESSAGE delivered by Peter, and some who had experienced Salvation and Baptism... **but they had NO understanding of WHAT they had received.**

When PETER and PAUL (and the others, like BARNABAS, etc) began to Teach and to travel they were able to inform the Believers, and to evangelize the locals (*Jew and Gentile*).

Going FIRST to the Synagogues to speak to the *Jews* and *Devout*, they taught the GOSPEL as it was presented in the OLD TESTAMENT and fulfilled by JESUS THE MESSIAH (THE CHRIST).

Read ACTS 13: 14: 16: 17: 18: 19 where LUKE presents PAUL’s methods and experiences in these regions.

ROME was NO different...

The GOSPEL had been heard at Pentecost...

It was brought back to their cities and presented in their Synagogues...

The expectation was there... BUT the knowledge of How it happened, What it meant, and HOW does it affect them was still veiled. **Some** of course were excited... **Some** confused... **Some** opposed/resistant...

They needed clarity... they needed knowledge... They NEEDED An Apostle –

As can be seen from Paul’s writing, there is confusion and lack of understanding in the Churches in Rome:

- WHO is Paul? What IS the Gospel?
- Why is this Gospel needed? For the Ungodly? For Jews? For Gentiles?
- What about The Law?
- What IS faith? What is Grace? What is Justification? How are we Saved?
- What does this Gospel Change/ How?
- What about the Jews... and the Law?
- How do we live in light of the Gospel? In relation to the World? In relation to other Believers?

Paul wants to make these clear... to help everyone understand... and **HE DOES!**

## Who IS Paul?

The longest introduction of all of Paul's writing... - most formal... - most doctrinal...

- a **servant** of CHRIST JESUS... - "Doulos" – *one without a will of His own* – "bond-slave" –
  - obedience and absolute surrender –
  - *In OT Law slaves must be released every 7 years – NO culture / class of slavery –*
  - *Meant as payment of "debt" or result of conquest*
  - *By time of Paul "bond slave" was one who had been declared "free" but re-submitted themselves to their master for care / provision / protection – bound by their own volition*
  - *Paul identifies himself as a "Doulos" in every Letter -*
  - *GAL 6:17 From now on let no one cause me trouble, for I bear on my body the marks of Jesus.*
  - *Servants of the Lord: [ABRAHAM] GENESIS 26:24; [MOSES] JOSHUA 14:7; [JOSHUA] JOSHUA 24:29; [DAVID] PSALM 89:3; [ISAIAH] ISAIAH 20:3; [MY SERVANTS THE PROPHETS] SEVERAL PLACES...*
- *called to be an Apostle...* - "Apostolos" – *One sent as representative – fully equipped to fulfill the mission – Ancient Greek: Leader of Invasion Fleet – able to "Hellenize" (make Greek) the conquered -*
  - **Called** – One who has received a "commission" and responded –
    - NOT an "invitation" – it is authoritative... from God
    - It brings with it the necessary "abilities / empowerment" to accomplish the work [1 Tim 1:13]
  - **Levels of Apostleship:**
    - **Apostles of the Lamb** – *the 11 plus Paul* –
    - **The "Writing Apostles"** – *their words are "inspired by God" – unquestionable / TRUTH – MARK; LUKE; JAMES (Lord's brother); JUDE (Lord's brother)*
    - **Those who carried the Authoritative Gospel to others** – BARNABAS; SILAS; TIMOTHY; PRISCILLA & AQUILLA; TITUS; EPAPHRAS; EPAPHRODITUS; ANDRONICUS AND JUNIA; ETC.
    - **The "Five-fold" Gift to the Church** – EPH 4:11
- **set apart** -
  - *To mark-off for possession or purpose – to be chosen for a function that fulfills another's purpose – Paul was "set apart" not by HIS choice but by GOD'S – NOT for his purposes but to accomplish the desire of another...*
  - **By GOD** – **BEFORE** his conversion -
    - GAL 1:15 *But when he who had set me apart before I was born, and who called me by his grace, 16 was pleased to reveal his Son to me, in order that I might preach him among the Gentiles...*
    - EPH 3:7-10 *"Of this gospel I was made a minister according to the gift of God's grace, which was given me by the working of his power." 8 To me, though I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was*

given, to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ,<sup>9</sup> and to bring to light for everyone what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God, who created all things,<sup>10</sup> so that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places.”

- **EPH 2:10** “For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.”
  - **PHIL 2:12** “Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, <sup>13</sup> for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.”
- **By JESUS CHRIST – AT his conversion -**
    - **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.”
  - **By the HOLY SPIRIT – AFTER his conversion -**
    - **ACTS 13:2** “While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, ‘Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.’”

for the **GOSPEL OF GOD**... - “unto...” – THIS is the whole purpose of His separation – ALL of his work, plans, and life were to be centered around THIS..

**2 TIM 4:5** “As for you, always be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist [OR: do your work evangelistically – with the Gospel in mind/view], fulfill your ministry.”

which [GOD] **promised beforehand**

**TITUS 1:2** “...in hope of eternal life, which God, who never lies, promised before the ages began...”

**ISA 40:9** Go on up to a high mountain, O Zion, **herald of good news**; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good news; lift it up, fear not; say to the cities of Judah, **“Behold your God!”**

**ISA 52:7** How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of **him who brings good news**, who **publishes peace**, who **brings good news of happiness**, who **publishes salvation**, who says to Zion, **“Your God reigns.”**

**NAH 1:15** Look, there on the mountains, the feet of one who **brings good news**, who **proclaims peace!** Celebrate your festivals, Judah, and fulfill your vows. No more will the wicked invade you; they will be completely destroyed.

**MARK 1:1-3** The beginning of **the good news** about Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God,<sup>2</sup> as it is written in Isaiah the prophet:

“I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way” – <sup>3</sup> “a voice of one calling in the wilderness, ‘Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.’”