

The Epistle to the Romans

Introduction

The Epistle to the Romans is not the first Epistle which the Apostle Paul wrote. The First Epistle to the Thessalonians was written six years prior to the Epistle to the Romans, that is in 52 A.D. and the Second Thessalonian Epistle a few months later. The place given to this great document, immediately after the Book of Acts, is the right place, for the Epistle to the Romans has for its leading theme the Gospel of God, and that needs to be unfolded first of all.

This Epistle was written by Paul in the year 58. Paul was staying in the house of Gaius (Romans 16:23). He was a wealthy Corinthian whom Paul had baptized (1 Corinthians 1:14). His amanuensis was Tertius, who makes the statement himself, "I Tertius, who wrote this Epistle, salute you in the Lord" (16:22). It was during the brief visit to Corinth (Acts 20:3) when the Apostle wrote the Epistle. He was on his way to Jerusalem, with the great desire in his heart "I must also see Rome" (Acts 19:21). Of this he speaks in the Epistle. "But now having no more place in these parts, and having a great desire these many years to come unto you; whensoever I take my journey into Spain, I will come to you, for I trust to see you in my journey, and to be brought on my way thitherward by you, if first I be somewhat filled with your company. But I go unto Jerusalem to minister unto the Saints." (15:23-25). And in the beginning of the Epistle he expressed the same wish. "Making request, if by any means now at length I might have a prosperous journey by the will of God to come unto you. For I long to see you that I may impart some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established" (1:10-11).

When a Greek Christian woman, Phoebe, was about to visit Rome, he was constrained to write this letter and she was undoubtedly the bearer of this Epistle. This we learn from Chapter 16:1-2. "I commend unto you Phoebe our sister, which is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea (the port of Corinth); that ye receive her in the Lord, as becomes the Saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you; for she hath been a succorer of many, and of myself also." The genuineness of this Epistle has never been doubted. The critics have never been able to attack its authenticity. Universally it has been believed, and that from earliest time, to be the production of the Apostle Paul.

To Whom the Epistle was Written

The Epistle is addressed "to all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called Saints." There was then a church, a local assembly of believers in the great world city Rome. We do not know the facts of its origin. The wicked system which goes by the name "the church of Rome" claims that Peter had much to do with the church there and was the first bishop in Rome. This is done to uphold the claims of the papacy. But it is a mere invention, lacking all historical support. Long before Paul ever addressed the Saints in Rome, Peter had made in Jerusalem declaration which confined his ministry to the circumcision (to Jews) while the Gentile field was left to Paul. "And when James, Cephas (Peter), and John who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me (Paul) and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship, that we should go unto the Gentiles and they unto the circumcision" (Galatians 2:9). Peter wrote two Epistles addressed to scattered Jewish believers. He does what the Lord told him "to strengthen his brethren." and nowhere does he claim the exalted position into which the Romish apostate system has put him. That no Apostle had anything to do with the foundation of the local assembly in Rome seems fully established by Paul's statement in chapter 15:20. If Peter had anything to do with the church in Rome, if he had founded the church there, Paul would have certainly made some mention of him. And when later the Apostle Paul wrote his great prison Epistles, not a word did he say about Peter's

presence and activity in Rome. These and other evidences are conclusive.

Perhaps Jewish believers were used in carrying the gospel to the capital of the Roman Empire; or Gentile believers may have been the means of proclaiming first the good news there. While the assembly in Rome was composed of Jews and Gentiles, the latter were predominant, for the names mentioned in chapter 16 are nearly all Gentiles. Many of these may have been Jewish proselytes. That this church was also troubled with a Judaizing element, teachers who demanded the keeping of the law and circumcision as a means of salvation, may be learned from the warning exhortation at the close of the Epistle: "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them." (16:17). This may explain the different objections raised and answered in the Epistle, objections which would come mostly from a Jewish mind. See 3:1, 5, 7, 31; 4:1; 6:1, 15; 7:7; 9:14, 19, 30; 11:1, 11. However, there are conclusive proofs in the Epistle itself which show that the Gentiles were the more numerous in the Roman assembly.

Paul addresses them as the Apostle of the Gentiles and in chapter 15:16 he writes, "that I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the Gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being "sanctified by the Holy Spirit."

The Great Theme of the Epistle

The great theme of Romans is the Gospel of God, that is the good news concerning the way which God, in His infinite love, has provided by which sinners are saved and all which this free and full salvation includes. While this great theme has been recognized by all intelligent writers on this Epistle, various estimates have been given of the doctrinal unfoldings, which often miss the mark. Some have called Romans a religious treatise written by a man with a wonderful, logical mind, in which he explains his views concerning salvation. Others state that the letter is "the foundation document of the Pauline system of teaching" or they call it "the explanation of the Pauline theology." Still others have suggested that the Epistle to the Romans is "the personal mental history of the Apostle, in which, after his conversion, he worked his way from the old Jewish standpoint to his standpoint under the Gospel." But there is a far better statement which explains it all. In the sister Epistle of Romans, the Epistle to the Galatians, in which he gives the defense of the Gospel, Paul acquaints us with the origin of the Gospel, which he called so peculiarly "My Gospel."--"But I certify you brethren, that the Gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ" (Galatians 1:11-12). The Gospel he preached and which is so wonderfully taught in the Epistle to the Romans was given to him by revelation. It was not the product of a logical mind, a system of theology which he had thought out, or which some one else had taught him. It is revelation. And the proof of it is the Gospel itself. The mind of man could not have invented or discovered such a scheme. God Himself had to reveal it. The more a Christian studies this great Epistle concerning the Gospel of God, the more he will find out the truth that all is of God and not of man. A great thinker called Romans the profoundest document which has ever been written. It is that, because it is of God. And all that comes from Him is as inexhaustible as His Person. The things revealed in this Gospel of God are deep; no saint has ever sounded the depths. Yet it is simple at the same time. This is always the mark of divine revelation, profundity and simplicity.

We shall point out more fully in the analysis the scope and division of this Epistle, how this great theme is unfolded. God reveals man's true condition, destitute of all righteousness, positively and negatively bad, the whole world guilty before God, Jew and Gentile lost. Upon that dark background God writes the story of His great Love. The source and center of all is the sacrificial work of Christ in which the righteousness of God is now manifested. no longer condemning the guilty sinner, but covering every sinner who believes in Jesus. Justification is by faith, and this faith which trusteth in Jesus is counted for righteousness. "But to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness" (4:5). And the resurrection of Jesus from the

dead is also our justification; the blessed results of all this are seen in the opening verse of the fifth chapter. Being justified by faith we have peace with God, a secure standing in Grace and the hope of the Glory of God. The justification of the sinner is the great foundation of the Gospel of God. Then follows an equally blessed revelation, which is another part of the Gospel. The justified sinner is constituted a Saint, and as such he needs deliverance from sin and its power. Up to chapter 5:11 we learn how God has dealt with our sins and after that how He has dealt with sin. The believing sinner is no longer in Adam, the first man, but in Christ, the second man. What we have by nature through Adam and what we receive through Grace in being in Christ (by the new birth), this most wonderful contrast, is the subject in chapter 5:12-21. God therefore does no longer behold the believer as in Adam, but he sees him in Christ; the old man has been put to death in the death of Christ "that the body of sin might be annulled that henceforth we should not serve sin." God looks upon the believer as being dead with Christ to sin. He is therefore no longer to live in sin. The assurance is given "sin shall not have dominion over you." And faith is to act upon it as being dead to sin and alive unto God (6:11-13). In the seventh chapter the question of the law is raised and the Gospel of God declares that the justified believer, in Christ, dead with Him and delivered from the sin principle is also dead to the law. The eighth chapter leads us into the full place of deliverance. What was impossible to the law, to produce the righteous requirements of the law, is made possible by the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus. The Spirit of God and His work in the believer is now revealed as a part of the Gospel. Furthermore the believer saved by Grace is a child of God and an heir of God. Glory is his eternal destiny and nothing can separate him from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Then follow three chapters which deal with dispensational matters, Israel's fall and coming restoration to the place of blessing as His earthly people. The final chapters contain exhortations to walk in the power of this blessed Gospel.

The Importance of Romans

If we are asked what portion of the New Testament should a Christian study the most, we answer always, unhesitatingly, the Epistle to the Romans. Dr. Martin Luther found his great message and deliverance in this Epistle. No better testimony about this Epistle could be given than his. He said, "It is the true masterpiece of the New Testament, and the very purest Gospel, which is well worth and deserving that a Christian man should not only learn it by heart, word for word, but also that he should daily deal with it as the daily bread of men's souls. For it can never be too much or too well read or studied; and the more it is handled the more precious it becomes, and the better it tastes."

John Wesley, the godly preacher of the eighteenth century, found peace and deliverance while listening to the reading of Luther's introduction to Romans. No Christian can enjoy the Gospel and know true deliverance unless he knows the precious arguments of the first eight chapters of this Epistle. It is the great need at the present time. So many professing Christians are ignorant of what redemption is and what it includes. Many have but a hazy view of justification and have little or no knowledge of a settled peace with God and lack the assurance of salvation. They are constantly striving to be something and to attain something, which God in infinite grace has already supplied in the Gospel of His Son. And the ignorance about deliverance from the power of indwelling sin! Most Christians live constantly in the experience of the wretched man in chapter 7:15-24. The teaching of the Gospel of God according to Romans is therefore of the greatest importance. It brings assurance and peace; its teachings lead the believer into a life of victory. So many sincere, but untaught believers become ensnared in all kinds of strange doctrines, taught by different cults, because they are deplorably ignorant of the salvation of God. Luther was right, "it can never be too much or too well read or studied." Even if we have grasped the great doctrines of salvation as revealed in this Epistle it is needful that we go over them again and again. And it must be done with prayer. There are many Christians who hold the correct doctrines concerning justification and sanctification as made known in Romans, but they lack the power of these truths in their lives.

Nor must we forget that these blessed truths are increasingly denied as well as perverted in our days. We must therefore keep in constant touch with them, lest they slip away from us and we lose

the reality and power of the blessed Gospel in our lives.

Division of the Epistle to the Romans

The division of the Epistle is very simple and presents no difficulty. There are three very clearly defined parts.

The first eight chapters contain the doctrine of the Gospel of God, what salvation is and what it includes. Justification, Sanctification and Glorification are revealed and the believer's deliverance from the guilt of sin, the power of sin and the future deliverance from the presence of sin is made known in these eight chapters.

Chapters 9-11 form the second part. God's sovereign dealings with Israel is the theme of these chapters, which have a parenthetical character. Here we learn of Israel's election, rejection and coming restoration. God's righteousness is demonstrated in this second part as it is in the doctrinal section of this Epistle.

Chapters 12-16 constitute the third part. Here we find the exhortations for the justified and sanctified believer, who waits for the coming glory, how he is to live on earth in the power of the Gospel and manifest practically the righteousness of God.

I. DOCTRINAL. THE SALVATION OF GOD. Chapters 1-8

1. Introduction. Chapter 1:1-17

2. The Need of Salvation Demonstrated. The Whole World Guilty and Lost. Chapter 1:18-3:20.

3. The Righteousness of God Revealed. Justification, What it is and What it Includes. Chapter 3:21-5:11.

4. In Christ. The Sanctification of the Believer; his Deliverance from Sin and the Law. Children and Heirs. Chapter 5:12-8:39.

II. DISPENSATIONAL. GOD'S DEALINGS WITH ISRAEL

Chapters 9-11. 1. Israel and God's Sovereignty

Chapter 9. 2. Israel's Failure and Unbelief

Chapter 10. 3. Israel's Future

Chapter 11.

III. EXHORTATIONS AND THE CONCLUSION. Chapter 12-16:27.

1. The Exhortations. Chapter 12-15:13.

2. The Conclusion. Chapter 15:14-16:27.

The Epistle to the Romans demands the closest Study. "Its texture is so fine, its very vein so full, its very fibers and ligatures so fine and yet strong, that it requires not only to be again and again surveyed as a whole, and mastered in its Primary ideas, but to be dissected in detail, and With unwearying patience studied in its minutest features, before we can be said to have done it justice. Not only every sentence teems with thought, but every clause; while in some places every word may be said either to suggest some weighty thought, or to indicate some deep emotion" (D. Brown). In the analysis and annotations we point out the way to the deeper study of the Epistle. But the most successful learners of these great truths are the men and women who walk in the truth and learn daily anew that the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation, who rejoice in God through the

Lord Jesus Christ.

Analysis and Annotations

I. DOCTRINAL. THE SALVATION OF GOD. Chapter 1-8.

CHAPTER 1

1. The Apostle and the Gospel of God. 1-6.
2. The Greeting. 7.
3. The Apostle's Prayer and Desire. 8-15.
4. The Great Theme Introduced. 16-17.

Verses 1-6

The introduction to the Epistle is unsurpassed by any other Epistle. Every word should be carefully studied. The writer introduces himself first of all as a servant (literally: slave) of Jesus Christ and called an apostle. Notice that in verses 1-7 two little words are found three times in italics, the words "to be." They are supplied by the translators and should be omitted. Paul was not called to be an Apostle, but he was called an Apostle. The Lord Jesus Christ was not declared to be Son of God, but He was declared Son of God; believers are not called to be Saints, but they are called Saints. Paul loved to call himself bondman of Jesus Christ. He knew the Lord had redeemed him and now he was no longer his own, but belonged to Him who had purchased him and made him one with Himself. His highest ambition was to serve the Lord Jesus Christ. His Apostleship he puts in the second place. The highest and best is to be in reality a willing, devoted servant of the Lord. How did he become an Apostle? "Not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ" (Galatians 1:1). The exalted Christ in glory had called him and sent him forth. And next we find in the opening verse the specific work unto which the Lord had separated him--"separated unto the Gospel of God." The Gospel was his great commission and therefore is the great theme of his Epistle. The Holy Spirit who guided his mind, as well as his pen, now unfolds this Gospel. The highest and the best, after all, in God's whole revelation is the Gospel. And the Gospel is not confined in the Pauline Epistles to Romans. We read Colossians and find there still the Gospel. The highest revelation which ever flowed through this chosen vessel is contained in the Epistle to the Ephesians; it is still the Gospel. Oh! the blessed Gospel! it can never be exhausted; it will be the object of eternal praise. In His presence, conformed into His image we shall know its heights and its depths.

Notice after Paul mentioned the Gospel of God there follows a parenthetical statement about that Gospel. Verse 5 is the continuation of what he saith about his Apostleship. The word Gospel means "good news." It is the good news of God, for it has its source in Himself and in His eternal counsel. The Gospel is also called the Gospel of Christ, because it centers in Him, and is proclaimed through His finished work on the cross. This Gospel was promised by God's Prophets in the Old Testament Scriptures. In many ways, in types, in the sacrifices, in direct predictions this Gospel has been announced and Jewish believers looked forward to its accomplishment. Throughout the Old Testament from Genesis 3 to the Prophet Malachi the promises and predictions of the Gospel are found. The Old Testament is the foundation of the Gospel. The rejection of the Old Testament as the inspired Word of God is therefore a very serious matter. And the Gospel of God we learn next is a person. It is "concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord." Jesus is the name of the Son of God in humiliation, living on the earth; Christ is His official name in resurrection and He is the Lord of all. The Lord Jesus Christ is the proper way to address Him. "Made of the seed of David according to the flesh." This brings before us His incarnation "made of a woman, made under law" (Galatians 4:4). He came of the seed of Abraham and from the house of David, according to divine promise.

