A Study Through Paul's Epistle to the Romans

Romans 1:1–4

notes by Tim Hegg

Some background to Paul's Epistle to the Romans

Paul's *magnum opus* – the primary work of the Apostle detailing the biblical doctrine of salvation.

Pauline authorship is essentially undisputed, even by modern scholars (who disavow the Pauline authorship of other books that bear his name).

Date: 55 or 56 CE

Paul is collecting funds for the believers in Jerusalem (15:25–26; cf. 1Cor 16:1–9)

He mentions Erastus and Gaius (16:23) who lived in Corinth, where Paul was in his third missionary journey.

Purpose:

To establish the Apostolic *halachah* for the *ekklesia* Yeshua promised to build, comprised of both Jewish and non-Jewish believers.

To establish in certain terms the biblical doctrine of salvation, the method by which God declares sinners righteous.

To explain that the ingathering of the Gentiles was necessary in God's eternal plan for bringing about the final salvation of Israel.

The opening verses of the epistle

Verses 1–2

Paul: his Roman name / שָׁאוּל (*Shaul*): his Hebrew name

Paul was born with Roman citizenship.

After coming to faith in Yeshua, he always refers to himself in his epistles by his Roman name, Paul (παῦλος, *paulos*).

He apparently did so in order to identify himself as one with the non-Jewish believers to whom he was sent.

He is never called a rabbi and never used that title.

bond-servant: this was Paul's self-identification as an Apostle of Yeshua.

called: Paul's commission as an Apostle was not self-determined. His apostleship was divinely decreed.

an apostle: "Apostle" means "one sent with the authority of the one who did the sending."

set apart: giving a new definition to the idea of "Pharisee."

for the gospel of God:

> Paul's duty was in regard to the Gospel.
>
> Gospel = "good news"
>
> Note: "gospel of God," which means the Gospel as centered upon Yeshua the Messiah & His work.

which He (God) promised beforehand: the Gospel Paul was teaching was not something new.

through His prophets: Paul proclaimed the same Gospel as did Moses (Rom 10:4–8, quoting Deut 30:11ff).

> Rom 10:4 For Messiah is the goal of the Torah for righteousness to everyone who believes.…
>
> Rom 10:8 But what does it say? "THE WORD IS NEAR YOU, IN YOUR MOUTH AND IN YOUR HEART" — that is, the word of faith which we are preaching…

concerning His Son: "son" terminology was common in the late 2nd Temple period, being connected to the prophecies of Daniel (3:25; 7:13).

> 3:25 – He said, "Look! I see four men loosed and walking about in the midst of the fire without harm, and the appearance of the fourth is like a son of God (gods, אֱלֹהִים)."
>
> 7:13 – I kept looking in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven one like a Son of Man was coming, and He came up to the Ancient of Days and was presented before Him.

The Messianic language which employed the phrase "Son of God" emphasized both the divine nature of Yeshua as well as His messiahship. For a son has the same nature as his father, and a good son obeys his father.

Thus, at the very beginning of Paul's epistle to the Romans, he emphasizes both the deity and the humanity of Yeshua.

born of a descendant of David: not everyone in the late 2nd Temple period believed the Messiah must be from the line of David. For instance, Akiva proclaimed Bar Kochba to be Messiah, but history never indicates that he was considered to have Davidic lineage.

The Gospels trace Yeshua's Davidic lineage through Joseph (Matt 1:16, 20; Lk 1:34ff)

Joseph was not physcially the father of Yeshua.

Joseph would have been considered the legal father of Yeshua. Yeshua would have been known as
"Yeshua ben Yosef."

according to the flesh: that is, in His incarnation, Yeshua reckoned as from the line of David by the fact that He was legally the son of Joseph.

As the promised Messiah, Yeshua fulfilled the promise made to David (2Sam 7:16) that one of his descendants would forever reign as King over Israel.

who was declared the Son of God with power: Before the resurrection, Yeshua refused publicly to proclaim Himself as the promised Messiah, and charged His disciples likewise not to announce Him as the Messiah.

This was necessary because the common Jewish understanding was that the mission of the promised Messiah was political and military, that is, to conquer Israel's enemies and free the nation from oppression.

The true work of the Messiah, however, was to procure eternal salvation for His people.

by the resurrection from the dead: The resurrection, however, made it clear that Yeshua was far more than a prophet or a great teacher.

His resurrection proved beyond doubt that He was the One Who had conquered death and was therefore the Savior of all who would come to Him.

with power – two possible interpretations

describing "Son of God" = "the powerful Son of God"

describing "declared" = fully and finally known to be the Son of God, i.e., the promised Messiah.

according to the Spirit of holiness: – two options

"spirit of holiness" = Yeshua's own spirit, meaning that His life of holiness was finally and fully verified by His resurrection on the 3rd day.

"Spirit of holiness" = the Holy Spirit, the phrase (πνεῦμα ἁγιωσύνης) being a strengthened form of the more common Holy Spirit (πνεῦμα ἅγιόν)

The 2nd option is preferred because Paul specifically teaches (Rom 8:11) that the Spirit played a pivotal role in the resurrection of Yeshua (cf. 1Pet 3:18).

> Rom 8:11 – But if the Spirit of Him who raised Yeshua from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Messiah Yeshua from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.
>
> 1Pet 3:18 – For Messiah also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, so that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive by the Spirit (or "in the spirit").

Yeshua Messiah our Lord:

Yeshua: the name is based upon the Hebrew verb יָשַׁע, meaning "to save" (cf. Matt 1:21).

The name יֵשׁוּעַ means "Savior," "one who saves"

Messiah: מָשִׁיחַ – "anointed one" = Χριστός, "Christ" from χρίω, *chriō*, "to anoint" = Prophet, Priest, King

Lord: κύριος, *kurios*, "Master, Lord" – in the Lxx יהוה is most often translated by the Greek *kurios*. = the Eternal One; Creator; Sovereign

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Roman 1:5

v. 5 "through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles for His name's sake,

"through whom" = Yeshua Messiah our Lord (from v. 4)

"**we have received grace and apostleship**"

"we" = common "writer's plural," used often by Paul (cf. Rom 3:8–9; 1Cor 9:11ff; 2Cor 1:12ff; 1Thess 3:1f)

"grace and apostleship" is most likely an hendiadys, i.e., a expression made up of two words connected by "and" that together express a single thought.

"I have received the office of apostle as a gracious gift, undeserved by any human merit."

Thus, Paul recognized that as an apostle of Yeshua, he was given authority to proclaim Messiah's message, not his own message.

"to bring about the obedience of faith"

"to bring about" = translation of the preposition εἰς (*eis*) indicating the goal of Paul's work as an apostle of Yeshua.

What was that goal? = "the obedience of faith"

What is meant by "the obedience of faith"?

1. obedience to *the* faith, where "the faith" = Affirming the body of accepted doctrine. (cf. Jude 1:3)

2. obedience to the authority of faith = The authority of the community of faithful ones.

3. obedience to God's faithfulness = Relying only upon God's grace for salvation.

4. obedience which true faith produces & requires

5. obedience which consists in faith = accepting the Gospel message that Yeshua is the only savior.

Which interpretation is to be preferred?

4. obedience which true faith produces & requires

Compare Rom 16:25–27, Paul's conclusion to the epistle.

> Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Yeshua Messiah, according to the revelation of the mystery which has been kept secret for long ages past, but now is manifested, and by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal God, has been made known to all the nations, leading to obedience of faith; to the only wise God, through Yeshua Messiah, be the glory forever. Amen.

Thus, the obedience of faith means:

obedience to God which always accompanies saving faith

"faith" without obedience to God is not true, saving faith.

