

“Grace & Peace to You”

A STUDY IN THE BOOK OF ROMANS

Voice of China and Asia

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ROMANS LESSON 31 PART 1: “GOD’S OVERWHELMING LOVE”

ROMANS 5:2b-5 “... and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. ³ Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, ⁴ and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, ⁵ and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.”

PAUL’S LETTER TO THE ROMANS continues in Chapter **ROM 5** presenting the **REAL** results of being “*justified by faith...*” Believers in Jesus Christ are not only brought into a right relationship with God, and promised a glorious life in Eternity, but also are assisted in the issues of their present life, so that they may live a life of victory giving glory to God.

THIS is the direct result of **GOD’S OVERWHELMING LOVE** shown to us in the gift of Jesus Christ.

A “SONG” OF GOD’S PRESENCE IN LIFE

There are passages in the Scriptures that almost serve as “songs” celebrating God’s goodness, His grace, His Character. HERE is one that proclaims the triumphant celebration of His great Love.

ROM 5:3-5 *Not only that, but we rejoice in our [tribulations], knowing that [tribulation] produces endurance, ⁴ and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, ⁵ and hope does not put us to shame, because God's Love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.*

Having declared that our “*justification*” has brought us “*peace WITH God*”, Paul makes it clear that this “*peace*” and the “*grace*” into which we have been ushered does NOT mean we will have **no trouble in this world**. We have not been promised “*peace FROM trouble,*” but “*peace IN trouble.*”

- **Our “Boasting” – Not the boasting of arrogance... as from a “self-promotion / self-centeredness”**
I choose rather to translate this as a “*glorying in, triumphing in*” as a warrior who has prevailed over his enemy - there could be no “triumph” if there was NO “pressure” confronted – It is a result of something encountered –
 - **“Middle Voice”** meaning this is OUR **chosen response** – *what we do on/for our own regard...*
 - The following “statements” are the basis for our “*Triumphing*” -
- **[We Triumph] IN Hope of the Glory of God... – NO article...” BUT “in hope OF...”** it is an active ever-present attitude
 - Our “ultimate Hope” is not fully realized in **Justification** from our PAST separation from God...
 - Nor in the joyful experience of our PRESENT **Peace** with God...

- **BUT** in the FUTURE **Glorification** which we will experience in ETERNITY...
- [We Triumph] in “THE” Tribulations... – “Thlipsis” – the result of being “pressed under a weight” so as to break apart.
 - 1) Used of a great stone passed over the grain to break away the hull and reveal the kernel.
 - 2) A great stone imbedded with protruding spikes which was used by the Rom Army to crush the enemy battle lines.
 - 3) Consistently in reference to the “powers of this world” or of “the Devil...”
- Tribulation, to the early Christians, meant not so much sickness, ill health, poverty, or loss of friends, but **the sacrifices they had to make and the perils they had to meet from their proclamation or profession of Christ.** In HEBREWS, Paul says that after his readers were converted, they were to: “But recall the former days when, after you were enlightened, you endured a hard struggle with sufferings,³³ sometimes being publicly exposed to reproach and **affliction**, and sometimes being partners with those so treated.” [HEB 10:32-33]

In the case of the Christian, **tribulation** results in increased faith in this life, and in reward in the life to come: “Our light **tribulation**, [see 2 COR 1:8-10] which is for the moment, worketh [generates] for us more and more exceedingly an eternal weight of glory” [2 COR. 4:17].

ROMANS LESSON 31 PART 2: “GOD’S OVERWHELMING LOVE”

- While “encountering Tribulation” is expected, it is uniformly to be “resisted” [Hupomone – “endure so as to overcome] and to be rewarded...
 - It is **NOT FROM** God as a source – although God may lead us INTO it...
 - But it is **USED BY** God to accomplish His purpose **IN** and **THROUGH** the Believer...

2 COR 1:3-10 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all [encouragement],⁴ who [encourages] us in all our **affliction**, so that we may be able to [encourage] those who are in any **affliction**, with the [encouragement] with which we ourselves are [encouraged] by God.⁵ For as we share abundantly in Christ's **sufferings**, so through Christ we share abundantly in [encouragement] too.

⁶ If we are **afflicted**, it is for your [encouragement] and salvation; and if we are [encouraged], it is for your [encouragement], which you experience when you **patiently endure** the same **sufferings** that we **suffer**.⁷ Our hope for you is unshaken, for we know that as you share in our **sufferings**, you will also share in our [encouragement].

⁸ For we do not want you to be unaware, brothers, of the **affliction** we experienced in Asia [1 COR 15:32]. For we were so utterly burdened beyond our strength that we despaired of life itself.⁹ Indeed, we felt that we had received the sentence of death. But that was to make us rely not on ourselves but on God who raises the dead.¹⁰ He delivered us from such a deadly peril, and he will deliver us. On him we have set our hope that he will deliver us again.

- **Endurance...** – “Hupomone” – To abide under the pressure so as to triumphantly overcome... –

- When John Wycliffe [1300's] was looking for an English word to translate this Greek word, he could find none that were adequate. So, he adapted the word for "strength - fortis" This then has become the root for our words, "Fort; Fortified; and Comfort"
- All that pressure, says Paul, produces fortitude – hupomene - MUCH MORE than endurance.
- The Greek word meant, "to have the attitude which can overcome the world; a spirit which does not passively endure but which actively overcomes the trials and tribulations of life."
- This is NOT our English idea of "patience" - just passively, "putting up with something." BUT it is actively standing AGAINST our opponent – and this is NEVER God - until triumph is realized."
- IF the pressure WERE from GOD, to resist it would be to oppose HIS WILL...
- Character... – Much more than "experience" – "Dokimen" – Proven Character - Approved-ness - "to put to the test for the purpose of approving, finding that the person tested meets the specifications necessary..."
- Tribulation "generates" Endurance...
Endurance "generates" Approved-ness...
Approved-ness "generates" Hope...

ROM 5:5 "...and [THIS] hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us." [MORE in Chapter 8]

- [We Triumph] in NO Shame... – "Kataischung" – "to turn the face because there is nothing of beauty or benefit in what would be seen" – ROM 1:16 / 2 TIM 1:8 / 2 TIM 1:16
 - The "tribulation" we face is NOT for nothing...
 - The "endurance" we exercise is NOT wasted...
 - The "Approved Character" we have gained is not meaningless...
 - At each stage we can be tempted to "turn the face / give-in / run from the contest"
 - BUT we have "HOPE..."
 - And that HOPE has a source... "THE LOVE OF GOD..."
- [We Triumph] in The LOVE of GOD... – FOR US!
 - This is NOT our Love for HIM...
 - It is NOT our Love for One another...
 - It is HIS Love for us that is "poured-out into our hearts" BY WHICH we know that HE will bring us TRIUMPHANTLY through to HIS intended purpose.

HOW do we know this?

Rom 5:6-12 ...

BUT that's for Next Week