He was both David's Son and David's Lord, the Root and Offspring of David. To Him belongs a throne for He is the King of the Jews. But "He came to His own and His own received Him not." He came to go to the Cross and finish the mighty work there which enables God to be just and a Justifier, as we shall find later. He will receive the throne when He comes again in great power and glory. And He is declared (marked out) the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness by the resurrection from the dead. He lived in Perfect holiness on earth and the Spirit of holiness was upon Him. He raised the dead and thereby demonstrated that He is the Son of God. But it is equally true that His own resurrection must be included in this statement, for His resurrection is the effectual justification of Himself as the Son of God. Trace in these opening verses all the great facts of Christ--Son of God--Son of Man--Incarnation--His Death--His Resurrection--His Lordship.

Verse 7

Precious is the word of greeting to all the believers, not only in Rome, but everywhere. "Beloved of God called Saints." Such are all who have accepted Christ as their Saviour. They are justified, sanctified, and accepted in the Beloved. Blessed truth! in Christ, one with Him, we are the objects of the Love of God. The Love wherewith God loves His Son is the Love with which He loves all who belong to Christ (John 17:23). And then we are Saints, not called to be, or to become Saints, by a separated life; but we are constituted Saints in Christ, sanctified, that is separated unto Himself. God loves us and in Christ has set us apart to Himself. Nothing that we do could ever make us the Beloved of God. No effort of ours to live consistently, apart from evil, could make us Saints of God. God has done it for us in Christ. And because we are Saints we can live saintly lives. The greeting is from the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. The third person of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit is not mentioned, for He is in and with the Saints of God, both individually and also collectively forming the body, the church.

Verses 8-15

In addressing them the Apostle has no rebuke, no evil to correct, no exhortation. Instead he thanked God that their faith was spoken of throughout the whole world. They let their light shine brightly in the darkness of paganism. And His heart was filled with love for them. He thanked God for them, He prayed for His blessing upon them and that "by the will of God" he might be enabled to be with them. He longed to see them for mutual blessing. Here we have an illustration of Christian fellowship. Oftentimes he had purposed to come unto them, but was hindered. "The thwarted desires of Paul gave occasion to the Spirit of God to indite and publish, by his hand, this invaluable Epistle; to present to the Church a gift, not of present and passing effect, but which should build up and feed, and instruct, the Saints to the end of the time of the church's patience in the wilderness of this world." He felt, what every sinner, saved by Grace should feel, that he was a debtor to all. The possession of the Gospel makes us debtors to all. He had constantly discharged his debt by preaching the Gospel to the Jews and Gentiles and now he is eager "to preach the Gospel to you that are in Rome also." And can there be anything more blessed for the Saints than the Gospel? To be reminded of it and to be led deeper into the story of God's love and redemption is one of the great needs of God's people. Only as we do this can we be maintained in the reality and freshness of the Gospel. Therefore Paul longed to visit Rome to preach the Gospel to "the Beloved of God called Saints."

Verses 16-17

These two verses are the key verses of the Epistle. The great words of the doctrinal part of the Epistle are found here. Righteousness and Faith are these words; Paul declared that he is not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ. It cannot mean, what it is often said to mean, that Paul was not ashamed to confess Christ. It means that he had the utmost confidence in the Gospel of Christ; he knew it would not make him ashamed; he was not ashamed of it because of its intrinsic character. The world sneered at the Gospel he preached "for the preaching of the cross is to them that perish

foolishness" (1 Corinthians 1:18). He knew that in the Gospel was embodied the highest wisdom, that God Himself was its author, that it came from God and leads to God; he knew that through the Gospel the Greek, the Jew, the Barbarian could be saved out of the horrible pit and the miry clay and become a child of God and an heir of God. He was not ashamed of it for "the Gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation." What weighty words these are! The power of God is needed to save man. And that power God has, to save the vilest sinner through the Gospel of Christ. God is omnipotent, but in one thing God is powerless, He cannot save sinners apart from the Gospel of Christ, for the Gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation. The spurious Gospel of today, which denies the Cross of Christ and the blood, which substitutes character, good works or something else for faith in the Work of Christ as sin-bearer, has no power to save. God cannot save in any other way than the way made known in the Gospel of Christ, who died for our sins. And what is salvation? It includes the whole of Christ's redemption work. It includes Justification, Sanctification, and Glorification. Saved from the guilt of sins; saved from the power of sin; saved from the presence of sin. Salvation from wrath and eternal damnation; salvation from the power of darkness and sin's awful dominion; salvation unto eternal glory. The word includes all the sinner needs. The cross of Christ has supplied every need. If man had to do something with it and could help along in his salvation, it would be an imperfect and insecure salvation. But God being the author, it is His salvation and thus (Acts 28:28) it is a perfect salvation, a salvation which is both deliverance and safety forever. (Philippians 2:12 "Work out your own salvation" is often quoted as meaning that we must work to be saved and to stay saved. It means that we are to work out with results the salvation which is ours by faith in Jesus Christ.) And this salvation is to any one that believeth, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. Faith is the means of obtaining this salvation. Of this we shall hear more in the third and fourth chapters. Furthermore, in the Gospel "the righteousness of God" is revealed. This great word will receive our closest attention in the annotations of the third chapter. Here we briefly state that the Gospel of Christ makes known that the very righteousness of God, which condemns a sinner, is now on the side of the believing sinner. it is revealed from faith to faith, which means that it is not on the principle of works, but on the principle of faith.

2. The Need of Salvation Demonstrated. The Whole World Guilty and Lost. Chapter 1:18-3:20.

CHAPTER 1:18-32.

1. Wrath Revealed from Heaven. 18.
2. Gentile Knowledge of God. 19-20.
3. Turning from God to Idolatry. 21-23.
4. God Gave Them Up to Corruption. 24-32.

Verse 18

God now demonstrates that the whole world is destitute of righteousness and needs salvation. Verse 18-3:20 is parenthetical, showing the moral condition of the whole race, away from God and lost and therefore under wrath. In this verse we read that wrath is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness. It is a solemn declaration. All who are ungodly and unrighteous, who oppose the truth by living in sin are under wrath. And this is now shown to be the actual condition of the entire race, Gentiles and Jews. All are by nature the children of wrath (Ephesians 2:3). A holy God must forever exclude from His Presence those who are His enemies by wicked works.

Verses 19-20

The heathen world in its moral history is first described. The heathen darkness which prevails now in idolatry and its attending degradations was preceded by the knowledge of God and produced by turning from God. Man can know God, in and through creation; His eternal power and Godhead are clearly seen in the things that are made. "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth His handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech and night unto night showeth knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard" (Psalm 19:1-3). And there was no doubt also a primeval revelation, though unwritten, so that the Gentiles could know God.

Verses 21-23

They knew God and glorified Him not. They turned away from the light. Here is the true law of evolution, not an evolution upward as taught so much at the present time, but an evolution downward. The ascent of man is a delusion; the descent of man is the truth. The only possible way of lifting man, who has fallen so low, yea beneath the beast, is the Gospel of Jesus Christ. "They became vain in their imaginations." The word imagination means, perverse, self-willed reasonings revealing the evil heart beneath from which they spring. Then their foolish heart was darkened. The next step down is that they professed themselves wise and became fools. Rejecting the light and turning away from God, they became philosophers and thought to find out things by searching. Idolatry was the next step. "A god, in some shape, is a natural necessity of man. His natural desire, in his first apostasy from truth, is a god after his own heart." A brief history of idolatry is given. First they changed the glory of the incorruptible God into a likeness of an image of corruptible man. But they did not stop with this, but they worshipped birds, four-footed beasts and creeping things. Birds, flying through the air, therefore considered nearer heaven, are put above the quadrupeds, which walk on the earth and the creeping things, which cannot rise out of the dust and mire of the earth are the lowest form. They worshipped the serpent, as it is still done by the Indians in Arizona. And idolatry is not confined to the heathen nations, it is practised in that great apostate system Romanism. A piece of bread, under an elaborate ritual, is lifted up and claimed to be changed by a few words of a sinful man, into the body and soul of the Son of god; then they fall down and worship. The mass is a blasphemous idolatry.

Verses 24-32

Then moral corruption of the worst kind follows. They had given Him up and now He gives them up. Three times we read that God gave them up. But why should there be a threefold repetition of the fact that He gave them up? Man is composed- of body, soul and spirit. The first giving up is as to the body; this is found in verses 24-25. Then He gave them up to vile passions; this concerns the soul and the horrible things stated in verses 26-27 are the results. These were practised openly in the Greek and Roman world in the days of the Apostle Paul. Ancient literature bears abundant witness to that effect. These vile things are still going on in heathen India, China, Africa and elsewhere. They are found likewise in the midst of Christendom. Whenever and wherever the Truth of God is abandoned, degradation in every way follows, for the Truth of God alone can restrain evil. The third giving up is found in verse 29. Given up to a reprobate mind, which involves the spirit of man. "All these things spoken of here are clearly regarded as the recompense" even now, of the error of the creature, in departing from the Creator. "The world is thus regarded as under a judicial bondage of sin and dishonor. Men eat the fruit of their own ways, sometimes pleasant to the taste of corrupted nature, but with prospect of Divine and eternal judgment at the end. The very lusts which govern and torment the slaves of sin are, as it were, the earnest and token of that wrath of God, which, now revealed from heaven, will yet deal with ungodliness and unrighteousness of unrepentant sinners after death" (Hebrews 9:27). (Pridham on Romans)

Then follows a description of the sins, the fruits of a corrupt human nature, sins which were the characteristic features of heathendom when this Epistle was written. If we turn to 2 Timothy 3:1-5 we find a similar list, which corresponds in a striking way with the list at the close of the first chapter

of Romans. There is, however, an important difference. As already stated Romans 1:29-31 describes the moral condition of the heathen world in Paul's day, but 2 Timothy 3:1-5 describes the moral condition of the professing Christian masses of the last times, church members who have the form of godliness and who deny the power thereof. They make an empty profession, their hearts are away from God and the last days of this age revert to the moral conditions in which the heathen world was in the days of the Apostle. And these characteristics prevail everywhere in Christendom. The last verse of our chapter tells us, that they know that they are worthy of death, yet they keep on in their evil ways.

CHAPTER 2

1. The Gentile Moralist and Reformer and His Condemnation. 1-6.

2. The Two Classes. 7-16.

3. The State of the Jew. 17-29.

Verses 1-6

But in the heathen world there were such who gave witness against the immoral condition, the different vices. There were Moralists, Reformers and Philosophers like Socrates, Seneca and others. They judged and condemned certain evils. But God declares that they were not a whit better than the rest. The very things they condemned they were guilty of themselves. One of their own writers declared, "I see the good and approve of it and follow the evil." Thus they practiced evil, because the same evil heart was in them; in spite of their ethical writings, they were corrupt. And this is not confined to heathen moralists in the past, the same is true of others during this age, who judged existing evils and condemned them, while later they were found out to do the very things they condemned. Such is the unregenerated heart of man. They cannot escape the judgment of God. They were impenitent, despising the riches of His goodness and were treasuring up unto themselves wrath against the days of wrath.

Verses 7-16

God is righteous and He will render every man according to his deeds. Then two classes are mentioned. The first are those who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, and to that class God will give eternal life. (Eternal life is here not, as in John's Gospel a present possession. but is that to be entered in after death.) How is this to be applied? Does this answer the question how man is to be saved? it does not, but it is the question of God's moral government. Man in his unconverted state cannot obtain eternal life by patient continuance in well doing, for we read later that God's Word declares "there is none that doeth good, no, not one." Man cannot seek for glory for it is written, "there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God" (3:11). On these terms no human being can obtain eternal life. Man is a sinner and all the wages he can earn is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord (6:23). If eternal life is received by faith in Jesus Christ then man is able to do right and live the life that pleases God. Then there is the other class; those who obey not the truth, who live in unrighteousness, who reject His Word. Indignation and wrath is in store for such and this is the condition in which Jews and Gentiles are by nature "Among whom also we (Jews) all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath even as others (Gentiles)" (Ephesians 2:3). God states in these verses the principles on which He judges according to man's works, and as man is a sinner and cannot do good works, man is therefore under condemnation.

And likewise there is no respect of persons with God. The Jew may boast of a higher place than the Gentile, but God deals with all alike. The Gentiles had not the law and therefore sinned without law and they cannot escape the righteous judgment of God. They had the witness in Creation, as seen from the first chapter, and besides this there is conscience and that witnesses of what is sin; they

have the knowledge of good and evil and are therefore morally responsible. They turned from God and they will be judged apart from the law; but it is more than that "they shall perish without the law." That completely answers the teaching that the mercy of God covers in some way the heathen world and that the heathen are not lost. And the Jews had the law and did not keep it. Could the possession of the Law make them just before God? Certainly not, "for not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified." "For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse, for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the law to do them" (Galatians 3:10). And theirs will be the greater judgment, for they knew His will and did not according to His will and shall be beaten with many stripes (Luke 12:47). The entire passage deals with the judgment of a righteous God and that neither the Gentile without the law nor the Jew with the law is righteous before God, but that both classes must fall under the judgment of God. And there is a day appointed when this righteous judgment will be executed by the Son of Man, our Lord. And that none can be just by doing is seen in Paul's defense of the Gospel.

Verses 17-29

Then the case of the Jew is more specially considered. He possessed the Law, the Holy Scriptures. And he rested in the law; the Apostle knew something of that in his own experience for he had declared "that touching the righteousness which is in the law" he thought himself "blameless." (Philippians 3:6). The Jew still does the same thing. He rests in the law and in the obedience to it for righteousness. But the law was never given for man to obtain righteousness. "For by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified" (Galatians 2:16). The law was given to convict of sin and not as a means to obtain righteousness. All the outward righteousness of which the Jew boasted, especially in the strictest sect of the Pharisees, was but an attempt to cover the inward corruption of a heart which cannot bring forth the fruits of righteousness. The Scribes and Pharisees were "like unto white sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead bones, and of all uncleanness" (Matthew 23:27). Self-righteous, despising others, condemning others—such was the state of the Jew, as he rested in the law, boasted of God and as being instructed out of the law. But the Spirit of God now uncovers his true condition. They violated that law. All the sins forbidden by the law were secretly and publicly committed by them. They dishonored God so much so that the name of God was blasphemed among Gentiles through them. Their whole history bears witness to all which is written in these verses. In Ezekiel's message we read that they profaned His name among the heathen (Ezekiel 36:20-23). And this condition is the same among ritualistic, law and ordinance keeping, professing Christians, who are religious, but unsaved. They boast in what they do and what they possess and yet they live in sin, and their conduct belies their profession.

Especially did the Jew boast of his circumcision as a means of having favor with God, as nominal Christians trust in the sacraments as the means of salvation. But circumcision or ordinances cannot save man and make him right before God. And besides this, circumcision had become a reproach among the Gentiles, because the Jews had dishonored God and denied the true meaning of circumcision. (Separation.) "Was circumcision of no use because of the dishonor put upon it? No, but that could not be counted such which was united with the transgression of that which it pledged one to keep. And the uncircumcised person keeping the commandments of the law would before Him be counted as circumcised. Israel, in fact, never contained all the sheep of the Lord's flock, as we know; and the apostle will presently remind us that Abraham himself was an example of the faith that might be in one uncircumcised. How indeed would the obedience of the uncircumcised condemn the man who, having both the letter of the law and circumcision also, yet violated the law! Plainly then, one must place what is internal and spiritual before what is external in the flesh. The true circumcision is spiritual and of the heart, and constitutes the true Jew, whose 'praise' (the word Jew means 'Praise') is found with Him who sees the heart." (Numerical Bible.)