"among all the Gentiles"

The Greek could just as well be translated "among all the nations."

This defines Paul's primary mission: Apostle to the Gentiles

Paul continues the mission commissioned by Yeshua before His ascension: "Go and make disciples of all the nations…." (Matt 28:19)

"for His [Yeshua's] name's sake"

Salvation is first and foremost for the glory of God.

The message of righteousness by works robs God of the praise He deserves.

> He predestined us to adoption as sons through Yeshua Messiah to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. (Eph 1:5–6)

Romans 1:6

v. 6 – among whom you also are the called of Yeshua Messiah;

"among whom"

among whom" = among the nations / Gentiles

"the called of Yeshua Messiah"

Paul uses the concept of "calling" most often to express God's sovereign act of drawing to Himself those He saves.

> And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose… these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified. (Rom 8:28, 30)

> No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day. (John 6:44)

The "calling" of Gentile & Jewish believers is the same calling.

> Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called …. There is one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling; (Eph 4:1, 4)

"of Yeshua Messiah" = "called by Yeshua Messiah"

Romans 1:7

v. 7 – to all who are beloved of God in Rome, called as saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Yeshua Messiah.

"beloved of God"

"beloved of God" = loved by God, cp. 11:28, of Israel

This sets the stage for Paul's words in 8:38–39

All who are "in Yeshua" are the objects of God's eternal love.

"called as saints"

"called as saints" = called to be holy

holy (*qadosh; hagios*) = set apart to God & for God

The title "saint" conferred upon certain prominent figures in the later Roman Church finds no basis in the Scriptures.

All who are saved by faith are "called to be holy" = saints

"Grace to you and peace"

Grace & Peace may be understood as *chesed* and *shalom*

chesed – often used of God's covenant steadfast love

shalom – more than "no conflict" – shalom envisions life in its fulness; fulfilling the purpose for which we were created.

> The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly. (John 10:10)

"from God our Father and the Lord Yeshua Messiah"

"from God our Father" – emphasis may be upon "our"

Paul affirms that Jew and Gentile are one in God's family.

"Father" emphasizes family – we are in God's household.

> So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household… (Eph 2:19)

"and our Lord Yeshua Messiah" – emphasis may be upon "our."

Grace & peace from God are to be found only in Yeshua.

He is Sovereign, Savior, Promised Redeemer.

Questions for Further Thought

1. How would I evaluate my own growth in faith? Is my love for God increasing as evidenced by my growing desire to obey Him?
2. What does it mean to me that I have been called by God to be a witness of His grace? How am I doing as His witness?
3. Having been saved by God's grace given to me through Yeshua, He counts me as one of His beloved children. Do I see myself this way?
4. How have I recently experienced God's grace & peace?

notes by Tim Hegg

Roman 1:8

First, I thank my God through Yeshua Messiah for you all, because your faith is being proclaimed throughout the whole world.

The opening word "First" may mean "foremost" or "of prime importance." (This word does not begin a list because no "Second" or "Third" follows in the context.)

"I thank my God" – Paul gives all the credit to God for the faith which the believers in Rome possessed, because faith is a gift given by God to those who believe.

> For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; (Eph 2:8)

"through Yeshua Messiah" – our access to the Father is through our Mediator, Yeshua. He is our High Priest Who intercedes for us before the Father.

For Roman citizens to congregate together with Jews, and to confess the God of Israel to be the one and only God, was surely a strange phenomena in ancient Rome and would have been very newsworthy.

"the whole world" in this case should be understood to mean the expanding world of the Roman Empire.

Romans 1:9–10

9 For God is my witness, Whom I serve in my spirit in the preaching of the gospel of His Son, as to how unceasingly I make mention of you, 10 always in my prayers making request, if perhaps now at last by the will of God I may succeed in coming to you.

The word order of the translation above follows the Greek, which emphasizes that Paul is using an oath formula: "God is my witness."

"Whom I serve in my spirit" – Paul's ministry of prayer was the inward side of his apostolic service contrasted with the outward side consisting of preaching, writing, etc.

Our personal prayers of intercession for others are an essential part of fulfilling God's commandment to love one another.

Paul planned for the future always with the "will of God" as the deciding factor.

> Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, and spend a year there and engage in business and make a profit." Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away. Instead, you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we will live and also do this or that." (James 4:13-15)

Romans 1:11–12

11 For I long to see you so that I may impart some spiritual gift to you, that you may be established; 12 that is, that I may be encouraged together with you while among you, each of us by the other's faith, both yours and mine.

"impart" (μεταδίδωμι, *metadidōmi*) can mean "to share", cf. 12:8

"some spiritual gift" – How does Paul use the word "gift"?

- God's gracious gift of salvation in Yeshua HaMashiach
- in the plural, the blessings God has given to Israel (11:29)
- a special work of the Ruach, giving to each member of the body of Messiah a special ability for the service of others (12:6)

Paul wanted to share his own spiritual gift, i.e., his work as an apostle of Yeshua, in order to help establish the believers in Rome in their faith in Yeshua.

Paul also recognized that through mutual encouragement, his faith would be strengthened.

Romans 1:13

I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that often I have planned to come to you (and have been prevented so far) so that I may obtain some fruit among you also, even as among the rest of the Gentiles.

15:22 might indicate that Paul was divinely directed to give priority of his time & energy to bring the gospel to those regions which had not yet been evangelized:

> And thus I aspired to preach the gospel, not where Messiah was already named, so that I would not build on another man's foundation; but as it is written, "THEY WHO HAD NO NEWS OF HIM SHALL SEE, AND THEY WHO HAVE NOT HEARD SHALL UNDERSTAND." [Isaiah 52:15] For this reason I have often been prevented from coming to you; (Rom 15:20–22)

Yet Paul did consider that his coming to Rome would help establish the body of believers there.

Particularly, to teach the truth which had been revealed to him regarding the ingrafting of the Gentiles into the believing remnant of Israel.

Romans 1:14–15

14 I am under obligation both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish. 15 So, for my part, I am eager to preach the gospel to you also who are in Rome.

"I am under obligation" – Paul's primary obligation was to Yeshua Who appointed him to be His apostle (1:5).

Paul's ministry focus was to the Gentiles regardless of their ethnic origins or their social standing:

- Greeks & barbarians = meaning "non-Jews"
- (barbarian [βαρβαρος] = Greek speakers; of Greek culture)
- wise & foolish = educated and uneducated

"preach the gospel"

The "gospel" is more than describing how one could have his or her sins forgiven.

The "gospel" entails the whole message of salvation, which includes both justification and sanctification.

Justification = the method by which God declares sinners to be righteous in His sight.

- entirely the work of God through Yeshua Messiah (monergistic = one working)
- takes place in the courts of heaven by the once-for-all declaration of God

Sanctification = the work of God through the indwelling Spirit by which He conforms the justified one to be like Yeshua.

- the justified one & God working together (sunergistic = to work together)
- takes place within the believer and is progressive

Questions for Further Thought

1. Do others know me as someone who walks in the footsteps of Yeshua? Could Paul have said about my faith what he states about the faith of the believers in Rome?
2. What importance do I put on prayer in my own spiritual life? How often am I interceding for my brothers and sisters in the body of Messiah?
3. What can I do to encourage others in their life of faith in Yeshua?
4. What are the essential means of grace by which God is enabling me to become more like His Son, Yeshua?
5. How consistent am I in applying these essential means of grace in my own life?

notes by Tim Hegg

Roman 1:16

For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel"

The open word "For" links our verse to the previous context.

Paul was eager to visit the Messianic community in Rome not only because he wanted to exercise his duties as an Apostle of Yeshua, but because of the very nature of the gospel.

God has has promised that the gospel would be successful in accomplishing His purposes.