Outward observances have no value; it is the heart which needs circumcision. They boasted in circumcision and all the time denied and broke the law. Verse 29 is often misused by certain sects who claim that all the Jewish promises are now fulfilled in those who are Jews inwardly, that is

Christians, and that Christians are the spiritual Israel and should keep the seventh day as Sabbath, etc. These arguments reveal ignorance in the scope of this Epistle. It is simply to prove the Jew with his boast in circumcision is lost. There is a circumcision of the heart, in the Spirit. Of this Paul wrote to the Philippians, "We are the circumcision, who worship by the Spirit of God, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh."

CHAPTER 3:1-20

1. Objections and Their Answers. 1-8.

2. The Whole World Under Sin. 9-20.

Verses 1-8

A number of objections are next raised and answered. "What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision?" Such would be the natural question of the Jew after reading the argument that the Jew is on the same level with the Gentile. This objection is stated here for the first time. It is important, for the Jews are God's chosen people and as the Apostle states later, to them belongs "the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God and the promises" (9:4). If God puts Jews and Gentiles upon the same footing, what then becomes of all these peculiar blessings promised to the Jews? And in chapter 11 the question comes up again. "I say then hath God cast away His people?" What superiority then hath the Jew? This question of a supposed objection is at once answered. The advantage of the Jew is "much every way." The chief advantage is stated "unto them were committed the oracles of God." They possessed what the Gentiles did not have, the Holy Scriptures, the Word of God. What we call now the Old Testament is therefore the Word of God, in which God spoke to His covenant people. And in these oracles of God are found the great promises for that race, which await their glorious fulfillment in the day of their national restoration.

Another objection comes next. And this is also met and answered (Verses 3-4). All did not believe, but that does not make the faithfulness of God void for those who do believe. God does not fail those who put their trust in Him, because others did not believe. Part of the answer is from David's penitential Psalm (Psalm 51:4). David justified God, declared that He was true and then condemned himself. In the day of judgment it will be found that God is true and every man a liar. But this second objection leads to still another one, which is also answered by the Apostle (Verses 5-6). But if our unrighteousness commend God's righteousness, what shall we say? Is God unrighteous who inflicteth wrath? If that were true, that He needs our sins for the praise of His righteousness "then how shall God judge the world?" But more than that. They had accused the Apostle and others of saying, "Let us do evil, that good may come." If it were true that our unrighteousness commends God's righteousness, then this slanderous statement would be perfectly right. For if our sins help to glorify God, why should we be judged for them? But the Apostle brands it as utterly false. For those who sin on such a principle awaits a damnation (judgment) which is just.

Verses 9-20

We have seen that the previous verses considered possible objections to the arguments of the preceding chapter. Verses 1-8 have therefore a parenthetical character. And now we come to the summary. Gentiles and Jews were proved to be absolutely unrighteous and therefore guilty and lost. The judgment wrath of a righteous God is upon them who had no law and upon them who possessed the law. The verdict of the Oracles of God is given. The following Scripture passages are quoted to confirm all that has been said: Psalm 14:1-3; 53:1-3; 5:9; 140:3; 10:7; Isaiah 59:7-8; Psalm 36:1. The whole human race is proved to be negatively and positively bad; nothing good and everything bad is in man. Read carefully these positive statements. We need to be reminded of them in a day when almost universally the truth of man's lost condition is disbelieved, and when

religious teachers constantly speak of "a better self," "a divine spark," "the germ of good"; when thousands follow the unscriptural teaching of a Fatherhood of God apart from true and saving faith in the Lord Jesus. Therefore read what God saith about the condition of his fallen creature. "There is none righteous, no, not one";--"There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God";--"there is none that doeth good, no, not one." How positive are these statements. And it is blessed to read in the Scriptures that God knows all the depths of sin into which we have been plunged. God knows all, and here He shows us the true picture of ourselves. "Wherefore by works of law shall no flesh be justified before Him; for through law is knowledge of sin." Men try to do something to meet God's requirements, but they cannot do that. All human efforts in doing good works are futile. That which is born of the flesh is flesh. And they that are in the flesh cannot please God. By deeds of law, all kinds of religious observances and good works, no flesh shall be justified before Him. Thus ends the revelation concerning man guilty and lost. The whole world is proved under sin. Man cannot save himself. If there is salvation, it must come from God. Upon this dark, dreary background a righteous God now flashes forth the wonderful story of redeeming love.

3. The Righteousness of God Revealed. Justification, what it is and what it Includes. Chapter 3:21-5:11.

CHAPTER 3:21-31

1. The Righteousness of God Manifested. 21-22.

2. Just and Justifier. 23-26.

3. Not of Works but of Faith. 27-31.

Verses 21-22

And now God comes forward and manifests His righteousness. Verse 21 must be connected with chapter 1:17. As previously stated chapter 1:18-3:20 is a parenthesis proving all the world destitute of righteousness and therefore guilty. Righteousness of God as revealed in the Gospel was the statement in chapter 1:17 and it is this which is brought more fully in view. The term "Righteousness of God" is much misunderstood. Not a few think it is the righteousness of Christ (a term nowhere used in Scripture) which is attributed to the believing sinner. They teach that Christ fulfilled the law, lived a perfect life on earth and that this righteousness is given to the sinner. All this is unscriptural. Righteousness cannot be bestowed by the law in any sense of the word. If the holy life of the Son of God, lived on earth in perfect righteousness could have saved man and given him righteousness, there was no need for Him to die. "If righteousness came by the law then Christ is dead in vain" (Galatians 2:21). It is God's righteousness which is now on the side of the believing sinner; the same righteousness which condemns the sinner, covers all who believe. And this righteousness is revealed in the Gospel. God's righteousness has been fully met and maintained in the atoning work of Christ on the Cross. By that wonderful work God is now enabled to save sinners and to save them righteously. The righteousness of God is therefore first of all revealed in the Gospel of Christ. Apart then from the law, righteousness of God is manifested, the righteousness of God by faith of Jesus Christ. And this righteousness now revealed was also witnessed to by the law and the prophets. The law of the different sacrifices, insufficient in themselves to take away sins, pointed to the great sacrifice, in which God would be fully glorified as well as His righteousness satisfied. There were many types and shadows. Now since the righteousness of God is fully made known in the Gospel we can trace God's wonderful thoughts and purposes in the types and histories of the Old Testament. To deny that the law testified to the coming redemption by the blood of Jesus Christ is to deny the Gospel itself. And this is done in the camp of higher criticism. But the Prophets also witnessed to it (Isaiah 41:10; 46:13; 51:5, 6, 8; 56:8).

It is blessed to see that the Prophet Isaiah who has the most to say concerning the sufferings of

Christ, also witnesses to the righteousness which should follow. "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (Isaiah 1:18). "Thou hast made me to serve with thy sins, thou hast wearied me with thine iniquities. I, I am He that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake and will not remember thy sins" (Isaiah 43:24-25). "A just God and a Saviour" (Isaiah 45:21). "His Name... the Lord our righteousness" (Jeremiah 23:6). The old, old question never fully answered "how should man be just with God?" is now solved. Thus the Oracles of God witness to the righteousness of God. And this righteousness of God by faith of Jesus Christ is "unto all and upon all them that believe." It is unto all, which means that the propitiatory sacrifice of Christ is sufficient to save all. The whole world may be saved. It is "upon all that believe," which means that only those who believe on Christ are covered by the righteousness of God and are justified.

Verses 23-26

"Being justified freely by His Grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." Christ has met all, He paid for all our sins. If we believe on Jesus we are justified freely by His Grace, that is, as a free gift. And justification is acquittal; we are acquitted from sin and from any charge of it. "It is divine righteousness that acts in justifying; righteousness is just that attribute of God which is concerned in it. It is like a broad, effectual shield stretched over the believer, and for all like a house that with its open door invites men to take shelter from the coming storm of judgment." The redemptive work of the Lord Jesus Christ has satisfied every claim forever. Christ has paid the price and all who believe are fully acquitted from every charge and penalty. "Whom God hath set forth a mercy seat through faith by His blood." On the day of atonement on the mercy seat, overshadowed by the Cherubim, the blood was sprinkled. And now the better blood, that which alone can take away sin, is upon the mercy seat, and God is faithful and just on account of that blood, to justify the believer.

"To declare His righteousness in respect of the passing by the sins that had taken place before, through the forbearance of God." The sins that had taken place before, does not mean the sins committed before the conversion of an individual believer. It means the sins of believers before Christ had come and died. When sins were forgiven in Old Testament times God's gracious forbearance was manifested, but when Christ had paid the great redemption price, when His blood had been shed, then God's righteousness was made manifest in having declared righteous believers, who lived before Christ had died. In view of what God's blessed Son would do, a righteous God forgave the sins of all who believed. And now God is just; His righteousness is unchanged and fully maintained and as the just God He is the justifier of Him that believes on Jesus. The justification of the believer is fully consistent with the righteousness of God. Negatively stated "what if God were not to justify, declare free, a sinner who believes in Jesus?" Then God would not be just to the blood of Christ. And in view of these wonderful revelations of the Gospel of Christ, so far above man's wisdom, God-like from start to finish, how awful the rejection of this blessed Gospel, as well as the perversion of it! Surely a righteous God must deal with such in judgment of eternal wrath.

Verses 27-31

Boasting from man's side is excluded. The law could do nothing but condemn man. The principle of simple faith excludes all boasting. "Not of works lest any man should boast." It is all of God and therefore all the praise belongs to Him. And there is another question. God justifies the circumcision (the Jews); He justifies the uncircumcision by faith (Gentiles). "Do not we then make void the law by faith? Far be the thought! No, but we establish the law." The law is not made void but established by the Gospel, not in the sense that it is to help the sinner. The broken law and its curse was borne by Christ; therefore the law has been vindicated as well as the holiness and righteousness of God. The man who tries to be right with God by the works of the law makes the law void, for he will not live up to the letter of the law, as the law demands and excuses his failures at the expense of the

law, which is holy and good.

CHAPTER 4

1. The Witness of Abraham to Justification. 1-5.
2. As Confirmed also by David. 6-8.
3. Circumcision the Sign of the Covenant. 9-12.
4. Faith in Him Who Raiseth the Dead. 13-25.

Verses 1-5

Two witnesses are summoned next in whose lives the truth of justification by faith is illustrated. The Jews boasted of Abraham as the father of their nation. "Abraham our father" is still the common phrase used by all orthodox Jews as it was in the days of John the Baptist, as he declared, "Say not within yourselves, We have Abraham to our Father." How then was Abraham counted righteous before God? Was he justified by keeping the law? That was impossible, for the law was 430 years after Abraham. He was not justified by works. He was a sinner like every other human being. He had no works to justify him. But what saith the Scripture? "Abraham believed God and it was counted unto him for righteousness." Abraham simply believed God when He gave him a promise (Genesis 15:5-6) and God said, you have no righteousness, but I take your faith instead of righteousness. Faith was reckoned to him for righteousness. There is then a difference between the righteousness of God in the previous chapter and the righteousness imputed in this chapter. And a blessed statement it is "But to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is reckoned for righteousness." Abraham did not work. To him that worketh not, God reckons a reward. And what a reward. What God puts on the side of him, who believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, will only be fully known when redeemed sinners are in His presence. "The glory which Thou has given me I have given Them" (John 17:22). This wonderful utterance of our Lord tells us of the great reward in store for him that worketh not, who, as ungodly, believes on Christ, who died for the ungodly. Thus faith is reckoned for righteousness and has its reward of glory through grace. The statement in Galatians 3:6-9 must be studied in connection with these verses. "Even as Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him for righteousness. Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the Gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. So then they which be of faith are blessed with believing Abraham." (In Galatians analyzed and annotated this statement is more fully explained.)

Verses 6-8

And David is the second witness. David and Abraham are mentioned in the first verse of the New Testament. The covenant God made with Abraham and with David make these two men the leading men of the nation. Now Abraham had no law, but David was under the law. David describeth the blessedness of the man (whosoever he may be) to whom God imputes the righteousness without works. The beautiful 32nd Psalm is quoted. The blessedness of the believer is there described. Iniquities forgiven; sins covered; sin no longer imputed. He does not impute sin, but imputes righteousness. Forgiveness takes the place of sin, and everlasting righteousness has covered the believer's iniquity, hiding it alike from the eyes of Divine glory, and from the conscience of the justified vessel of His grace; and significantly it is stated in that Psalm "for this cause shall every one that is godly pray unto Thee in the time when Thou mayest be found." This is the way to be godly, confessing ourself a sinner, confessing sin and believing on Him, who justifieth the ungodly.

Verses 9-12

The question of circumcision is raised again. The Jew boasted in circumcision as placing him into a position of favor and blessing before God. Is this blessedness, justification by faith, sins put away, righteousness imputed, for the circumcision, the Jews, only, or does it come also upon the uncircumcision, the Gentiles? When Abraham was declared righteous he was still in uncircumcision. The historical account in Genesis shows that circumcision followed the declaration "he believed God and it was counted to him for righteousness;" circumcision did not precede his faith which was reckoned to him for righteousness. He was in uncircumcision, practically a Gentile, and circumcision was a sign and seal of the righteousness of faith. All this manifests the wisdom of God. It was divinely arranged so that Abraham "might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised (Gentiles) that righteousness might be imputed unto them also; and the father of circumcision to them who are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the steps of the faith of our father Abraham, which he had being uncircumcised." Here we have the best possible argument that ordinances, or sacraments so called by man, have no part in bestowing salvation upon man. Baptism is called "a sacrament" and ritualistic Christians hold that it is necessary to receive the blessing of forgiveness. Others who do not hold to corrupt ritualism, also teach that Baptism as an ordinance is necessary for salvation. This portion of the Epistle answers completely these unscriptural claims. "For by Grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God. Not of works lest any man should boast" (Ephesians 2:8-9).

Verses 13-25

This section is of deep interest and must be carefully studied. While we had the atoning death of Christ so far before us, resurrection is now brought to the foreground as another important fact of the Gospel. The faith of Abraham is defined. How did he believe? When the promise was given that he should have a son and numerous offspring (Genesis 15:4-5), he believed God, who quickeneth the dead (resurrection) and calleth those things which be not as though they were. Abraham was an old man and Sarah was far beyond the time of childbirth; their case was humanly impossible. But Abraham believed that God could bring life from the dead, that He had the power to touch a grave and bring life out of it. "Against hope he believed in hope--and being not weak in faith he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb; he staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; and being fully persuaded that what He had promised, He was able to perform. And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness." From Genesis we know that he was also weak in faith and that he acted in unbelief. But this is graciously passed by. God, so to speak, had forgotten his unbelief and remembered it no more.

The application of all this is found in verses 23-25. The promised seed was more than Isaac, it was Christ; so that Abraham believed the God who raised the Lord Jesus from the dead. And we believe on Him also. Our Lord was delivered for our offences and has been raised for our justification. His resurrection is the blessed and positive proof that our sins are completely put away. For this reason the resurrection of Jesus, our Lord, is the justification of the believer. We have then a threefold justification of the believer. We are justified by His blood; He bore our guilt and penalty. We are justified by His resurrection, because this assures us that the work is done and we are accepted, and we are justified by faith, which is reckoned for righteousness.