Why would anyone be ashamed of the gospel?

1. The gospel stands in opposition to the world because it proclaims God's judgment against sin and sinners.

> He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. (John 3:18)
>
> But by His word the present heavens and earth are being reserved for fire, kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men. (2Pet 3:7)

2. The gospel declares that all people are sinners and that none are able to escape the punishment for their sin.

> There is none righteous, not even on; There is none who understands, there is none who seeks for God; All have turned aside, together they have become useless; There is none who does good, there is not even one… so that every mouth may be closed and all the world may become accountable to God(Rom 3:10–12, 19)

3. The gospel demands humble submission to God.

> … at the name of Yeshua every knee will bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and that every tongue will confess that Yeshua Messiah is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (Phil 2:10–11)

4. The gospel is centered upon the Messiah Who came, not as a conquering warrior but in the humility of the incarnation and was put to death by His enemies.

> … but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. (Phil 2:7–8)

What are the essential elements of the gospel? **Repentance**

The gospel requires sinners to agree with God.

confess: "It is true, I am a sinner. I'm guilty."

agree: "As a sinner, I deserve to be condemned."

The gospel instructs the sinner to ask for God's mercy.

request: "God, be merciful to me; forgive my sin."

What are the essential elements of the gospel? **Faith**

The gospel requires the sinner to trust in Yeshua:

believe: "I believe Yeshua paid the penalty for my sin (which is death) because He died in my place."

The gospel calls the sinner to be holy:

faithful: "I believe Yeshua rose from the dead and has given me a new life in order to be His witness.

"for it is the power of God for salvation"

The word "it" refers back to "the gospel"

The power of God for salvation is contained in the gospel.

This means that the truth contained in the gospel is the means by which God, through the work of His Spirit, saves sinners.

> For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not come to know God, God was well-pleased through the foolishness of the gospel message preached to save those who believe. (1Cor 1:21)

It is wrong, therefore, to attempt to make the gospel message acceptable to sinners.

> For the word of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. (1Cor 1:18)

> For indeed Jews ask for signs and Greeks search for wisdom; but we preach Messiah crucified, to Jews a stumbling block and to Gentiles foolishness, but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Messiah the power of God and the wisdom of God. (1Cor 1:22–24)

The word "for" ("**for** it is the power of God for salvation," *eis*) means "resulting in"

When the pure gospel is given to those who have been called to salvation, it is accepted by faith and results in salvation.

"to everyone who believes"

There is one gospel because there is only one way of salvation, that is, through faith in Israel's Messiah.

There is not one way for the Jews and a different way for Gentiles.

"to the Jew first and also to the Greek"

"first" indicates priority not chronology.

This means that God's salvation in Messiah is the goal of the covenant made with nation of Israel.

The gospel has Israel as the primary focus, which means that "anti-Israel" or "anti-Semitism" is contrary to the gospel.

Those from the nations who are saved by faith in the Messiah are therefore grafted into Israel.

The ingathering of the Gentiles proves God's faithfulness to the covenant promise made to Israel.

God has one people, not two.

> Many nations will join themselves to Adonai in that day and will become My people. Then I will dwell in your midst, and you will know that Adonai of hosts has sent Me to you. (Zech. 2:11)

Questions for Further Thought

1. Why is it that believers might at times be afraid to share the message of the gospel with their unbelieving friends?
2. What could a person do to overcome the fear of telling others the "Good News," i.e., the gospel?
3. If one believes that God is sovereign in giving His grace to sinners, how would this effect the way one would share the gospel?
4. We not only "speak" the gospel message, we also "live" the gospel message. In what ways do we best "live" the gospel before those who are unbelievers? What things do we do that might hinder or confuse the message of the gospel?

notes by Tim Hegg

Roman 1:17

For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "BUT THE RIGHTEOUS man SHALL LIVE BY FAITH."

- "**For in it** the righteousness of God is revealed"

  The word "For" links our verse to the previous verse.

  The word "it" refers back to the word "Gospel" in v. 16.

  The gospel is powerful to save sinners because the gospel reveals God's plan for making sinners righteous.

  The focal point of the gospel is Yeshua, for it is by His work that sinners are made righteous in God's eyes.

- "For in it **the righteousness of God** is revealed"

  What does Paul mean by "the righteousness of God" in this verse?

  "righteousness" (*tzedeq*) in the Tanach means "actions which conform to God's standards."

  The Greek word δίκαιος (*dikaios*), "righteous" or "righteousness" in the Lxx was used to convey this idea of living according to God's standards.

  Two ways of understanding the phrase "righteousness of God".

  1. "righteousness" as a description of God & His actions, i.e., "God Who is righteous"

  2. "righteousness" that has God as its source, i.e., "the righteousness which God gives to sinners."

  Both options have good, biblical support:

  1. Righteousness as a description of God & His actions:

  God's own righteousness is revealed in the Gospel, for the Gospel reveals that God is just in requiring payment for sin.

...for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Messiah Yeshua; whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith. This was to demonstrate His righteousness, because in the forbearance of God He passed over the sins previously committed; for the demonstration, I say, of His righteousness at the present time, so that He would be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Yeshua. (Rom 3:23–26)

2. Righteousness which God grants to sinners:

Paul uses the phrase "the righteousness of God" as a direct contrast to man's own attempts at being righteous.

Brethren, my heart's desire and my prayer to God for them is for their salvation. For I testify about them that they have a zeal for God, but not in accordance with knowledge. For not knowing about God's righteousness and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God. For Messiah is the goal of the Torah for righteousness to everyone who believes. (Rom 10:1–4)

They were ignorant about God's righteousness.

This could not mean that the religious Jews of Paul's day were ignorant of the attribute of God's righteousness.

Rather, Paul explains their lack of knowledge about God's righteousness by the fact that they sought to establish their own righteousness.

Thus, in this text, their attempt at establishing their own righteousness is the opposite of God's righteousness.

In Rom 10:1–3, the contrast is between God's method of establishing righteousness and man's own attempts to establish his own righteousness.

It is in the message of the gospel that God's righteousness is revealed, that is, God's method of making sinners righteous.

Paraphrase: "For in the gospel message God's method of making sinners righteous is made known…."

- God's method of making sinners righteous:

  God imputes the righteousness of Messiah to all who believe in Him.

  This means that God credits the righteousness of Messiah to all who are "in Messiah."

  This is what Paul means by the word "justification".

  The debt of sin owed by the sinner has been fully paid by the substitutionary death of Messiah on the sinner's behalf.

> *When you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions, having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us, which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. (Col 2:13–14)*

  Having cancelled the debt of sin, God creates a new heart in the believer.

  This new heart, empowered by the indwelling Spirit, desires to obey God and to put to death the deeds of the flesh.

  This is what Paul describes as the process of sanctification.

> *For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall also be in the likeness of His resurrection, knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin; for he who has died is freed from sin. (Rom. 6:5–7)*

- "**From faith to faith**"

  What does Paul mean by "from faith to faith"?

  1. from "Old Testament" faith to "New Testament" faith
  2. from faith in the Torah to faith in the Gospel
  3. from faith of the Preachers to faith of the Hearers
  4. from faith in things not seen to faith in things realized

5. from God's faithfulness to man's faith
6. from initial faith in accepting Yeshua as one's Savior to persevering faith seen in faithfulness to Yeshua

> *Therefore <u>as</u> you have received Messiah Yeshua the Lord, so walk in Him, having been firmly rooted and now being built up in Him and established in your faith, just as you were instructed, and overflowing with gratitude. (Col 2:6–7)*

- the word "as" means "in the same way"

"**for the righteous man shall live by faith**"

Paul explains what he means by "from faith to faith" by quoting Habakkuk 2:4.