CHAPTER 5:1-11

1. What Justification Includes. 1-11.

The blessed results of justification are next revealed. What justified believers possess and what they may enjoy is the theme of the opening verses of this chapter. The first thing mentioned is that all who are justified by faith have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Peace was made

in the blood of the Cross, He who died for our sins is our peace. His greeting to the assembled disciples on the resurrection day was "Peace be unto you," and then He showed unto them His hands and His side, and again He said, "Peace be unto you." This peace with God we have as believers in Christ. It is settled forever and can never be disturbed. Some times Christians ask others if they made their peace with God. They mean by it, turning away from sin, repentance, conversion, surrender, etc., as if those actions from our side could make peace with God. This is incorrect and the reason why so many professing Christians lack the assurance that they have peace with God is in this very fact, that they are constantly trying what they term "to be right with God." Peace does not need to be made, it was made when Christ died for our sins. And into this peace we enter when we believe on the Lord Jesus and are justified freely of all things. We may live sober, earnest and useful Christian lives for fifty years or longer and at the end of such a devoted life we have not more of the peace with God than we had the moment we trusted in Christ. And our failures and stumbling walk as the "beloved of God, called Saints" our sinning, can never disturb and undo that peace.

The second result is that we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand. We have a perfect standing before God in Christ, and perfect access. We stand in grace, accepted in the beloved One and this grace keeps and sustains. We are the children of God made nigh by blood. Grace makes us nigh. We can draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith. Our faithfulness cannot increase this standing in Grace, nor can our unfaithfulness decrease it, for the simple reason that it is Grace. The third result of justification is "the hope of the glory of God" in which we can now boast. The only title to glory is the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. Christ has secured the glory for us and has made us sharers of His own glory He received from God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory. People speak of fitting themselves for heaven by living good lives. No one can be fitted for heaven. The only fitness is the new nature, received in the new birth. And that nature is given to the justified believer when he is justified by faith. That there are, special rewards for sacrificing service is very true, but to be in glory is a matter of grace and is given along with justification. The glory of God is the Hope of righteousness (Galatians 5:5). These three things cover the past, the present and the future. Past; Peace was made. Present; Standing in this Grace. Future; The Hope of the Glory of God. The approach to God in the tabernacle illustrates this beautifully. First the brazen altar, the type of the sacrifice of Christ; then the laver for washing, the candlestick, the table--typifying the cleansing, light, food and fellowship, the grace wherein we stand. Then behind the veil the glory of Jehovah, which ere long God's people shall reach when He calls them home. How happy God's people should be in possession of such precious things with the knowledge of sins forever put away!

But we are still in the wilderness and there are tribulations. And in tribulations, as justified and assured of the glory of God, we can even boast (the word used in the Greek) in them. Tribulation worketh patience; and patience experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed. "Here is how that which is against us works for us; and notice that the very first thing effected is the breaking down of our own wills, those wills, that Jacob-like struggle so much with the will of God. Sovereign He must be; and spite of all that we have known of Him, it is what in practical detail we so little want Him to be. Amid the clouds and darkness that encompass Him in His providential dealings, faith that should find its opportunity finds oftentimes bewilderment and perplexity; yet in it we are forced to recognize our nothingness, and creep close to the side of Him who yet goes with us. Forced to let God be God, it is then that we get experience of a moral government which is that of a Father. The forcing of outward things comes to be read as drawings of Omnipotent Love that seeks us for its own delight. His ways, if still they may be beyond us, are not strange and still less adverse. They beget, not fear or misgiving, but a brightening hope, that steadies as it brightens." (F.W. Grant)

In verse 5 the Holy Spirit is mentioned for the first time in this Epistle. The highest truth is not the work of the Spirit in the believer, but the work of Christ for the believer. The Holy Spirit is here to take of the things of Christ and to show them unto us. Once more therefore Christ and His finished

work and the outflow from it are mentioned. God commending His love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us. Justified by His blood we shall be much more saved from wrath through Him. All believers are exempt from the wrath to come because they are one with Him who is the administrator of the judgments of God. And there is a second "much more". Reconciled by the death of His Son, much more being reconciled we shall be saved by His life, the life which is in God's own presence and which is in us, for He is our life. And the very highest result, the joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have received the reconciliation.

4. In Christ. The Sanctification of the Believer; his Deliverance from Sin and the Law; Children and Heirs. Chapter 5:12-8.

CHAPTER 5:12-21

1. Sin and Death Through the First Adam. 12-14.

2. In Adam by Nature; in Christ Through Grace. 15-21.

So far the subject of this Epistle has been our sins and how God has dealt with them in the Cross of Christ. The guilt and penalty of the sins of the believer are forever gone. With this section the question of sin itself is taken up and we learn how the justified believer is also sanctified in Christ and as such delivered from the dominion of sin and from the law. Furthermore we learn it also includes that believers are children and heirs of God. To distinguish between sins and sin is important. Sin is that evil principle in us, as fallen creatures, and sins are the fruits which spring from the evil root in us. Sin, the old nature, and how God deals with it in virtue of the redemption of Jesus Christ, is now, first of all, revealed. What we were in Adam and what we are through grace in Christ, how as identified with Christ we may be delivered from the power of indwelling sin, are truths unknown to many believers. Without this knowledge a true Christian experience, such which a believer should constantly enjoy, is impossible. One of the chief reasons why true believers are carried about with divers and strange doctrines, is the ignorance of these great facts of our redemption in Christ as unfolded in this part of Romans. How many others are constantly striving and struggling to lead a spiritual life and fail in it because they know not the great principles of sanctification and deliverance in Christ.

Verses 12-14

"Wherefore as by one man sin entered into the world, and by sin death and thus death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." By one man, the first Adam, sin entered into the world (not sins, but sin). And death followed, which is physical death. "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return," and this death has passed upon the race because of sin. The margin of the authorized version contains a statement which is responsible for a very unscriptural teaching. The margin states "in whom all have sinned"; upon this it has been taught that the guilt of Adam has been imputed to all. This is not correct. We are not responsible for the sin of Adam nor are we held responsible by God for a sinful nature; we are responsible for the outworking of that nature, that is for our own sins. The wicked dead, those whose sins were not taken away, because they believed not, will not be judged for having had a sinful nature, but solely according to their works (Revelation 20:12). Death comes upon us on account of our sins, as it is stated in this verse "death passed upon all men for that all have sinned."

"For until the law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law; nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of Him to come." This looks difficult, but it is simple after all. The law was given by Moses; from Adam to Moses there was no law, men were left to conscience,

by which they knew good and evil. But death reigned nevertheless from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression. Adam had a commandment which he transgressed, inasmuch as there was no law till Moses, the generations could not sin after the similitude of Adam's transgression. Sin is lawlessness and not as the faulty translation of 1 John 3:4 states, "sin is the transgression of the law." However, sin becomes transgression when there is a law. As there was no law from Adam to Moses, sin was therefore not imputed as transgression. But as they all sinned, death reigned and there is also judgment afterwards for them. The last sentence of verse 14 "who is the figure of Him that was to come" is the important statement which is fully developed in the verses which follow and upon which the whole argument rests.

Verses 15-21

The first Adam is the type of the last, Adam, the Lord Jesus Christ. The same comparison is also found in 1 Corinthians 15 "For as all in Adam die, even so all in Christ shall be made alive" (verse 22). This passage has often been used by those who teach the ultimate, universal salvation of the whole race. It has nothing whatever to do with salvation from the penalty of sin, but it applies to the resurrection of the bodies of the redeemed. Here in Romans the contrast is of a different nature. Adam and Christ are viewed as two heads, having each his offspring to whom they communicate something. The first Adam bestows upon his offspring the results of his sin; Christ, the last Adam,* bestows upon those who belong to Him, by personal faith in Him, the blessed consequences of His great work. (Christ is never called the second Adam, but the last Adam, as there will not be another after Him.) A sinful nature and physical death is what we have as the children of the first Adam. In Christ the believer receives a sinless nature, eternal life and glory. In this sense Adam is the figure of Him to come.

The first sentence of verses 15 and 16 is best put in the form of a question. This helps much in understanding this deep portion of the Epistle. "But shall not the free gift be as the offence?" By the offence of Adam the many died, his offspring has been affected by his Offence. In like manner the grace of God and the gift of Grace, which is by the other Adam, Jesus Christ abounds also to the many. The question asked must therefore be answered in the affirmative. This and the following verses have also been used to teach that there is universal salvation. But it does not mean that. The condition "faith in Christ" must not be lost sight of. We are all in the first Adam by the natural birth; identification with the second Man is only possible by the new birth and that takes Place when a sinner believes on Christ and in His finished work. Those who do not believe are in Adam and are dead in trespasses and sins. "And shall not as by one that has sinned be the gift? For the judgment was of one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification" (verse 16). The sins committed are here in view. Our sin brought judgment. The free gift of justification, on account of Christ's atoning sacrifice, is blessedly sufficient to deliver from the guilt of many offences. "For if by the offence of one death reigned by the one; much more shall those who receive the abundance of grace, and Of the free gift of righteousness, reign in life by the one, Jesus Christ" (verse 17). The Previous verse spoke of the guilt of sins, which rests upon all those who are in Adam and this guilt is met in Christ by justification. In verse 17 death which reigns in the first man is met by reign of life in Jesus Christ. Those who believe on Him have life now and are delivered from the reign of death. When He comes, the bodies of His Saints will be raised in incorruption and we who remain shall be changed in a moment and be caught up into His Presence without dying. Verse 18 in the Authorized version is poorly translated and misleading. "So then as it was by one offence towards all men to condemnation, so by one righteousness towards all men to justification of life." This blessed contrast between Adam and Christ is made again in verse 19. "For as indeed by the disobedience of the one man (Adam) the many have been constituted sinners, so also by the obedience of the one the many shall be constituted righteous." Here it is the contrast between Adam's disobedience and Christ's obedience. And the obedience of Christ which constitutes all who believe on Him righteous, is not His obedient life, but His obedience in the death of the cross. "But law came in in order that the offence might abound; but where sin abounded grace overabounded, in order that, even as sin has reigned in the power of death, so also grace might reign through

righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Here for the first time a reason is given why God gave the law. The Epistle to the Galatians will bring the subject of Law and Grace more fully to our attention. Law came in that the offence might abound; it has constituted man a transgressor and in this sense the offence abounds. But grace overabounds. It deals with the transgressions and reigns through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. Wonderful and preciously deep contrast! In Adam sin, condemnation and death. In Christ righteousness, justification and eternal life; yea much more, eternal glory. In Adam we have his constitution; in Christ we possess through grace His life and glory.

CHAPTER 6

1. Dead with Christ to Sin. 1-7.
2. Risen with Christ and Alive to God. 8-11.
3. Sin shall Not Have Dominion. 12-14.
4. Servants to Righteousness. 15-23.

Verses 1-7

We have learned from the previous chapter that the justified believer is in Christ and fully identified with Him. God sees the believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, no longer in Adam, but in Christ, the head of a new creation. "So if any one be in Christ, it is a new creation the old things have passed away, behold all things have become new" (2 Corinthians 5:17). Judicially the believer therefore is dead to sin, the old man was crucified, put completely to death in the death Of Christ, and the believer is alive to God in Him. But this wonderful part of the Gospel must become a reality in the life and experience of the believer. God beholds us as dead to sin in Christ and alive in Himself, this must be lived out. This is the solemn responsibility of the justified believer. And we are not to do this in our own strength, but in the power of the indwelling Spirit, who is also given to the believer. All this is unfolded in this chapter.

"What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" Inasmuch as we have died to sin in the death of Christ, the practical deliverance of sin and its dominion must be manifested in our lives. As we find later the old nature, the flesh is still in the justified believer, but he has also another nature, another life and he is therefore enabled in the power of that new life and his identification with Christ, to continue no longer in sin. It is a most positive fact "dead to sin" and this is true of all believers positionally in Christ, and therefore the Holy Spirit tells us that we should no longer live therein. And this truth is illustrated in Christian baptism; it is into Christ's death and illustrates the truth of death and burial in Christ. Baptism therefore does not save. It has no power to put a sinner in Christ, nor can it convey forgiveness of sins and impart the new life. Faith alone is needed for that, and when the sinner believes, the grace of God saves and accomplishes identification with Christ. And furthermore we are more than dead and buried with Christ "as Christ was raised up by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." We share in His resurrection. What the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ did to Him, raising Him from the dead, He does to all who believe on Him. "He hath raised us up together" (Ephesians 2:6). We possess His life, the risen life and therefore we should also walk in the power of this life. Our old man (what we are in Adam), was crucified with Christ. When He died we also died. Our old man was crucified with Christ "that the body of sin might be annulled, so that we should be slaves to sin no longer." Many have been misled by the mistranslation which states "that the body of sin might be destroyed" and teach that the old nature is completely eradicated. But it does not say destroyed, but annulled, or cancelled. The body of sin is our mortal body with the law of sin in its members. And as long as we have this mortal body, the law of sin is in its members. But the operation of that law is annulled for the believer, who in faith, as we shall see later, reckons himself to be dead unto sin and alive unto God

in Christ Jesus. And therefore the believer is enabled to be no longer a slave to sin, as the natural man is. A dead man is justified or discharged from sin; the tyrant's power is at an end when the subject over which he domineers is dead. And so we being crucified with Christ escape the tyrant's power, and ultimately when the Lord comes this mortal body will be changed and sin itself will be forever gone.

Verses 8-11

Inasmuch as we have died with Christ we shall also live with Him. Death hath no more dominion over Him; He liveth unto God. And all this is true of the believer. Then comes the most important answer to the question raised, in the beginning of the chapter. "Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?" "In the same manner reckon yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God in Christ Jesus." This is an exhortation to take hold of this great and deep truth, the identification of the believer with Christ in death and resurrection. Reckon is an act of faith. It means to believe all this and to appropriate in faith what God has put on our side in Christ Jesus. We must reckon that we are dead and in possession of the life which empowers us to live unto God. "We reckon this is so, not feel it to be so. It is an entire mistake, and fraught with important consequences, to imagine this being dead to sin to be a feeling or an experience. We cannot feel Christ's death on the cross, and it was there He died to sin, and we because He died. If it were experience, it would be an absolute perfect one, no evil thought, feeling, or desire, ever in the heart; and this not true of some of the more advanced, but of all Christians and that always. But this is contrary to the experience of all. The attempt to produce such a condition in ourself ends either in the misery of utter failure, or, still worse, in self-satisfaction, indeed, the well-nigh incredible delusion for a Christian, that he is as impassive to sin as Christ Himself! The words do not express such an experience. (As claimed by Perfectionists and Holiness sects.) In every way, it is plain that it is not an experience of which the apostle is speaking here. We could not be told to reckon what we experience. What we reckon is a fact for faith, the fruit of the work done for us, not of that done in us. Because Christ died unto sin once for all, and in that He liveth, liveth unto God, thus also do we reckon ourselves dead indeed unto sin, and alive unto God in Christ Jesus." (Numerical Bible.)