In the MT: "Behold, as for the proud one, His soul is not right within him; But the righteous one will live by his faith."

In the Lxx: "But the righteous one will live by My faith."

- The context of Hab 2:4

The prophet raises the question of God's justice.

How could He use the wicked nation of Babylon to punish Israel, His chosen people?

The righteous one would turst God's ways even when they appear to be contrary to what seems right.

Thus, "the righteous one will live by his faith in God," not judging God by his own understanding.

Note the other time Hab 2:4 is quote by Paul in Gal 3:11

> *Now that no one is justified by the Torah before God is evident; for, "the righteous man shall live by faith."* (Gal 3:11)

Justified by the Torah = trusting in my way to be righteous.

Righteous by faith = trusting in God's method of making a sinner righteous.

notes by Tim Hegg

Roman 1:18

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them.

- "For the **wrath of God** is revealed from heaven"

  The word "For" links our verse to the previous context, and particularly to the pivotal phrase "from faith to faith."

  It does so because the natural disposition of mankind stands in opposition to the whole concept of saving faith.

  The first step of saving faith is to affirm the existence of God as Creator and therefore as sovereign over His creation.

> And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him. (Heb 11:6)

  The second step of faith is one's willing submission to God as Creator and Sovereign.

  That as the Creator, He has the sovereign right to establish what is right and what is wrong for the people He has created, and by these standards to judge all people.

  The "wrath of God" –

  analogous to human anger, but not the same

  Even our righteous anger is never completely righteous.

  God's anger is infinitely pure & without compromise.

  The wrath of God is in complete harmony with all of His attributes, including love and mercy.

- The wrath of God **is revealed** from heaven"

  ἀποκαλύπτεται = present tense = "being revealed"

  How is the "wrath of God" revealed?

1. the inevitable effects of sin: disease, hurt, frustration, futility, broken lives, hopelessness, no real & lasting shalom.

2. the final judgment when God's wrath will be plain and evident to all who are His enemies.

3. But while these explanations for defining the "wrath of God" have merit, they do not take into account the close parallelism with the previous context.

v. 17 – "For in it the righteousness of God is revealed…"
v. 18 – "For the wrath of God is revealed…"

In the same way that the "righteousness of God" is revealed, so the "wrath of God" is revealed.

It is in the Gospel that both the righteousness of God and the wrath of God are revealed.

The Gospel reveals God's method for making sinners righteous as well as the wrath of God against sinners because:

> The Gospel is centered in the crucifixion of God's Messiah for sinners and
>
> > His victorious resurrection proving that He has conquered sin and death, the penalty for sin.

Thus, it is primarily in the proclamation of the Gospel that God's wrath is being revealed against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men.

God's wrath against sin and sinners is fully displayed in the cross, for the Father poured out His wrath upon Yeshua, His righteous wrath owed to those for whom Yeshua died.

- "against **all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men**"

  while the following context focuses upon the ungodliness and unrighteousness of the Gentiles, Paul's use of the word "men" (ἄνθρωπος, *anthrōpos*) includes both Jew and Gentile.

  Idolatry, whether seen in worship of false gods or in smug upon one's ethnic status, is still idolatry.

> Thus they exchanged their glory for the image of an ox that eats grass. (Ps106:20)
>
> Has a nation changed gods when they were not gods? But My people have changed their glory for that which does not profit. (Jer 2:11)

- "who **suppress the truth** in unrighteousness"

  "suppress" = κατέχειν, *katechein* = "to hold down"

  Fallen mankind seeks to bury the truth because to admit the truth means accepting the fact that they are dependent upon God to whom they must therefore submit.

- "who suppress the truth **in unrighteousness**"

  "in unrighteousness" = "by means of unrighteousness"

  they hold to that which they know is not true and teach others to believe the same lies.

  The character of unrighteousness is to suppress the truth.

  The character of righteousness is to seek & uphold the truth.

- "because **that which is known** about God is **evident**"

  το γνωστον, *to gnōston* = "that which is knowable."

  "evident" = φανερός, *phaneros* = "in plain sight"

  "within them," better understood as "among them."

  Not "brute fact," but rather that God has intentionally revealed Himself in the created universe and continues to do so.

Romans 1:20

For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.

• "His **invisible attributes** … have been **clearly seen**"

How can the "invisible" be "clearly seen"?

"Clearly seen" does not mean completely understood.

The created world gives mankind a sure picture of God's infinite power which could only be possessed by a divine being.

This is what has been called the "natural revelation" of God, i.e., God's self-revelation in the created world.

"Special revelation" is the term used of God's self-revelation in Yeshua and in the Scriptures.

- "so that they are **without excuse**"

  Mankind cannot argue for their innocence on the basis that they were uniformed about God.

Fallen mankind has received God's self-revelation but consistently suppresses and denies this truth.

Natural revelation reveals the existence & power of God.

Special revelation reveals God's method of making sinners righteous.

Romans 1:21-23

For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures.

- "even though they **knew God**" = "knew about God's existence and His infinite power"
- "they did not **honor** Him as God or **give thanks**"

  "honor Him as God" = submit one's life to God

  "give thanks" = acknowledge with gratitude His goodness

  Ingratitude is the first step toward apostasy.

Mankind's Actions	Mankind's Inaction
Futile speculations	Did not honor God
Foolish heart darkened	Did not give thanks to God
Professed wisdom	
Became fools (there is no God)	
Exchanged God's glory	

- "the glory of the **incorruptible God**…" = God Who is, Who never changes, and Who is infinite in time, space, and being.
- "form of **corruptible man**, etc." = man who, like the animals, is not eternal and whose earthly existence will end in death

  Fallen man worships himself, and thus tries to "create" a god who is like himself. Selfishness is the first form of idolatry.

notes by Tim Hegg

Roman 1:24–25

Therefore God gave them over in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, so that their bodies would be dishonored among them. For they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.

- "Therefore **God gave them over**…"

  Our pericope is structured by the repeated use of this phrase:
  – v. 24 - *God gave them over…to impurity*
  – v. 26 - *God gave them over to degrading passions*
  – v. 28 - *God gave them over to a depraved mind*

  What is meant by "God gave them over…"?

  1. Indicates that God is <u>active</u> and not <u>passive</u> in this action.
  2. Displays both God's <u>justice</u> and His <u>mercy</u>
     a. He is just in punishing the rebellious acts of mankind.
     b. He is merciful because the temporal penalty (the negative effects of sin) may turn the sinner to seek God's forgiveness.

> *The LORD will strike Egypt, striking but healing; so they will return to the LORD, and He will respond to them and will heal them.* Is 19:22

  3. Thus, the concept of God "giving them over" does not mean that He has given them up <u>forever</u>. We should note that the same verb (παραδιδωμι, *paradidōmi*) is also used in 8:32 of Yeshua:

> *He who did not spare His own Son, but <u>delivered Him over</u> for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?* Rom 8:32

  4. It seems best, then, to understand the phrase "God gave them over…" to reveal God's way of "<u>striking</u> in order to <u>heal</u>."

- "in the **lusts of their hearts** to impurity, so that their bodies would be dishonored among them."
  – God removes His divine <u>restraints</u> so that sinful mankind, unfettered, give way to their <u>base</u> <u>passions</u>.

- "For they **exchanged the truth of God for a lie**…"

  – This illustrates an important point regarding the image of God in mankind: a primary aspect of the image of God is the unity of male and female in the sacred institution of marriage.

> *For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh.* Gen 2:24

  – Homosexuality is the result of fallen mankind rebelling against the the image of God in which they are created, destroying God's pattern of marriage which illustrates an essential aspect of God's very nature.

- *"*and **worshiped and served the creature** rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen."