Verses 12-14

The exhortation which follows in verse 12, addressed not to the world but to justified believers, proves that sin is still in the mortal body of the believer. It is not destroyed. But while sin is in our mortal body, it has no more right to reign there. However it will reign, if we yield to the desires of the old nature. If a believer obeys the old nature in its lusts, he walks not in the Spirit but in the flesh. Whenever temptation comes, the believer must take refuge in prayer, in self-judgment and self-surrender and yield (or present) his members afresh as instruments of righteousness unto God. As long as the believer is in the mortal body there is the conflict between the flesh and the Spirit (Galatians 5:17). And if we walk in the Spirit we shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh; this necessitates that we make no provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof (Romans 13:14). Furthermore, the promise is given to the believer in Christ that sin shall not have dominion over him because he is not under the law, but under grace. The grace which has saved the believing sinner and made Him nigh unto God, teaches also to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts and to live soberly, righteously and godly in this present age (Titus 2:12). And more than that; grace supplies the power to live godly. Therefore sin shall not have dominion over a believer because he is under grace. But this promise must be appropriated in faith.

Verses 15-23

Another question is asked. "What then, shall we sin because we are not under the law, but under grace?" Another, "God forbid"--perish the very thought of it--is the answer. Whoever yields to sin falls under the mastery of sin. Then follows a word of praise. He thanks God that the believers to whom he writes, once servants of sin, but having obeyed from the heart (and true faith is obedience), they were made free from sin and became servants of righteousness. "Free from sin"

does not mean, as often taught, free from the old nature, but free from the domineering power of indwelling sin. Then there is the contrast between the former state in sin and the place of deliverance into which grace has brought the believer. In the former life as unsaved, slaves of sin, there was an awful fruit and the end of it is death. But now as servants of God, freed from sin's awful slavery, there is another fruit, the fruit of holiness and the end eternal life. How this fruit of the justified believer is to be produced we shall learn in the next chapter. Sin's wages is death; that is what man receives in payment for sin. Eternal life, the great and inestimable gift of God is bestowed through Jesus Christ our Lord.

CHAPTER 7

1. The Law and its Dominion. 1-3.
2. Dead to the Law and Married to Another. 4-6.
3. Concerning the Law; its Activities and Purpose. 7-13.
4. The Experience of a Believer in Bondage to the Law. 14-24.
5. The Triumphant note of Deliverance. 25.

Verses 1-3

The law is now more fully taken up. We have learned before that by the works of the law no man can be justified before God. But when the sinner is justified by faith, does he need the law to please God? Can obedience to the law produce in him the fruit of holiness unto God? What is the relation of the justified believer to the law? Is he still under the dominion of the law or is he also delivered from the law and its bondage? These questions are answered in this chapter. An important principle is stated in the first verse. The law has dominion over a man as long as he lives. The law has dominion over man (both Jews and Gentiles). The law, which is holy, just and good (verse 12) condemns man, his sinful nature and the fruits of that sinful nature, and in this sense it has dominion over every man and holds him in its grasp. But when death takes place, the rule of the law is broken. It cannot touch a dead man. The penalty of the broken law is death, when that sentence is executed, the law can have no longer dominion.

An illustration from the marriage law as instituted by God is given to make this clear. Husband and wife are united in a union till death dissolves it. The married woman is bound by that law to her husband as long as he lives. When he dies she is free and can be married to another. And we are become dead to the law by the body of Christ. The body of Christ means the death of Christ on the Cross. On the cross He bore the judgment which is our due. He bore the penalty and the curse of the law for us. "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us, for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree" (Galatians 3:13). The penalty of the broken law has been met and the law is vindicated. Inasmuch, then as His death is our death, in that we died with Christ, the law can have no more dominion over us; "we are dead to the law by the body of Christ."

Verses 4-6

The old union is dissolved. Death has done its work and it is now possible after being freed from the law to be married to another. In Galatians the question about the law and its authority is viewed from another side. The law was the schoolmaster unto Christ; now after faith is come, the full truth concerning redemption by the death of Christ is made known, we are no longer under a schoolmaster (Galatians 3:23-25). Being then dead to the law by the body of Christ we are married to another. And this other One is He who died for us and who is risen from the dead. Justified believers are in a living union with a risen Christ; He lives in us and we live in Him. And the result of this most blessed union is fruit unto God. The law could not produce any fruit whatever but only

death; nor can the legal principle bring forth fruit unto God in a believer. Ephraim was joined to idols as we read in Hosea. But Ephraim observed the Lord, heard Him and became like a green fir tree. And the Lord adds, "From Me is thy fruit found" (Hosea 14:8). The parable of the vine and the branches (John 15) illustrates in a simple and blessed way the apostolic statement, "Married unto another--that we should bring forth fruit unto God." As the branch is in closest union with the vine and the sap of the vine produces the fruit, so are we one with Christ, and abiding in Him we bring forth the fruit unto holiness, the fruit which pleases God.

And "when we were in the flesh" (our former state) the passions of sins were by the law. The law by its holy character brings out what the natural man is and stirs up the passions of sins. But it is different now. We are delivered from the law and we can serve in newness of Spirit. We have a new nature, even eternal life, and in that we can render a true spiritual service.

Verses 7-13

"Is the law sin?" is the next question raised. It springs logically from the statement that the passions of sins, coming out of an evil, sinful heart, were by the law and bringing forth fruit unto death. Still another "God forbid" is the answer. The law was given that we might have through that law the knowledge of sin. "I had not known sin, but by the law." I would not be conscious of lust, unless the law said, "Thou shalt not covet." The law given by a holy God is God's detective. The law forbids and the commandment at once brings out what is in the heart of man. Therefore, no blame can be put upon the law. Sin is that which must be blamed. Sin is lawlessness, rebellion against God and the law brings out that rebellion. Therefore apart from the law sin was dead, that is, dormant. But as soon as the commandment is given, the evil heart rebels against it and man is detected to be a sinner and a transgressor. Let us notice the change of the pronoun "we" to "I." Some thirty times this little word "I" is found in verses 7-25. We are brought upon the ground of personal experience; it has to be discovered and learned experimentally. The Apostle personifies this experience and speaks thus personally describing how a believer learns the lessons about the law, how the law cannot help a justified believer, and but makes of him a wretched man. It must also have been his own experience.

"For I was alive without the law once, but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died." This is the experience of a man who is ignorant of the spirituality of the law. He thinks himself alive, but when the commandment came, its spiritual demands realized (the law is spiritual, verse 14), the false notion of being alive was detected, for sin revived and he died, which means that sin, discovered by the law, condemned him to death. "And the commandment which was unto life was found for me to be unto death." In connection with the commandment, the law, it is written, "This do, and thou shalt live." And so in this experience--he tries next to get life by the law, but he found it was unto death, for the declaration of the law is "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them" (Galatians 3:10; Deuteronomy 27:26). He speaks of sin, his evil nature, as one who had deceived him into all this, so that the law could manifest its power in slaying him. Verse 12 is the real answer to the question, "Is the law sin?" The law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just and good. And because the law is holy it gives knowledge of sin and detects sin, bringing it to light in all its hideousness and then pronounces the sentence of death. One other question is asked, "Was then that which is good (the law) made death unto me?" God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceedingly sinful." It all comes back upon sin (the evil nature, the flesh). Thus by the commandment sin becomes exceeding sinful.

Verses 14-24

But all this must be learned by experience, especially the fact "I am carnal," the knowledge that in my flesh there dwelleth no good thing and that I have no power, I am powerless against indwelling sin. What person is it who describes his experience in these words? Some have applied it exclusively to the Apostle. Others state that it pictures an awakened sinner and not a converted

man. The man described is born again, but is in bondage to the law and is ignorant of his deliverance in Christ. We find first the statement "we know that the law is spiritual." This is the knowledge which a true Christian possesses concerning the law. And the Christian who knows this great truth, that the law is spiritual, also has learned another truth. "I am carnal and sold under sin." Here then it is where experience begins. True Christian experience is to know our full deliverance in Christ and to walk in the Spirit; the experience of a Christian in struggling with the old nature and discovering what is that old nature, the flesh, is put before us in verses 15-24. That we have here a converted person is seen by the fact first of all, that he does not want to do evil, he wants to do good and cannot do it and therefore hates what he does. The carnal nature, the flesh, which is still in a converted person, is thus demonstrated as enslaving him, however, he is no longer a willing slave, but he hates that old thing which has the mastery over him. In hating it and condemning sin, he does the same what the law does, for it also condemns sin. In this way he consents to the law that it is good. The seventeenth verse is of much importance. "Now then it is no more I that really do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." He learns the difference between himself as born again, in possession of a new nature, and the old nature. He begins to distinguish himself as in possession of a new nature that wills to do good, hating evil, and sin in him, the flesh in which dwells nothing good, but all that is evil. "For I know that in me, that is, in my flesh dwelleth no good thing, for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not." It is a great discovery to find out by experience, that although the believer is born again, he has a nature in him which is evil, which cannot bring forth a good thing. But the will is present with him to do good, because he is born again; however, he finds not the power in himself to perform what is good. And now the conflict between the two natures is on. It brings out some important facts. "It is no more I that do it, but sin that dwells in me." He as born again, no longer loves sin; he hates it. Because he does that which he does not want to do he can truthfully say "it is no more I that do it." Furthermore he delights in the law of God after the inward man. This can never be said of an unconverted man, but only he who has a new nature can delight in the law of God. But he finds himself in helpless captivity to the law of sin which is at work in his members. He finds out that while he has a new nature to will good and to hate evil, he has no power; sin is too strong for him. And this is to teach the believer that he must get power to overcome outside of himself. All his resolutions and good wishes cannot supply the strength to do. That he is self-occupied, seeking power by what he does and tries to do, is seen from the use of the little word "I." The name of the One in whom we have deliverance, Christ, is not mentioned once. The case is clear, it is the description of the experience of a believer, who is justified, born again, in union with Christ, dead with Him, risen with Him and indwelt by the Holy Spirit; but he lacks the knowledge of this and tries by his own efforts and in his own strength, through keeping the law, to obtain holiness. Having discovered that nothing good dwells in his flesh; that the flesh is not himself, but sin in him and that, because it is too strong for him, he is powerless, the cry of despair is uttered by him. "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" He has reached the end of self. He looks now for deliverance from another source, outside of himself. The answer comes at once. "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." In Him there is deliverance and what that deliverance is, we shall learn from the first four verses of the eighth chapter. The two laws are mentioned once more in the last verse of this chapter. With the mind, as born again, he serves the law and the law gives him no power; in the struggle with the old nature he is enslaved by the law of sin.

CHAPTER 8

1. In Christ; no Condemnation but Deliverance. 1-4.
2. Flesh and Spirit. 5-8.
3. The Body and the Spirit. 9-11.
4. Sons and Heirs of God. 12-17.

5. The Time of Travail and Groaning; the Future Redemption. 18-25.

6. The intercession of the Spirit. 26-27.

7. The Saints Calling; the Challenge and the Assurance. 28-39.

Verses 1-4.

We have reached the mountain-top of this great Epistle. What man is in the flesh and under the law has been fully demonstrated. "The flesh profiteth nothing" (John 6:63). The law cannot give power to deliver, but only produces wretchedness, and, as we saw, deliverance must come from another. "Power belongeth unto God" (Psalm 62:11); the power of deliverance must come from God. And this was the triumphant note in the previous chapter. "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." And now we see the believer in Christ Jesus, free from all condemnation, free from the law of sin and death, indwelt by the Holy Spirit, a child of God, an heir of God and joint heir with the Lord Jesus Christ." It is the contrasted statement of the privileges, the capacities, the security, and the prospects of the Christians as having the Spirit, that is here presented as the divinely wrought counterpart of the preceding description of man "as carnal, sold under sin." The proof and witness of human wretchedness is the Law. The title and measure of Christian blessedness is Christ. "As alive in Christ the believer is estimated, not according to the variable standard of his own emotions, but according to the eternal fixedness of Divine truth now realized and established in the person of Christ before God" (Pridham on Romans).

The first statement assures the believer in Christ that there is for him no more condemnation. In Christ Jesus, in identification with Him who died for our sins and is risen from the dead, in whom we have died and have life, in such a position condemnation is no longer possible, because nothing is left to be condemned. There can be no condemnation for those who are united to a risen Christ; as He is so are we. And this most blessed assurance is unconditional.

The words "who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" as they appear in the Authorized version must be omitted here; they have been proven to be an interpolation. We find them at the close of the fourth verse, which is the proper place for them.

But what makes the believer in Christ Jesus free from the law of sin and death, which is in his members? The second verse answers this question. "For the law of the Spirit, of life in Christ Jesus, hath set me free from the law of sin and death." The law of sin and death has lost its power by another law; the law of the Spirit is that of life in Christ Jesus. It means that the Spirit's law is that we are, as believers, for everything, for all things, dependent on Christ. In Him are all our springs and resources. He is our life and His life is in us. We are one with Him. To appropriate this in faith, identifying ourselves with Christ as God has done it, giving Him the preeminence, glorifying Him-- this gives power and deliverance. And the Spirit, the Spirit of holiness and power is also given to the believer; He dwells in Him. If the believer then walks according to the law of the Spirit, that is in Christ, we are made free from the law of sin and death. The righteousness of the law can in this way be fulfilled in us. But there is a condition. We must walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. What is the walk according to the Spirit? It is not self-occupation, nor even occupation with the Holy Spirit. Walking according to the Spirit is occupation with the Lord Jesus Christ. If the believer ever looks to Christ, depends on Him, draws all he needs from Him, if Christ is His all--then the believer walks according to the Spirit. Then there is power over the old nature and the righteousness, demanded by the law is being fulfilled. And we must not overlook the fact that God's love is mentioned in this blessed unfolding of our deliverance in Christ. The law was weak, it could not get its righteous requirements fulfilled, on account of the flesh, the fallen nature of man. Then God came in. "God sending His own Son in likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin condemned sin in the flesh." It points us once more to the cross.

"He has sent His own Son in 'the likeness of sinful flesh' as the cross manifests Him, but there for sin, our sin, putting it completely away, while, at the same time condemning it, utterly. Sin in the

flesh is condemned,--I myself, with all that is in me, my own thoughts, my will, my wisdom, my ways,--in the cross, I see the end of it all, but the end of it in the love which has come in fully for me and which now fulfills in me the righteous requirement of the law when it is no longer simply requirement, but the Spirit of God has filled my heart with the joy of Christ. 'The joy of the Lord is your strength.' I am free to give myself up to drink in this love which God has shown me and which rests upon me in Christ, in all the fulness of God's delight in Him. I have no cause now to ask: Must not God condemn the evil in me? He has condemned it, and I read the condemnation there where I find also Himself for me in a grace which knows no conditions, and which holds me fast, therefore, forever" (Numerical Bible.)

Notice that the opening verses of the eighth chapter refer us back to the fifth, sixth and seventh chapters. The believer is in Christ the last Adam and therefore beyond condemnation. (Chapter 5:12-21). Sin is not to have dominion over us (Chapter 6). Sin in the flesh has been condemned and the righteousness of the law is fulfilled by a walk according to the Spirit (Chapter 7). (To much included for 7.)

Verses 5-8

Next we find a contrast between the flesh and the Spirit. While the believer is no longer in the eyes of God in the flesh, the flesh, however, is still in him as long as he has this mortal body. There is therefore a conflict between the Spirit and the flesh. Humanity falls into two classes, those who are according to the flesh, the unsaved; and those who are according to the Spirit, believers in Christ. A believer is called to walk according to the Spirit, in the sphere into which he is brought through grace. He may walk according to the flesh, but that does not put him back into his former state, when unsaved, he was in the flesh. The mind of the flesh, the condition in which man is by nature, is described in a fourfold way:

1. It is death.
2. It is enmity against God.
3. The flesh is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.
4. They that are in the flesh cannot please God.