  – Fallen mankind lives out the lie first announced by Satan in Gan Eden, that God is not good and that He is not sovereign.

  – There is no neutral position for mankind. Either we worship and serve the Creator, or we worship and serve ourselves and the false gods (demons) of our own deceived imagination.

  – The truth is that there one God, Who is the Creator, and He is forever blessed.

Roman 1:26–27

For this reason God gave them over to degrading passions; for their women exchanged the natural function for that which is unnatural, and in the same way also the men abandoned the natural function of the woman and burned in their desire toward one another, men with men committing indecent acts and receiving in their own persons the due penalty of their error.

- "For this reason God gave them over to **degrading passions**…"

  – The Greek word translated by the English "degrading" is ἀτιμία, *ατιμια*, which is simply the word for "honor" with a negative "a" attached: thus "without honor" or "unhonorable."

  – This teaches an important lesson: passions in line with God's created purposes are honored by Him. The physical relationship between a husband and wife are honored by God.

  – This also means that the physical relationship within marriage is a sacred gift given by God Himself.

Marriage is to be held in honor among all, and the marriage bed is to be undefiled; for fornicators and adulterers God will judge. Heb 13.:4

- "for their women **exchanged the natural function** for that which is **unnatural**, and in the same way also the men **abandoned the natural function** of the woman men with men committing **indecent acts**…"
  - "Natural function" = what God intends by creating male and female who are attracted to each other and who compliment each other.
  - Satan's lie is that those who engage in homosexual relations cannot help themselves because they were born this way. Paul's statement regarding what is natural exposes this lie, as well his use of the the words exchanged (μεταλλάσσω, *metallassō*) and abandoned (ἀφίημι, *aphiēmi*).
  - Paul labels all homosexual acts as "indecent" (ἀσχημοσύνη, *aschēmosunē* = "behavior that elicits disgrace."
  - All ungodly (unnatural) passions, in whatever realm they may occur, are to be abandoned in favor of God's created order.

In the Tanach תּוֹעֵבָה (*tô'eivah*, "abomination") describes homosexuality

> You shall not lie with a male as one lies with a female; it is an abomination. Lev 18:22
>
> If there is a man who lies with a male as those who lie with a woman, both of them have committed a detestable act; they shall surely be put to death. Their bloodguiltiness is upon them. Lev 20:13
>
> There were also male cult prostitutes in the land. They did according to all the abominations of the nations which the LORD dispossessed before the sons of Israel. 1Kings 14:24

Other references in Paul's writings:

> Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, …" (1Cor 6:9)
>
> …those who are lawless and rebellious … immoral men and homosexuals (1Tim 1:9–10)

- "…receiving in their own persons **the due penalty** of their error.
  - cf. v. 18 and the "wrath of God being revealed."
  - The cross is the full demonstration of God's wrath against sin, but the temporal misery which sin brings is also divine punishment.

Roman 1:28

And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, God gave them over to a depraved mind, to do those things which are not proper,

- "Did not see fit **to acknowledge God** any longer…"
  - God has repeatedly made Himself known to all mankind (v. 19) yet rebellious mankind refuses to accept that which is evident.
  - This is an act of rebellion, not the result of ignorance.
  - The NASB "any longer" is an attempt to translate the Greek word ἐπίγνωσις, *epignōsis*, which may stress the idea of "fact upon fact" which the rebellious heart refuses to acknowledge.
- "God gave them over to a **depraved mind**…"
  - Even as they refuse to acknowledge God, so God refuses to acknowledge them, that is, to accept them in their rebellion.
  - Apart from God's intervention, they continue to believe that their choices are good, and that their actions are acceptable.
- "to do those things which are **not proper.**"
  - Once again, Paul emphasizes that what is proper is that which agrees with God's self-revelation.
  - God alone is the standard of what is right and wrong.

------- A Righteous Response -------

1. We must remain firm in calling homosexuality a sin which God hates.
   - because we confess the Bible to be God's word, and the Bible is clear that homosexuality is an abomination in God's eyes.
2. We must affirm that those who have engaged in this sin are stilled called to repent, and that God will always forgive the sin of anyone who repents and accepts Yeshua as his or her Savior.
3. We ought therefore to be anxious to give the Gospel to all who are perishing, regardless of their life-style, for the Gospel is the power of God the results in salvation.
4. We should not allow the rapid rise of homosexuality in our times to diminish the wholesome and godly relationship that may often exist between friends of the same gender.

notes by Tim Hegg

Roman 1:29–31

being filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, greed, evil; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice; they are gossips, slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, without understanding, untrustworthy, unloving, unmerciful;

- **Unrighteousness**: the opposite of *tzedeqah* which is often demonstrated through acts of mercy.
- **wickedness**: the lack of moral or social values
- **greed**: "evil eye" (cf. Matt 6:23) – materialism without consideration of others
- **evil**: κακία, *kakia*, general word for bad actions
- **full of envy**: never contented; always wanting what others have
- **murder**: the physical side of envy at its worst
- **strife**: the opposite of *shalom*; one who causes division among people
- **deceit**: living a lie; leading people astray; masking the truth
- **malice**: mean-spirited; a defect in character that leads one to be hurtful to others
- **gossips**: *lashon hara*, evil speech; damaging the reputation of people by speaking evil of them
- **slanderers**: *lashon hara*, including making up falsehoods to destroy another person
- **haters of God**: the core issue; the source of all evil
- **insolent**: (the Greek *hubristēs* is used only here and in 1Tim 1:13) – treating others with contempt; considering oneself to be above everyone else
- **arrogant**: self-centered; refusing to acknowledge God as the source of all that is good
- **boastful**: arrogance as displayed in one's speech

- **inventors of evil**: finding ways to take the good things God has given and using them for evil
- **disobedient to parents**: denying God's established authority
- **without understanding**: blinded to the truth; unwilling to accept that which is evident
- **untrustworthy**: dealing treacherously (cf. Lxx Jer 3:7ff). The Greek word *asunthetous* = "covenant breakers"
- **unloving**: Greek *astorgē* – The Greek *storgē* stands for love that is naturally shown among family members. This most likely refers to infanticide which was common in the Greco-Roman society of Paul's day.
- **unmerciful**: unwilling to forgive or show kindness to someone who otherwise deserves punishment

unrighteousness
wickedness
greed
evil
full of envy
murder
strife
deceit
malice
gossips, slanderers, haters of God
insolent
arrogant
boastful
inventors of evil
disobedient to parents
without understanding
untrustworthy
unloving
unmerciful

Roman 1:32

and although they know the ordinance of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, they not only do the same, but also give hearty approval to those who practice them.

- "and although **they know** the ordinance of God…"

  They know the "ordinance of God" in the general sense that God's has made Himself known as the Creator and Sovereign in the creation (vv. 20–21)

> *For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse. For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened.* (Rom 1:20–21)

- "that those who practice such things are **worthy of death**…"

  Not that each sin listed is a capital offense but that sin in general is rebellion against God and that the ultimate penalty for rebellion against the Sovereign Creator is death.

- "they not only **do the same** but also give **hearty approval** to those who practice them."

  While those who practice sin are surely guilty, it is clear that Paul considers those who approve of such wickedness to be equally guilty.

notes by Tim Hegg

Roman 2:1

Therefore you have no excuse, everyone of you who passes judgment, for in that which you judge another, you condemn yourself; for you who judge practice the same things.

- To whom is Paul addressing his words here? To Gentiles, to Jews, or to a mixed group? It would seem he has the dominant voice of Pharisaic Judaism in mind, for the following reasons:

1. The language of v. 4 fits the history of Israel and not God's activity toward the nations.

Or do you think lightly of the riches of His kindness and tolerance and patience, not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to repentance? (Rom 2:4)

– God has shown mercy to Gentile nations (e.g., Ninevah), but this is more the exception rather than the rule.

– the terms "kindness," "tolerance," and "patience" better describe God's forbearance toward rebellious Israel.

Hear this word which the LORD has spoken against you, sons of Israel, against the entire family which He brought up from the land of Egypt: "You only have I chosen among all the families of the earth; Therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities." (Amos 3:2)

2. In the larger context of this chapter, Paul has two groups in mind, Jews & Gentiles. One is viewed as morally superior, and this would most likely be the nation of Israel.

3. Paul clearly address the Jewish community in v. 17 and there is no indication that he begins addressing a different group at this point.

But if you bear the name Jew and rely upon the Torah and boast in God,.... (Rom 2:17)

4. Historical sources picture some Pharisees as avoiding contact with Gentiles because they judged all Gentiles to be morally corrupt and idolators.

- How, then, should we understanding the connection of our text to what Paul has said in the previous chapter?
- How should we understand the opening word "Therefore"?

  – Paul is not saying that the Jewish community is engaged in the same sins of sexual perversion as described in 1:26–31.

  – What he is saying is this: rebellion against God is seen in far more ways than in sexual perversion and worship of false gods.

  – Rebellion is even more evident among those who have received God's special revelation and refuse to obey Him.
- Paul's argument in a nutshell:

  – If a person condemns the actions of another while engaging in those selfsame actions, he condemns himself at the same time.

  – The worst form of hypocrisy is when someone condemns others for sins he or she is likewise practicing.
- Does this mean that we should accept everything then?

  – No. It is important to distinguish right from wrong!

  – What Paul is condemning here is hypocrisy.

  – Yeshua Himself taught about hypocrisy in Matthew 7:3–5

Why do you look at the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' and behold, the log is in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye. (Matt 7:3–5)

Roman 2:2

And we know that the judgment of God rightly falls upon those who practice such things.

- God is just in judging those who disobey Him.
  - "rightly falls…" (NASB) = Greek "according to truth"
  - "practice such things" = a lifestyle of disobedience to God
  - Hypocrisy = knowing what is true but refusing to live it.
    - Gentiles: know God is creator but worship idols
    - History of Israel: Considered themselves superior to the pagan nations but borrowed their idolatrous worship.

Roman 2:3

But do you suppose this, O man, when you pass judgment on those who practice such things and do the same yourself, that you will escape the judgment of God?

- Finding security for one's soul in "doing religion."

  – Some 1st Century Judaisms taught that one's Jewish status guaranteed God's forgiveness.

  – In this verse, Paul makes it clear that this is not true. God does not forgive sin based upon one's lineage or group association.

I myself might have confidence even in the flesh. If anyone else has a mind to put confidence in the flesh, I far more: circumcised the eighth day, of the nation of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the Law, a Pharisee; as to zeal, a persecutor of the ekklesia; as to the righteousness which is in the Torah, found blameless. But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Messiah. (Phil 3:4–7)

Roman 2:4

Or do you think lightly of the riches of His kindness and tolerance and patience, not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to repentance?

- God's kindness = His goodness
- God's tolerance = His forbearance
- God's patience = His remaining faithful to His purposes
- God's goodness is seen in that He leads people to repentance.
- He conquers our hearts by the strength of His love.
- In true repentance before God we give up everything and gain the unspeakable riches of His love in Yeshua.
- How do we take God's grace for granted?

  – If God has displayed His kindness, tolerance, and patience toward us, should we not do the same for others?

  – "Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil; cling to what is good." (Rom 12:9)

My eyes shed streams of water,
Because they do not keep Your Torah.
(Psalm 119:139)

When Yeshua went ashore, He saw a large crowd, and He felt compassion for them because they were like sheep without a shepherd; and He began to teach them many things.

(Mark 6:34)

notes by Tim Hegg

Roman 2:5

*But because of **your stubbornness and unrepentant heart** you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God,*

- Paul continues to address the religious Jewish community (as characterized by the Pharisaic sect)
- "stubbornness" = Greek σκληρότης (*sklērotēs* – note English "sclerosis"). The word means "to be hard," "hard-hearted," "unwilling to reconcier the facts".

Remember Your servants, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; do not look at the stubbornness (קְשִׁי) of this people or at their wickedness or their sin. (Deut 9:27)

- "unrepentant" = to "repent" means to return to the place one has left (Hebrew שׁוּב / תְּשׁוּבָה)
- "heart" = the place where moral and ethical decisions are made.
- Thus, "a heart unwilling to return to one's proper place"

… storing up wrath for yourself

- every act of rebellion and disobedience against God accumulates offenses that require divine judgment.
- "I'll repent later."
  - This is not the perspective a someone who is truly born again.
- This perspective presumes to know the future. "Later" may never come.

in the day of wrath & revelation of the righteous judgment of God

- The following verses make it clear that Paul is talking about the future judgment day, when all will give account to God.
- God's final judgment against sin and sinners will reveal His righteousness, for it is because He is righteous that sin cannot go unpunished.
- Usually the idea of "storing up" relates to what is good: storing up food; money; wood for the fire; etc.

- The rebellious heart thinks it is "storing up" good times for the future, but is doing just the opposite.

My son, if sinners entice you, do not consent. If they say, "Come with us, let us lie in wait for blood, let us ambush the innocent without cause; let us swallow them alive like Sheol, even whole, as those who go down to the pit; we will find all kinds of precious wealth, we will fill our houses with spoil….But they lie in wait for their own blood; They ambush their own lives. Prov 1:10–18

Roman 2:6

Who will render to every man ***according to his deeds;***

- Is Paul teaching that a person can earn God's acceptance through doing good deeds? Elsewhere he emphasizes just the opposite.

Now to the one who works, his wage is not credited as a favor, but as what is due. But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is credited as righteousness… (Rom 4:4–5)

For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. (Eph 2:8–9)

He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit… (Titus 3:5)

- No! Paul is not teaching righteousness by good works but good works as proof of genuine righteousness.

Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Messiah Yeshua have been baptized into His death? Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Messiah was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. (Rom 6:3–4)

knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin; (Rom. 6:6)

Roman 2:7

*to those who by **perseverance in doing good** seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life;*

- One of the primary proofs of genuine faith is perseverance in that faith.
- Greek = "in accordance with (κατά) perseverance"
- God gives the ability and strength to persevere in faith.
- Perseverance in faith is a cooperative work between the believer & God.
- Yet the spiritual strength to persevere comes from God
- "Persevere we must; persevere we will."

And not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance; and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope; (Rom 5:3–4, cf 8:25, 29)

For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, so that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. Now may the God who gives perseverance and encouragement grant you to be of the same mind with one another according to Messiah Yeshua ... (Rom 15:4–5, cf. Phil 1:6)

seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life

- "glory, honor, and immortality" are all common terms used in 1st Century Judaisms to speak of the resurrection and life in the world to come.
- Thus, to those who by faith have the assurance of salvation in Yeshua, they will be granted eternal life.
- Note v. 10: "glory, honor, and peace."

Roman 2:8

*but to those who are selfishly ambitious and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, **wrath and indignation**.*

- "selfishly ambitious" / "do not obey the truth" / "obey unrighteousness" – these are the opposite of a new life of faith in Yeshua.
- The reward is also opposite: The gift given to those "in Messiah" is "eternal life" while those who reject Yeshua will receive "wrath and indignation" from God.