Such is the state of all who are not born again. But the believer is no longer in the flesh, but is in Christ and the mind of the Spirit is life and peace, which the believer possesses. The believer who walks carnally cannot please God, just as a man who is not born of the Spirit, cannot please God. The carnal walk of the believer results in a broken fellowship with God. But Christ is our Advocate with the Father and He restores while the indwelling Spirit leads to confession and self-judgment. The standing of a believer before God is always in Christ; God beholds us in Him and no longer in the flesh, the sphere of sin and death. The practical state of a believer is often varying. But our failures and shortcomings can never affect our standing before God in Christ. This is an important truth. Many true believers are in a miserable bondage, in doubts and fears, lacking assurance and the joy of salvation, because they do not know the fixed and unalterable standing a believer hath in Christ.

Verses 9-11

The believer's standing is, therefore, emphasized. "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so that the Spirit of God dwell in you; but if any one have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His." The believer is no longer in the flesh, but in the Spirit because the Spirit of God dwells in him. For the first time we have the blessed truth declared that the Spirit of God is in the believer. AS the Spirit of God, He marks the new standing before God; as the Spirit of Christ, He is evidencing the fact that the believer belongs to Christ, and that He produces in him Christ-likeness. Sometimes true believers ask the question, "How can I get the Holy Spirit?" Certain teachers say that a believer, after being saved, should seek the gift and sealing of the Spirit. To teach this is altogether

unscriptural. The gift and sealing of the Spirit are at once bestowed upon all who are in Christ, and every true believer is in Christ. "In whom ye also trusted, having heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also believing, ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise" (Ephesians 1:13). "He that hath sealed us with the Holy Spirit is God" (2 Corinthians 1:22). The sealing with the Spirit does not put a believer in Christ; but because we have trusted on Him we are sealed. This verse here in Romans is conclusive. The Spirit given to us marks off the believer as belonging to Christ. Acts 19:2 is frequently quoted to back up the erroneous teaching that the Spirit must be received in a definite experience after conversion. One little word is responsible for the error. The word "since" is mistranslated; it is "when." "Have ye received the Spirit when ye believed?"

Occupation with the Spirit of God and His indwelling is nowhere demanded of the believer. He has come not to testify of Himself, but to glorify Christ. Therefore He testifies of the blessed fact that "Christ is in you." The Spirit is life on account of righteousness. It means that the spirit of the believer is energized by the Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit is the power of life in the believer. What about the body of the believer? It is dead on account of sin. The body has not yet the effects of redemption in it; it is not yet quickened. But the mortal body of the believer has the promise of redemption. The Holy Spirit dwells in that body and He is the earnest of our inheritance. "If the Spirit of Him who raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He who raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies on account of His Spirit who dwelleth in you." This is the redemption for which we wait (see verse 23). It will come when the Lord comes for His Saints. The believer is nowhere taught to look for the death of the mortal body he has, but for the Coming of the Lord, who "shall change our body of humiliation that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able to subdue all things unto Himself" (Philippians 3:21). "Behold, I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye" (1 Corinthians 15:51-52; 1 Thessalonians 4:17). Here we have a blessed answer to the question asked in the previous chapter. "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" The answer is "the Lord Jesus Christ." And while the believer waits for that promised, coming deliverance, deliverance from the presence of sin, He walks in the Spirit, freed from the power of sin.

Verses 12-17

Believers are therefore no longer debtors to the flesh, to live after the flesh. We owe the flesh nothing, for it has never done anything for us. If a person lives according to the flesh, if this is the sphere in which he moves, he is "about to die," on the road to death. But if by the Spirit ye mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." "Death and life are here set in prospect before the soul as the results, respectively, of the path now chosen. As to the believer, he is characteristically one who is not in the flesh. This he is, not as the result of attainment, but by the grace of God. The appeal which the Apostle here makes is to the Christian conscience. Where there is life, there will be an answer to that appeal. The mortification of the deeds of the body is the result of the Spirit's energy, the energy of that Spirit, who produces in him the fruits of life, when unhindered in the gracious operations of His love. Mortification of the deeds of the body is looked for only from believers who are indwelt by the Spirit. There is, therefore, nothing in verse 13 that need chill in the least the confidence of the poor weak-spirited self-judging Christian. Those who are most given to self-judgment are they to whom the warning here expressed has the least application." The mortification of the deeds of the body does not mean asceticism. It is that which is more fully mentioned in Colossians 3:5-7. (If men live according to the flesh, they are on the way to death. It does not say that they will die. God's grace is always free to come in, but then if it comes in it takes one off the road to death; it does not speak in such a manner as if sin were of no consequence.--Numerical Bible.)

For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. This proves the believer to be in this blessed relationship. The life and walk in the Spirit is the outward evidence of sonship. And the Spirit we have received is not the Spirit of bondage, to fear and to doubt, but it is the

gracious Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. Abba is the Aramaic (the language spoken by Jews in Palestine). Father is the word the Gentile uses. Both Jews and Gentiles believing receive the Spirit of Sonship. They both have access by one Spirit unto the Father (Ephesians 2:18). "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father" (Galatians 4:6). The marks and evidences of the sonship of the believer are more fully given in the first Epistle of John (1:5-7, 2:1-3, 9, 10, 27, 28, 3:1-6, 14, 19, 24, 4:1-4, 7, 8, 15, 20, 21, 5:1-4, 10-12, 13).

Furthermore, the Spirit beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God. This witness is not a mere good feeling, which is subject to fluctuations, but the witness of the Spirit is in the Word of God. We know that we are the children of God, because the Word assures us that it is so; this is the witness of the Spirit. And our own spirit bears the same witness, for we know that we have passed from death unto life. "Hereby know we that we dwell in Him, and He in us, because He hath given us His Spirit" (1 John 4:13). We have the blessed consciousness of our relationship as children in our own spirit, the highest intelligence we possess in ourselves. "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the children of God.... Beloved, now are we the children of God, and it doth not appear what we shall be, but we know, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is" (1 John 3:1-2). We are heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ. And we suffer with Him--for the world knoweth us not as it knew Him not--and shall be glorified with Him, in the coming day of His glorious manifestation. Our fellowship with Him as God's children is now in suffering, and afterward in glory.

Verses 18-25

The highest summit of the Epistle has been reached. In Christ; no condemnation; free from the law of sin and death; indwelt by the Spirit of God; led by the Spirit of God; children of God; heirs of God; joint heirs with Christ--this is the blessed and sublime culmination. And as it is when we stand on some mountain-peak, a great vision now bursts upon us. It concerns the future. A wonderful glory is in store for the children of God. The sons of God are going to be manifested (verse 19). That Will be when Christ, the head of the new creation is manifested; then we shall also be manifested with Him in glory (Colossians 3:4). Then He will occupy the throne of His glory and "we shall reign with Him over the earth." All creation groaneth and travaileth until now, anxiously looking forward to that coming day when the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God. For creation was put into the place of corruption and death through the fall of man. But it was subjected to this not without hope. The hope of a ruined creation is the Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is both the Creator of all things and the Redeemer. Upon His blessed brow He bore the thorns, the emblem of the curse which rests upon creation. And when He comes, groaning creation will be delivered. Then "the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf and the young lion and fatling together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox" (Isaiah 11:6-9). It is the glorious vision of the coming age, the dispensation of the fulness of times, when all things will be gathered together in Christ. The Prophets and the Psalms tell out more fully the story of a restored creation, through Him who paid for it by His own precious blood. And we, who have the first fruits of the Spirit also groan within ourselves, awaiting that blessed consummation, when we shall come into our full inheritance, the redemption of our body. Our salvation is in hope of this future redemption and glorification. We wait patiently for it.

Verses 26-27

Prayer is now mentioned. We need it in the midst of the groans, the sorrows and sufferings with which we are surrounded and which is our lot as long as we are in this mortal body. And prayer is our refuge, the expression of our dependence upon God and our utmost confidence in Him. But while we know how to pray, we often do not know "what we should pray for as we ought." Then the Spirit Himself maketh intercession with groanings that cannot be uttered. "Prayer is most commonly the witness of our infirmities. The burdened heart may find itself too full for speech, too much

perplexed, for the ordering of its thoughts. But there is an utterance of supplication that makes no sound. It is the Spirit, as the helper of our infirmities, who makes these desires known to the God. Groaning in sympathy with the tried and longing heart, He makes His intercession for the Saints according to the will of God." Thus the mind of the Spirit in us is known of God-- and heard by Him. And then we must remember that besides this intercession of the Spirit there is the intercession of Christ at the right hand of God (Verse 34). The believer is therefore hedged about and made secure and if he walks in the Spirit, constant peace and joy will be His daily portion.

Verses 28-39

Therefore we know that to those who love God all things work together for good, to those who are called according to purpose. We can rest in God and commit all to Him. The purpose of God for His own, from eternity to eternity is blessedly revealed. "From God's foreknowledge of us in the past eternity to the accomplished glory of the future, there is a perfectly linked chain of blessing, no link of which can ever be sundered. God's purpose is that Christ His Son, should be a First-born among many brethren" (Numerical Bible). And the chain of blessing is--foreknown -- predestinated -- called -- justified and glorified. We do not enter into the controversies of the past concerning predestination, but repudiate that unscriptural conception that God has predestinated a part of the human race to be lost. This is incorrect in view of the statement of Scripture that God "will have all men to be saved and come unto the knowledge of the truth" (1 Timothy 2:4). But all are not saved because they believe not. (Foreknowledge expresses the original operation of the Divine mind, considered with reference to the pure and unapproachable majesty of the blessed and only Potentate. Predestination respects rather the condition of that which is thus foreknown, objectively regarded as a vessel of His will."--Pridham.) God knows all who would believe and these are predestinated, called, justified and Will be ultimately glorified. And His eternal purpose will not fail and all who are in Christ will be conformed to the image of His Son. This is the Hope of God's calling (Ephesians 1:18).

And what a blessed, most precious and glorious ending of this great chapter and the entire doctrinal section of this great Epistle! What shall we say then to these things? Our answer must be worship and adoration of the God who hath loved us so in giving His only begotten Son, who reached down to our misery and shame and who hath lifted us so high. The great truths of the Gospel are once more reviewed. God is for us. Who can be against us? The proof of it is that He spared not His own Son, but delivered Him UP for us all. With Him He has given us freely all things. God is the justifier; therefore "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?" Christ died, Christ is risen, Christ is at the right hand of God making intercession for us-- who then is he that shall condemn? And nothing can separate us from the love of Christ and the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. No condemnation and no separation. No more wrath but eternal glory! Such is the salvation of God.

II. DISPENSATIONAL. GOD'S DEALINGS WITH ISRAEL. Chapters 9-11.

1. Israel and God's Sovereignty.

CHAPTER 9

1. Paul's Yearning over Israel. 1-3.
2. What Israel Possesseth. 4-5.
3. God's Unconditional Election. 6-13.

4. God's Sovereignty. The Vindication of His Justice and Mercy. 14-26.

5. Mercy for the Remnant. 27-29.

6. Israel 's Rejection of God's Righteousness. 30-33.

This second division brings before us Israel and shows that the principles of the Gospel, as unfolded in the first eight chapters are in harmony with God's ways with Israel. Jews and Gentiles, those who have the law and those who had no law, were proved guilty before God. All have sinned and are equally lost. Both Jews and Gentiles are all under sin. The same God justifies the circumcision by faith, and also the uncircumcision. Jews were thus brought upon the same level with the Gentiles. There is no difference. Grace goes forth alike to Jews and Gentiles who believe. But this fact raises a most important question. How can all this be reconciled with the promises made in a special manner to the Jews? How can the principles be harmonized with God's faithfulness? Has God gone back on His Word and covenants? Hath God cast away His people? The answer to these questions and the demonstration that God is just and faithful in all His dealings with Jews and Gentiles is given in these three chapters.

Godet states that the problem "how can God set aside those He elected," is answered in three ways:

1. God preserves His entire liberty (9).
2. He shows that Israel 's sin is the true explanation (10).
3. God vindicates His action by foretelling future consequences (11).

Verses 1-3

Paul speaks of himself in each of these three chapters. Knowing that they rejected the salvation of God, he yearns and sorrows over his kinsmen. In the next chapter he expresses his heart's desire and prayer for their salvation, and in the eleventh chapter he mentions himself as an evidence that God has not cast away His people. The Jews, because he preached salvation to the Gentiles, looked upon him as an enemy of their nation and as a traitor. "Forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved, to fill up their sins always, for the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost." Thus he wrote to the Thessalonians (1 Thessalonians 2:16). In Jerusalem the Jewish mob cried, "Away with such a fellow from the earth." They hated him, but he loved his brethren, his kinsmen according to the flesh. It was this mighty love which burned in his soul, which constrained him to go up to Jerusalem, in spite of the warnings given by the Holy Spirit. So intense was his yearnings for them that he had wished to be cut off from Christ for them, if that were possible. He was like Moses, when he prayed, "If Thou wilt forgive their sin--; and if not blot me, I pray Thee, out of Thy book, which thou hast written" (Exodus 32:32).

Verses 4-5

And what is this people in the purpose of God? What are their possessions and privileges? It is the most favored nation on the earth. "What nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them, as the Lord our God is in all things that we call upon Him for?" (Deuteronomy 4:7). The adoption is theirs, as His family on earth, destined for earthly blessings (Amos 3:2). And God had said, "I am a Father to Israel " and " Israel is my son, my Firstborn." They had the Glory. In visible glory Jehovah dwelt in their midst. While absent now, the promise is, that in the future day of their restoration, that glory will return with the coming of the Lord (Isaiah 4; Ezekiel 43:4). Theirs are also the covenants; they were made with the nation; and the giving of the law. Furthermore, theirs is the service of God, that divinely instituted levitical ritual, so full of blessed and prophetic meaning. All other rituals are unauthorized counterfeits. They also have the promises. "Whose are the fathers, and of whom, concerning the flesh, Christ came, He, who is God over all blessed forever. Amen." (More than once the attempt has been made to change those wonderful words, bearing testimony to the Deity

of our Lord. The revised version, in its marginal reading, is one of the latest attempts to rob our Lord of this great and true tribute.) And all these great things belong to Israel. They still belong to them. When the time of their national conversion and restoration comes, all these things will be manifested in their fulness, even to a restored, glorious service in the millennial temple (Ezekiel 40-47). And these statements show that the Apostle to the Gentiles did not despise the nation Israel and its privileges.