Roman 2:9–10

There will be tribulation and distress for every soul of man who does evil, ***of the Jew first and also of the Greek****, but glory and honor and peace to everyone who does good,* ***to the Jew first and also to the Greek****.*



- The primary emphasis in Paul's conclusion is that a person cannot be guaranteed life in the world to come based upon association in a particular people-group.
- National Israel is seen as especially guilty before God because even though they were the first to receive God's special revelation, they have (in the majority) rejected the Messiah foretold by the prophets.

Roman 2:11

For there is no ***partiality*** *with God.*

- Right standing before God is not the result of human effort but just the opposite: a confession of total inability and pleading for God's mercy.
- Thus, God does not give salvation based upon what He sees in the individual. He gives salvation as a matter of His pure grace.
- "partiality" in Greek = προσωπολημψία, *prosōpolēmpsia*

  Made from 2 words: *prosōpon*, "face" & *lambanō*, "to lift, take"
- Corresponds to נשׂא פנה, "to lift a face" = "to smile, accept someone, show favor to someone." (cf. Num 6:26)
- God's "smile" or "acceptance" is extended to those who are in His Son, Yeshua.

  For as many as are the promises of God, in Him they are yes; therefore also through Him is our Amen to the glory of God through us. 1Cor 1:20

notes by Tim Hegg

Roman 2:12

For all who have sinned without the Torah will also perish without the Torah, and all who have sinned under the Torah will be judged by the Torah;

- Here Paul is supporting what he has stated in v. 11, that "there is no partiality with God."
- Salvation is a gift from God and does not depend upon one's ethnicity or identity with a particular people-group.
- Paul is talking about Jews and non-Jews (Gentiles).

non-Jews	Jews
have sinned	have sinned
without the Torah	under the Torah
perish without the Torah	judged by the Torah

- "without the Torah" means having no direct access to the written revelation of God, i.e., the Torah.
- "under the Torah" means being part of Israel to whom the written revelation of God, i.e., the Torah, was given.

How can God condemn those who have never had access to the Bible?

- God has made Himself known to all via the creation.
- This revelation declares more than just His existence; it makes known His "invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature" (Rom 1:20)

What about those who have the Torah?

- The message of the Torah is one of faith in God and obedience to His commandments.
- The message of the Torah constantly points to Yeshua (Rom 10:4)
- Those who reject Yeshua have likewise rejected the Torah.

Therefore, all will be judged in accordance with the revelation they have been given:

- Those without the Torah will be judged in accordance with God's self-revelation in the creation.
- Those with the Torah will be judged on accordance with God's self-revelation in the creation and in the Scriptures.

Roman 2:13

for it is not the hearers of the Torah who are just before God, but the doers of the Torah will be justified.

Paul contrasts those who merely "hear" with those who "do" the Torah.

- "hearers" refers to the Jewish people who had received the Torah as opposed to the nations who had not.
- Paul's point: it is not merely possessing the Torah that is the mark of true faith, but obeying the Torah.

In this verse, Paul is not giving us a hypothetical statement.

- He is not saying that "if one could keep the Torah, one would be justified before God, but we all know that is impossible."
- He is reiterating what he has already taught, that obedience to God (being doers of the Torah) is the life-characteristic of genuine faith.

Roman 2:14-15

For when Gentiles who do not have the Torah do instinctively the things of the Torah, these, not having the Torah, are a law to themselves, in that they show the work of the Torah written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness and their thoughts alternately accusing or else defending them…

Who is Paul identifying here as "Gentiles"?

Various Interpretations	Yes	No
1. Pagans who still do good things & merit favor.		
2. Hypothetical: "If Gentiles could keep Torah…."		
3. Pagans who have a hidden faith/desire to do right.		
4. Gentile believers who have not known Torah.		

They show the work of the Torah written in their hearts

- This phrase is a reiteration of what is promised in the New Covenant: "I will put My Torah within them and <u>on their heart I will write it</u>…." (Jer 31:33)

- Paul teaches that unbelievers cannot do good in God's sight.

  as it is written, "There is none righteous, not even one; There is none who understands, there is none who seeks for God; all have turned aside, together they have become useless; there is none who does good, there is not even one. (Rom 3:10–12)

- This agrees with what Isaiah wrote: "All our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment…." (Is 64:6)
- Note Heb 11:6, "And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him."
- We conclude, then, that when Paul speaks about Gentiles doing the things of the Torah, he is speaking about Gentiles who have come to faith in Yeshua.

How, then, are we to understand the word "instinctively"? (*For when Gentiles who do not have the Torah do <u>instinctively</u> the things of the Torah…*)

- The Greek word is φύσις (*phusis*) which generally describes "the natural character" or "something done according to an established order."
- This can describe something determined by birth, by culture, or by common practice.

How does the word *phusis* function in this sentence? Does it go with what comes before or with what follows?

- Literal word order: "for when Gentiles the ones not having the Torah <u>by nature</u> the things of the Torah do…."
  - Gentiles, the ones who do not have the Torah by nature
  - Gentiles who naturally do the things of the Torah

Elsewhere, Paul uses the word *phusis* to describe one's ethnic or familial connections:

And will not he who is uncircumcised naturally (ek phusis)*, if he keeps the Torah, will he not judge you….?* (Rom 2:27)

We are Jews naturally, and not sinners among the Gentiles; (Gal 2:15)

Among them we too all formerly lived in the lust of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were naturally children of wrath, even as the rest. (Eph 2:3)

Thus, "Gentiles, the ones who do not have the Torah by nature"

…these, not having the Torah, are a Torah to themselves, in that they show the Torah written in their hearts…

- "They are a Torah to themselves" means that even though they did not come by the Torah as a matter of their own culture and upbringing, they prove they have the Torah by their deeds.
- This is because the Torah is written on their hearts, and the Torah therefore governs the way they live.

  "For it is not the hearers of the Torah who are righteous before God, but the doers of the Torah who will be justified." (v. 13)

  …their conscience bearing witness and their thoughts alternately accusing or else defending them…

- "conscience" is inward knowledge of right and wrong
- When the Torah is written on the heart, the renewed conscience is governed by the indwelling Spirit Who confirms or convicts in accordance with the Torah.

This is what is meant by "their thoughts accusing or defending".

- Someone who is born from above knows when he or she is tempted to make a sinful choice.
- In the same way, a born again person is settled in conscience when moved to righteousness, even if that decision will require self - sacrifice.

Romans 2:16

…on the day when, according to my gospel, God will judge the secrets of men through Messiah Yeshua.

- Not only is the conscience of the believer aided by the indwelling Spirit, but he or she also has their hope set upon the final day when all will appear before the Messiah.

The Judge of all mankind is Messiah Yeshua.

- The nail-pierced hands also hold the keys to death and Hades (Rev 1:18)
- Those who belong to Him are safe; those who reject Him are lost. This is what Paul means by "according to my gospel."

Note Matthew 25:34, 41, 46

notes by Tim Hegg

Roman 2:17–20

But if you bear the name "Jew" and rely upon the Torah and boast in God, and know His will and approve the things that are essential, being instructed out of the Torah, and are confident that you yourself are a guide to the blind, a light to those who are in darkness, a corrector of the foolish, a teacher of the immature, having in the Torah the embodiment of knowledge and of the truth,

- It is clear that in this paragraph that Paul is addressing Jewish people, and particularly those of the Pharisaic sect.
- All of the things Paul lists here are, in and of themselves, honorable and even desirable.
- Yet it is clear that Paul is listing things that highlight some level of hypocrisy.

"If you bear the name 'Jew'"

- "Jew" (Ἰουδαῖος, *ioudaios*) originally meant "of the tribe of Judah."
- By the 1st Century BCE, "Jew" designated those people of Israel who lived in Judea, and who worshipped at the Jerusalem Temple.
- Eventually the name "Jew" came to be equivalent with "Israelite" or "people of Israel."