Verses 6-13

Now if the nation as such had failed, as we find later, on account of unbelief, and they were rejected for the present, the Word of God had not failed on that account. If God had called the Gentiles and they received now the blessing of righteousness, it does not mean that the Word of God has come to naught. God's purpose concerning Israel cannot fail. But they prided themselves that they were of the seed of Abraham and therefore exclusively entitled to the promises. "We have Abraham to our father" (Luke 3:8), was their boast, and the Lord had told them "If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham" (John 8:39). They forgot in their blind antagonism to the Gospel that the Scriptures showed that blessing had its source with the choice of God, that blessing is the result of elective mercy and the title to it must be of faith. Divine election is the only ground of blessing. They are not all Israel, which are of Israel; neither because they are the seed of Abraham are they all children. If such were the case, then the children of the flesh, Ishmael and his offspring, were on the same ground with them. There was a promise made "At this time will I come, and Sarah shall have a son." In that promised son, in Isaac alone, the seed was called, therefore the children of the promise are counted for the seed. This showed that they had no right to expect Divine blessing simply on the ground of natural descent. And in the choice of Isaac, God's sovereignty and election is seen. They might therefore be Abraham's seed and yet not be Abraham's children; only those that are of faith are the children of Abraham (Galatians 3:7). The case of Jacob and Esau is next cited. Rebecca was their mother. Before the children were even born, and therefore had done neither good nor evil, to merit anything, it was said unto her, "the elder shall serve the younger." It was so ordered "that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of Him that calleth." If they claim and expect blessing merely on the ground of natural descent, then the descendants of Esau, the Edomites, must be admitted to the same blessings with them.* This they would not admit. Inasmuch as all rests upon God's unconditional election, their objections to the blessing of the Gentiles through the Gospel, God dealing with them in grace, were disproved by their own history. ("Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." The love for Jacob was unmerited. "Esau have I hated" stands written at the close of the Old Testament, after the continued wickedness of Edom had been fully demonstrated and merited God's indignation.)

Verses 14-26

God can choose whom He will. This is His sovereignty. Is then God unrighteous in doing this? God forbid. Two examples of God's sovereignty in mercy and in judgment are given. Had God dealt with Israel according to His righteousness, they would have been cut off. Then the sovereignty of God was displayed and Israel was spared. All rests upon that sovereign mercy--"So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy." And Pharaoh illustrates God's sovereignty in judgment. Pharaoh was a wicked, God-hating man. God had shown him mercy, but he hardened his heart and defied the Lord. In arrogant pride he said, "Who is Jehovah that I should obey Him? I know not Jehovah." Then He hardened his heart and made him a monument of His wrath. "Both were wicked-- Israel and Pharaoh. Righteousness would have condemned both. He has mercy on one, and hardens the other. He has mercy on whom He will have mercy, and whom He will He hardens, when simple righteousness would have condemned both. This is sovereignty. He proves Himself not merely righteous (the day of judgment will prove that), but proves Himself God." But man, the creature of the dust, replies to God and brings his finite thoughts to judge God. The questions in Verse 19 are severely rebuked. What is man that he should speak to his Creator! The thing formed speaks to Him that formed it. "Why hast Thou made us thus?" The potter can take

a lump of clay and form out of it two vessels, one unto honor and another unto dishonor. It is his right. God can do this according to His sovereign will, and none can say, What doest Thou? However, while this is God's right, that He can do so, if He chooses to do it, there is nothing said, that He has done so. "God's sovereignty is the first of all rights, the foundation of all rights, the foundation of all morality. If God is not God, what will He be? The root of the question is this; is God to judge man, or man God? God can do whatsoever He pleases. He is not the object for judgment. Such is His title: but when in fact the apostle presents the two cases, wrath and grace, he puts the case of God showing long suffering towards one already fitted for wrath, in order to give at last an example to men of His wrath in the execution of His justice; and then of God displaying His glory in vessels of mercy whom He has prepared for glory. There are then these three points established with marvelous exactitude; the power to do all things, no one having the right to say a word; wonderful endurance with the wicked, in whom at length His wrath is manifested; demonstration of His glory in vessels, whom He has Himself prepared by mercy for glory, and whom He has called, whether from among the Jews or Gentiles, according to the declaration of Hosea." (Synopsis by J.N.D.) The objections which were raised against God's dealings in race with Gentiles are completely met and answered. He calls whom He will and calling the Gentiles and showing them mercy has not cancelled the promises made to Israel.

Verses 27-29

Now while Grace goes forth to the Gentiles, mercy is also in store for Israel. Ultimately a remnant will be saved--not the whole nation, but a remnant. It refers us to a specific time, "When He will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness, because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth" (Isaiah 10:22-23). It is a prediction concerning the future. They will, when this age closes, pass through a time of judgment; in that period God in sovereign power and mercy will call a remnant of His people, the remnant so often seen in the prophetic Word and in the Book of Revelation. That remnant will be saved and will become the nucleus of the coming Kingdom; the unbelieving apostate Israel will be swept away in judgment.

Verses 30-33

The conclusion of this intensely interesting and often misunderstood chapter puts before us the fact of God's merciful dealings with Gentiles and Israel's failure. The Gentiles, who did not follow after righteousness, have attained to the righteousness, which is of faith. They believe the Gospel and enjoy the blessings of the Gospel. Israel failed. Why? They sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law, the way of failure and death. They rejected the principle of faith, even declared in their own Scriptures, "the just shall live by faith." They stumbled at the stumbling stone (1 Peter 2:8).

2. Israel's Failure and Unbelief.

CHAPTER 10

1. Israel's Condition. 1-4.
2. Righteousness by Works and by Faith. 5-13.
3. The Gospel Published Abroad. 14-17. 4. Israel's Unbelief. 18-21.

Verses 1-4

For His beloved people Israel the great apostle of the Gentiles prayed to God, that they might be saved. What an example he has given to us believers of the Gentiles. We owe a great debt to Israel; but how little prayer there is among Gentile Christians for the salvation of the Jews! Paul bears witness that they had zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. Their ignorance consisted in not knowing God's righteousness, that which is found in the first part of the Epistle,

seeking therefore to establish their own righteousness; in doing this, they did not submit themselves unto the righteousness of God. They were religious, kept the law outwardly, and Christ, who is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth, they rejected. Alas! The same is still the condition of the Jews.

Verses 5-13

Righteousness by works and by faith is contrasted. Moses, in whom they trusted as their great teacher, describes the righteousness which is of the law in these words, "the man who doeth those things shall live by them." But the righteousness by faith is likewise mentioned by Moses; but for the Holy Spirit calling attention to it in this passage, it would never have been known. Deuteronomy 30, where these words are found, speaks of the time, when Israel in a world-wide dispersion, will return with the heart to God and when He will have compassion upon them. Then their heart will be circumcised and grace will be manifested towards them. Driven out of the land for having broken the law, they will hearken to the Word and obey in faith.

"The Apostle therefore quotes such terms as exclude 'doing' on the part of man. Righteousness springs out of the finished work of Christ (verses 3, 4), and there can be no 'finished' work while man is endeavoring to be saved by law, for this would be virtually to undo what Christ has done. That which would be impossible to man, God has already done in Christ. All the 'doing' required by the law, has been accomplished by Jesus Christ, and everything that is required now from men is to believe what Christ has done. Christ has neither to be brought down from heaven, nor to be raised again from the dead; everything has been accomplished, and all that is left is to accept in trustful thankfulness. Faith has not to acquire or Win a Saviour, but to accept One Who has already accomplished the work of redemption. God's righteousness is not distant and difficult, but near and easy" (Professor W.A. Griffith Thomas).

And this word, which is nigh, the Apostle saith "is the word of faith which we preach." And this it is "if thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and shall believe in thy heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." How blessedly simple all this is. Jesus must be owned as Lord; He, who died for our sins, and whom God raised from the dead. Blessed assurance, "thou shalt be saved!" Saved by grace, through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God.

"Moreover, this faith is manifested by the proof it gives of its sincerity--by confession of the name of Christ. If some One were convinced that Jesus is the Christ, and refused to confess Him, his conviction would evidently be his greater condemnation. The faith of the heart produces the confession of the mouth; the confession of the mouth is the counterproof of the sincerity of the faith, and of honesty, in the sense of the claim which the Lord has upon us in grace. It is the testimony which God requires at the outset. It is to sound the trumpet on earth in face of the enemy. It is to say that Christ has conquered, and that everything belongs in right to Him. It is a confession which brings in God in answer to the name of Jesus. It is not that which brings in righteousness, but it is the public acknowledgment of Christ, and thus gives expression to the faith by which there is participation in the righteousness of God, so that it may be Said, 'He believes in Christ unto salvation; he has the faith that justifies.'"

Then twice the word "Whosoever" is mentioned, that Precious Gospel word, which includes all, Jews and Gentiles, for there is no difference between the Jew and the Gentile, for the same Lord over all is such unto all that call upon Him. "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Joel 2:32; Acts 2:21). All proves that righteousness is by faith and is offered to all. The statement in Joel also refers to a future day in connection with the coming deliverance of the remnant and the coming of the Lord.

Verses 14-17

And this good news for Jews and Gentiles must be proclaimed, for how can they call on Him, in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe on Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach unless they have been sent? Of such a gracious world-wide mission the law had nothing to say. Its message and the promises were confined to the nation Israel. The Lord Jesus as the minister of the circumcision sent His messengers only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel (Matthew 10); but after His death and resurrection He gave the commission "that repentance and remission of sins should be preached unto all nations, beginning in Jerusalem" (Luke 24:47). And the Lord sends forth His messengers; even so it was written before in Isaiah 52:7. (A careful study of this passage and the context shows its future meaning likewise, at the time, when the Lord reigneth, "when the Lord shall bring again Zion,") All is of Him, the righteousness, the salvation as well as the proclamation. But not all obeyed the gospel, nor do all obey the gospel call now. This also was foretold by Isaiah, in the great chapter (53) in which Israel's rejection of the Messiah is foretold, as well as the future confession of that rejection. "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God."

Verses 18-21.-- Israel is unbelieving. They heard and believed not. The law and the prophets had borne witness to the fact that the Gentiles would believe (Deuteronomy 32:21; Isaiah 65:1). And in infinite patience and longsuffering the Lord had stretched forth His hands unto Israel as a disobedient and gainsaying people. They were unbelieving and set aside. Their future restoration is the theme of the next chapter.

Israel's Restoration.

CHAPTER 11

("The Jewish Question", by A. C. G., gives a complete exposition of this great chapter.)

1. God Hath not Cast Away His People. 1.
2. Israel's Apostasy not Complete; a Remnant Saved. 2-6.
3. Israel's Blindness for a Season. 7-10.
4. To Provoke Them to Jealousy. 11.
5. Their Fulness and Reception Life from the Dead. 12-15.
6. The Parable of the Two Olive Trees. 16-24.
7. A Mystery Made Known. All Israel Saved. 25-32. 8. The Doxology. 33-36.

Verse 1

In view of the preceding chapter on Israel's rejection, the question is asked "Hath God cast away His People?" Is there nothing more in store for national Israel? God forbid. If it were so, God's gifts and calling would be subject to repentance and He would not be the faithful, covenant-keeping God. He foreknew His people Israel and that foreknowledge embraced all their sad history of failure and apostasy. The Apostle Paul speaks of himself as an Israelite of the seed of Abraham. He demonstrates in his own experience the fact that God hath not cast away His people. Hating Christ, having zeal for God without knowledge, a persecutor of the church, he had obtained mercy that in him Jesus Christ might show forth all long-suffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on Him (1 Timothy 1:16). His unique conversion must be looked upon as a prophetic type of the conversion of the remnant of Israel, when the Lord comes. As Saul of Tarsus saw Him in the glory-light, so the Israel living in the day of the second Coming of Christ will behold Him (Zechariah

12:10; Revelation 1:7). This vision will result in their national conversion.

Verses 2-6

The time of Elias was one of the darkest Periods of their history. it seemed as if the whole nation had apostatized from God. Elias had this conception when he complained in his despondency. "They have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life." The Lord told him then that there were seven thousand men who had not bowed the knee to the image of Baal. The apostasy of Israel was not a complete apostasy. The Lord had preserved a faithful remnant. Even so at this present time there is a remnant according to the election of grace. In the beginning of this present age there was in existence a distinctive Jewish remnant. This Jewish-Christian remnant in the beginning of the dispensation was an evidence that God had not cast away His people. A similar remnant of believing Jews will be called for a definite work and testimony during the end of the age. And throughout this Christian dispensation it has been abundantly demonstrated that God has not cast away His ancient people, for thousands of them have been saved by grace and have become members of the body of Christ.

Verses 7-10

When the apostle speaks here of the election he has in view the believing part of the nation at all times, the remnant past, the future remnant and all those who believe in Christ now. When he speaks of the rest being blinded he means the unbelieving part of the nation. Judicial blindness has come upon them for their unbelief. Three quotations are given from the Old Testament showing that the Lord foreknew their unbelief and predicted the judgment which was to come upon the nation (Deuteronomy 29:4; Isaiah 29:10 and Psalm 69:22-24). A careful study of these chapters will show that the threatened judgments and the judicial blindness are not permanent. All the Prophets and many of the prophetic Psalms reveal the fact that the judgments which have come upon the people are for a season only and that there is glory and blessing in store for them. The curses pronounced upon them have found their literal fulfillment; the unfulfilled promises of blessing and glory will also be literally fulfilled and Israel will be saved and restored to their land.

Verse 11

The setting aside of Israel is not final; their present blindness is not their permanent condition. But have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid. They stumbled over Him in whom they saw no beauty and whom they did not desire. They received Him not, who had come to His own. But this did not result in their complete fall. God in His infinite wisdom and all-wise purpose brought by their fall salvation to the Gentiles to provoke them to jealousy. In this statement we see again that God has not cast away His people Israel. If He had cast them away, why should He wish to provoke them to jealousy? And this provoking to jealousy is with the intent that some of them might be saved (verse 14).

Verses 12-15

And now the Apostle of the Gentiles addresses us Gentiles. "I speak to you Gentiles." It is a message of much importance. The fall of Israel was the riches of the world, the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles (verse 13); the casting away was the reconciling of the world. Thus blessing, great blessing came to the Gentiles by Israel's unbelief and fall. But this is not all. All this is far from accomplishing the promise made to the father of the nation, when God said to Abraham "In thy seed all the nations of the earth shall be blest." Israel's fall, the means in God's purpose to bring salvation to the Gentiles, is not the final thing, and the blessings the Gentiles received by their fall is not the fullest blessing which God has in store for the world. Much more is in store for the world in blessing through Israel's restoration. To Israel is promised in the Old Testament a time of fulness, a time when they shall be taken back. Their time of fulness comes when Christ returns in power and in glory. If then God brought blessing to the Gentiles by their fall, how far greater will be the blessings for the world, when their time of fulness has come. It will be life from the dead. Israel

is now nationally and spiritually dead. They will be nationally and spiritually made alive (see Ezekiel 37:1-17, 39:25-29; Hosea 5:15-6:5). And the whole world comes in for blessing then. The nations will be converted and the kingdom will be set up on earth (see Zechariah 2:10-18).

Verses 16-24

The parable of the two olive trees illustrates great dispensational facts and contains solemn warnings for Christendom. The good olive tree typifies Israel in covenant relation with God in the Abrahamic covenant. The olive tree is evergreen; and so is the covenant, unchangeable. Israel's faithlessness and disobedience cannot annul it. The root is Abraham, who was holy, separated unto God. On account of unbelief some of the branches were broken off. They are now separated from the good olive tree and are withered. The wild olive tree is a picture of the Gentiles. The branches of this wild olive tree are grafted among the branches of the good olive tree to partake of the root and fatness of the good olive tree. The wild olive tree branches grafted upon the good olive tree do not represent the true church. The Gentiles are meant by it, who are, after Israel's unbelief, put upon the ground of responsibility which Israel had, to partake now of the promised covenant blessings. The grafted in branches represent the Christian profession, Christendom, as we call it. The grafted in branches are solemnly warned. They are not to boast, not to be high-minded; they must abide in goodness. If the warning is unheeded they will not be spared but cut off. And when that happens God will graft in again the natural branches into their own olive tree if they no longer abide in unbelief. God is able to do this. He can and will put back Israel into their former relation. It is prophetic. Christendom is exactly that which is here warned against--boasting, high-minded, not abiding in goodness, in one word, apostate. The unbelief and failure of professing Christendom is as great, if not greater than the unbelief and failure of Israel. The time will come when God will not spare, but execute judgment upon Christendom. He will spew Laodicea out of His mouth (Revelation 3:16). Then the hour of Israel's restoration has come.

Verses 25-32

A mystery is made known. Blindness in part has happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. The fulness of the Gentiles means, the full number of the saved, gathered out from among the Gentiles, who constitute the church, the body of Christ. And when the body is joined to the Head in glory, the time of the coming of the Lord for His Saints (1 Thessalonians 4:17), the Lord will turn again to Israel. All Israel, that is, the all Israel living in the day will be saved, when the Deliverer comes out of Zion (Isaiah 59:20; Psalm 14:7). It is the second, visible, personal and glorious coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob and take away their sins. Between the coming of the Lord for the Saints, who will meet Him in the air, and His coming in great power and glory, are the days of Jacob's trouble, when the nation will have to pass through the fires of tribulation and the wicked among Israel will be cut off. And after He has come and has taken away their sins, all the great prophecies of Israel's earthly glory will be fulfilled. Verses 33-36.--A doxology closes this dispensational section of the epistle. What depths of riches, both of wisdom and knowledge of God, in His merciful dealings with the Gentiles and the Jews! How unsearchable His judgments! How untraceable His ways! For of Him, and through Him and to Him are all things to whom be glory forever. Amen.

III. EXHORTATIONS AND THE CONCLUSION. Chapters 12-16.

CHAPTER 12

1. The Body as a Willing Sacrifice. 1-2.
2. Service. 3-8.

3. The Daily Walk in Holiness. 9-21.

Verses 1-2.

Grace calls for obedience. After God has made known the riches of His grace, the fulness of the Gospel, His Spirit shows how believers should walk in a world of sin and tribulation. The first thing is to present the body a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God. This connects with the truth of chapter 6:19, "yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness." "The body is the instrument of the spirit; and this so completely, that, if it be laid hold for Him, there is no part of the practical life but must, of necessity, be His. The feet are used to walk at His bidding, the hands to employ ourselves in His things, the tongue to speak for Him and nothing else, the ear to hear His words; the eye also, so that whatever it looks upon, it will look upon as being under His control" (Numerical Bible). It is plain that the whole life thus finds its government." And this yielding of the body, giving it as a living sacrifice, is our intelligent service. It is the needful thing so that all which is written in the sixth chapter may become a practical thing in our lives. Is this presentation of the body as a living sacrifice an act done once for all (as some teach), or is it a daily yielding? It must be done continually. And it becomes possible to go on presenting the body thus, under all circumstances, if we remember the mercies of God, what God in Christ has done for us and in what a wonderful position He has put us in His own Son. But it needs constant watchfulness, prayer, meditation on the Word and self-judgment.

In doing this the believer will be able to carry out the exhortation, "be not conformed to this world (age)." A soul in touch with Christ, knowing the mercies of God in redemption, cannot enjoy the world. Well has it been said "true joy in the Lord renders the soul in which it dwells incapable of enjoying what the world esteems pleasure. Natural pleasures are the solace of that which is essentially alien of God." The present age is evil and Christ died to deliver us from this present evil age. Satan is the god of this age. It is not controlled by the Spirit of God. Therefore friendship with the world, conformity to it, is enmity to the cross of Christ. Separation from it is God's demand, for the cross of Christ has made us dead to the world and the world dead unto us. We must be transformed by the renewing of our mind. This is the work of the Spirit of God in us. The inward man is to be renewed day by day (2 Corinthians 4:16); and this will be so as we daily present our bodies as the living sacrifice.

Verses 3-8

Service is mentioned next. This is to be rendered in humility and according to the measure of faith as God has dealt to every man, who is a believer. Here the body, that is, the church, is touched upon. In first Corinthians and Ephesians the truth concerning the church and the different gifts is more fully revealed. All believers are members of that body, and as in the human body not all members have the same office, so in the one body there are different gifts bestowed by grace. Each must take his place given to him in that body and render the service unto which he is called and thus demonstrate the divine truth, that we are one body in Christ, and individually members one of the other. Ministry in the Word stands first and there is also ministry in other ways. The latter are, giving, ruling (or leading) and showing mercy. Giving is to be in simplicity (or liberality); ruling is to be in diligence and showing mercy in cheerfulness. The emphasis here is not so much upon the different gifts as it is upon the faithful exercise of the gift.

Verses 9-21

The daily walk in holiness is unfolded in these verses. These are precious exhortations and every Christian should read them often and order his daily life accordingly. Love stands first, for it is the great essential of the divine nature. He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him (1 John 4:16). It is to be unfeigned. Love seeketh not her own and therefore we are to prefer in honor one another. "Not slothful in business" is often misunderstood and many have thought it means devotion to a secular business. But the correct translation is, "In diligence, not slothful." Then there

is rejoicing in hope, patience in suffering, prayer, sympathy with others and many other blessed things into which we cannot enter in detail. The child of God desires all these things and the Spirit of God is with us to produce these blessed fruits in our lives.

CHAPTER 13

1. Obedience to Authorities. 1-7.
2. Love the Fulfilling of the Law. 8-10.
3. The Day is at Hand. 11-14.

Verses 1-7

The children of God are strangers and pilgrims in the world. Our citizenship is in heaven. But what is the Christian to do as living under different forms of government? The Christian is to be in subjection to these, for the powers that exist are ordained by Him. Resisting these powers would mean resistance to God who has ordained them. They are God's ministers to maintain order.

"Render therefore to all their dues, tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor." If Christians had always obeyed these injunctions, how well it would have been. But often they are forgotten and an attempt is made to control the politics of this age and to rule.

Verses 8-10

"Owe no man anything, but to love one another, for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law." The first sentence does not mean that it is wrong to borrow money. The question is about paying. If a debt is due it should be paid exactly on time. Borrowing money in a reckless way, without any prospect of returning the amount, is sinful, and often great dishonor has been brought upon the name of our Lord on account of it. But there is another debt which always remains. The Christian owes the debt of love to all. And this love is the fulfilling of the law. Love does not work ill to his neighbor. The natural man may claim that he keeps the sum of the other commandments, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," but he cannot do it. Only one who is born again, in whose heart there is love, has the power to do this.

Verses 11-14

The Coming of the Lord is brought before us in these verses as a motive to holy living. The final salvation is nearing, for the night is far spent and the day is at hand. The blessed hope is to be always before the Christian's heart; it is a purifying hope. "He that hath this hope set upon him purifieth himself as He is pure." In view of that approaching day, when we shall see Him face to face and be with Him in glory, the exhortations are given to awake out of sleep, to cast off the works of darkness, to put on the armor of light, to walk becomingly as in the day, to abstain from the things of the flesh, putting on the Lord Jesus and making no provisions for the flesh. We are to walk in the light as the children of the day, with faces set towards the coming glory. And never before were those exhortations more needed than now. The night is far spent, the day is at hand. The signs of the end of the age are seen everywhere, and yet in these solemn days how few of God's people walk as the children of the day in the path of separation.

CHAPTER 14

1. Strong and Weak Brethren are the Lord's Servants. 1-12.
2. The True Way of Love. 13-23.

Verses 1-12

The question concerning brethren who were weak in faith, how they are to be treated by those who are strong is now taken up. Those weak in the faith had not the complete knowledge of their position in Christ, though they knew Christ and loved Him. They did not realize that certain observances of days, or abstinences from meats and drinks, could not affect their salvation in any way. There were scruples and conscientious difficulties, as there are still among God's people. One believeth he may eat all things, he knew his full Christian freedom--another who is weak eateth herbs. How are these two to treat each other? Were they to criticize and condemn one the other? "Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him that eateth not judge him that eateth, for God hath received him." The weak in faith are to be received, but not to doubtful points of reasonings; these questions are not to be brought up for discussion, or worse, to make them a test of Christian fellowship. Judging a brother, or condemning him on such matters is forbidden, for inasmuch as God hath received him, he is the Lord's servant and not ours. The rebuke is "who art thou that thou judgest another's servant? to his own Lord he standeth or falleth." More than that, the Lord in His gracious power shall keep him in all his weakness. He bears with him, "the Lord is able to make him stand." Each is responsible to the Lord. Each does it as unto the Lord. No one lives to himself, and no one dies to himself, we are all the Lord's. There is also a day coming when we all must stand before His judgment seat and then He will judge, who knows the secrets of every heart. Therefore we must not judge. Every one, as stated in all these cases, should be fully persuaded in his own mind and should not judge another, but look forward to the judgment seat of Christ.

Verses 13-23

But more than that there should be loving tolerance for the brother. let the harsh judgment of the brother, whom God has received be abandoned; but judge this rather, "not to put a stumbling block or an occasion to fall in his brother's way." There is nothing unclean in itself. Yet a brother may account something unclean, his conscience so judges, then it is unclean for him. The brother with the weak conscience must be considered. The law of love demands this. "If thy brother is grieved on account of thy food, thou walkest no longer in love; destroy not with thy food him for whom Christ died." Therefore "it is good not to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor to do anything, whereby thy brother stumbleth or is offended, or is made weak." "He that serves Christ in these things is acceptable and approved of men. We are to follow what makes for peace and edifies others. To the pure all things are pure; but if a person defiles his conscience, even though an unfounded scruple, to him it is unclean. Happy for him who, in boasting of his liberty by faith, does not go beyond his faith in what he does; and does not offend in what he allows himself to do; for whatsoever is not of faith is sin. If a man thinks he ought to honor a certain day, or abstain from a certain food, and then, for the sake of showing his liberty, does not do it, to him it is sin. It is not faith before God" (Synopsis).

CHAPTER 15

1. The Example of Christ. 1-7.
2. The Ministry of Christ. 8-13.
3. Paul's Personal Ministry. 14-33.

Verses 1-7

An additional motive is brought in why the strong should bear the infirmities of the weak and not please themselves. It is Christ. He did not please Himself, but bore in great meekness and patience the reproaches with which men reproached God, and these reproaches fell on Christ Himself. It was the reproach of God He bore in perfect meekness. We are therefore to be likeminded one to another according to Christ Jesus. Wherefore receive ye one another even as Christ also received you to the glory of God. We have then three instructions concerning the weak brother: 1. To receive the weak, but not to doubtful disputations. 2. Not to judge a brother in those things, because he is

Christ's servant, and any one must give an account of himself. 3. To bear the infirmities of the weak, to put no stumbling block in their way, not to please ourselves. We are to walk in love and manifest that love by receiving one another as Christ has received us to the glory of God. And blessed are we if we also walk according to those rules and manifest the mind of Christ.

Verses 8-13

The exhortations are ended, and what we find in the rest of this chapter is supplementary to the whole Epistle and touches once more on the question concerning the Jews and the Gentiles. Christ was the minister of the circumcision for the truth of God to confirm the promises to the fathers. Thus He appeared in the midst of His people. But the Gentiles also were to receive mercy through Him. Four Scriptures are quoted to prove that it is the purpose of God to bless the Gentiles in mercy with His people Israel (Psalm 18:49; Deuteronomy 32:43 in Moses' great prophetic song; Psalm 117:1 and Isaiah 11:10). But it must not be overlooked that these quotations do not teach that Gentiles are as fellow heirs put into the same body with believing Jews. They show that God had announced that Gentiles would rejoice in salvation and trust in Christ. The fulfillment of the passages quoted awaits the second coming of our Lord "when He shall rise to reign over the Gentiles," when Gentiles will rejoice with the saved remnant of Israel. "Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Spirit." This is our most blessed inheritance. The Holy Spirit indwells the child of God and in believing He manifests His power, the God of hope filling us with all joy and peace, so that we abound in hope, looking forward to that blessed day, the realization of our blessed Hope, when we shall be like Him and see Him as He is.

Verses 14-33

Then the great man of God speaks lastly of his own ministry. Much might be written on this interesting paragraph. He had a special ministry conferred upon Himself. It was grace which had given it to him. His ministry he describes as being "the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the Gospel of God, that the offering of the Gentiles might be acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit." A closer study of his statements, which tell of his humility, his marvelous service in power, his confidence, as well as other things, will be found helpful and instructive. He looked forward to his coming visit to Rome and requested the prayers of the brethren. And when he came there at last, he came as the prisoner of the Lord, and from Rome he sent forth the greatest of his Epistles.

CHAPTER 16

1. Greetings to Individuals. 1-16.
2. Warning and Comfort. 17-20.
3. The Final Salutations. 21-24.
4. The Conclusion. 25-27.

Verses 1-16

Phoebe (which means "radiant") is first mentioned. She was probably a person of great influence and wealth, for she had been a succorer of many, including the Apostle. She is heartily commended to the assembly in Rome, to be received in the Lord, worthily of the Saints. Then that interesting pair of fellow workers of the Apostle Paul, Priscilla and Aquila, are saluted. To follow their wanderings and interest in the Gospel we have to omit here; see Acts 18:1-3, 18-19, 26; 1 Corinthians 16:19; 2 Timothy 4:19. At what time they laid down their necks for the life of the Apostle we do not know. The assembly met in their house. Then the first convert of the province of Asia, the beloved Epaenetus is greeted. Many, who had labored much; Andronicus and Junius, who were in

the Lord before Paul, and others are greeted. Little do we know of all these names, but their records are on high and at the judgment seat of Christ they and their abundant labors and sufferings will be made manifest.

(Not till the third century have we any proofs of the existence of buildings set apart for Christian worship. Not only were most of the churches too poor to build meeting-places, but, until *Christianity became the religion of the empire, the privacy and secrecy possible in a meeting held in a dwelling-house were important considerations. The wealthier members of a church seem to have put one of their rooms at the disposal of the brethren for this purpose. First comes the Upper Room, in which our Lord held his Last Supper with his disciples (Matthew 26:18), and then the house of Mary in Jerusalem (Acts 12:12), although this may have been the same place. In Ephesus the house of Aquila and Priscilla was a meeting-place (1 Corinthians 16:19), as it was in Rome also. At Laodicea the church met in the house of Nymphas (Colossians 4:15), and at Colosse in the house of Philemon (verse 2). Although there may have been in Rome one house in which the whole body of Christians met, yet it would seem that it was usual to hold meetings in a number of houses. The phrases, "and the brethren that are with them" (verse 14), and "all the saints that are with them" (15), seem to imply separate groups of believers.--A.E. Garvie.)

Verses 17-20

There is a warning against those who create divisions and give occasions to stumbling, contrary to the doctrine they had learned. These were probably teachers like those who disturbed the Galatians and these teachers were to be shunned--"turn away from them." To create divisions in the body of Christ is a work of the flesh and a serious matter. "For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ but their own belly, and by kind and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the guileless." How often this is the case with false teachers in our own times. Destructive critics, false teachers, deniers of the Gospel of Grace are often in character very amiable and kind. Such is especially true of Christian Science with their leaders; the blasphemies of that cult are generally covered up by kind and fair speeches. And Satan, who is behind all these things, will shortly be bruised under the feet of His people. Complete victory over all evil is promised for His people and will surely come.

Verses 21-27

And now the final salutations and the conclusion in praise. "Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my Gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, but now is made manifest, and by the prophetic Scriptures, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith. To God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ forever. Amen."