"rely upon the Torah"

- "rely" = ἐπαναπαύομαι, *epanapauomai* used only here and in Lk 10:6, "If a man of peace is there, your peace will rest on him; but if not, it will return to you."
- To rely upon the Torah means to believe that obeying the Torah was how one remained within the covenant.

"boast in God"

- Paul taught that it is right to "boast in God"

  "But he who boasts is to boast in Adonai." (2Cor 10:17, paraphrasing Jer 9:24)

- In Romans, however, Paul is talking about the claim that Adonai is the God of only the Jewish people.

“and know His will”

- literally, “and know the will”
- that the *halachah* being formulated by the Pharisees was the only true understanding of how to obey God, i.e., how to do His will.

“and approve the things that are essential”

- the word “essential” (διαφέροντα, *diapheronta*) can also mean “things that differ”
- discerning the essential characteristics by which things differ
- This relates to determining what is holy and what is profane.

“being instructed out of the Torah”

- The Pharisees believed that only they were able to know the true meaning of the Torah and its proper application to daily life.

“and are confident that you yourself are a guide to the blind, a light to those in darkness”

- Their confidence was in themselves.
- Rather than directing people to Adonai and His Messiah, they primarily desired to attract people to their own sect of Judaism.

“a corrector of the foolish”

- Surely Israel was blessed by God above all nations, for God gave His Torah only to Israel.

> “He declares His words to Jacob, His statutes and His ordinances to Israel. He has not dealt thus with any nation; and as for His ordinances, they have not known them. Praise Adonai!” (Ps 147:19–20)

- It was easy for Israel to think that God had blessed them because they were better than the other nations.
- They had forgotten their own beginnings were as a “wandering Aramean” (cf. Deut 26:5)

“a teacher of the immature”

- The Pharisees seemed often to view their understanding of the Torah as a result of their own intellect and education rather than as a gift from God.

“having in the Torah the embodiment of knowledge and of the truth”

- Paul everywhere affirms that the Torah embodies true knowledge and truth.

- Various Jewish sects, however, had claimed the Torah for themselves, teaching that only they had discovered the true meaning of the Torah.

Roman 2:21–22

you, therefore, who teach another, do you not teach yourself? You who preach that one shall not steal, do you steal? You who say that one should not commit adultery, do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples? You who boast in the Torah, through your breaking the Torah, do you dishonor God?

- Now Paul begins to mark the difference between "letter" and "Spirit" in regard to the Torah.
- Claiming to know God is not enough. The proof that one truly knows God is seen in how one lives.

"you, therefore, who teach another, do you not teach yourself?"

> "…the righteous say little and do much, but the wicked say much and do not do even a little." (*Avot R. Natan*,13)
>
> "There are four types of scholars: one studies himself but does not teach others; one teaches others but himself does not study; one teaches himself and others; and one teaches neither himself nor others."(*Avot R. Natan*, 29)

- The height of hypocrisy is for a teacher to exhort others to do what he or she is unwilling to do.

"You who preach that one should not steal, do you steal?"

- Lending money and charging one's brother interest.
- Failing to honor God with tithes. (cf. Mal 3:8)
- Reaping the harvest on the Sabbatical year.

"You who say that one should not commit adultery, do you commit adultery?"

- The Jewish leaders had made provisions for divorce which were contrary to Torah.
- As such, those who remarried after obtaining an invalid divorce were actually committing adultery. (cf. Matt 5:27–32; 19:9ff; Mk 10:11)

"You who abhor idols, do you rob temples?"

- Abhorrence of idols among the Jewish communities is well documented in the pre-destruction era.

- Desecration of idols and idol temples was considered a holy duty by some Jewish sects.
- Yet nothing of value from the pagan temples was to be retained nor given to the Temple (Deut 7:25–26)
- It seems, however, that some of the Jewish community were becoming rich through plundering pagan temples.

Roman 2:23–24

*You who boast in the Torah, through your breaking the Torah, do you dishonor God? "*THE NAME OF GOD IS BLASPHEMED AMONG THE GENTILES BECAUSE OF YOU*," just as it is written.*

- The opening sentence should probably be read as a statement rather than as a question (cp. ESV)
- "You who boast in the law dishonor God by breaking the law." (ESV)
- Thus, the quote from Is 52:5 (Lxx) is given as proof.
- When we confess to love God's Torah but we live contrary to it, we blaspheme the Name of God.

Applying this to Our Own Lives

- It is always easier to find faults in others than to do honest evaluation of our own hearts.

Personal evaluation:

- Have I "polished the outside of the cup" without cleaning the inside?
- Are there things in my life I know God wants me to get rid of, but I've still not done it?
- What things have I considered unimportant that God considers very important?

notes by Tim Hegg

Roman 2:25

For indeed circumcision is of value if you practice the Torah; but if you are a transgressor of the Torah, your circumcision has become uncircumcision.

- The opening word "For" links this verse to the previous context.
- Paul continues to explain his primary premise which he stated in v. 13, "for it is not the hearers of the Torah who are just before God, but the doers of the Torah will be justified."
- A life of obedience to God's commandments is the sure sign of saving faith.

circumcision is of value

- How is Paul using the term "circumcision" here?
- In the Apostolic Scriptures, "circumcision" is generally used in one of three ways:

1. to describe the act of circumcising

> If anyone else has a mind to put confidence in the flesh, I far more: circumcised the eighth day, of the nation of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the Torah, a Pharisee; as to zeal, a persecutor of the ekklesia; as to the righteousness which is in the Torah, found blameless. (Phil 3:4–6)

2. to describe the state of being circumcised

> If a man receives circumcision on the Sabbath so that the Torah of Moses will not be broken, are you angry with Me because I made an entire man well on the Sabbath? (John 7:23)

3. to describe the Jewish community in general

> But on the contrary, seeing that I had been entrusted with the gospel to the uncircumcised, just as Peter had been to the circumcised (for He who effectually worked for Peter in his apostleship to the circumcised effectually worked for me also to the Gentiles), and recognizing the grace that had been given to me, James and Cephas and John, who were reputed to be pillars, gave to me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, so that we might go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised. (Gal 2:7–9)

- Paul appears to be using "circumcision" in this verse to describe "the state of being circumcised."

- But notice that Paul is emphasizing the true meaning of circumcision in this passage, for he speaks of the value of circumcision.
- What is the true significance of circumcision as the sign of the Abrahamic covenant?

Circumcision as a Covenant Sign

Genesis 15 – Abraham's primary question: "O Adonai YHVH, what will You give me, since I am childless…?

- God had promised that He would give the Land to Abraham and to his descendants: "To your descendants I will give this land." (Gen 12:7)
- In order for God to fulfill His promise to Abraham, he would have to have his own son who would inherit the promised Land.
- God gives Abraham a two-fold demonstration that the covenant promise is secure:
  1. the innumerable stars in the heavens
  2. the dramatized covenant ceremony

Genesis 16 – The "Hagar Plan"

- Abraham and Sarah had lived in the Land for 11 years and Sarah was still unable to have children.
- Taking measures into their own hands, Abraham fathered a son, Ishmael, by Hagar.
- Apparently Abraham considered Ishmael to be the heir who would inherit the covenant blessings: "Oh that Ishmael might live before You!" (17:8)
- But this was not God's plan: "No, but Sarah your wife will bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac…" (17:19)

Genesis 17 – Not by the flesh but by the Spirit

- God waits until this point in the story to give Abraham the sign of the covenant, i.e., circumcision.
- This sign would reveal the very essence of the covenant itself: "This is My covenant, which you shall keep, between Me and you and your descendants after you: every male among you shall be circumcised."
- The sign of circumcision deals specifically with procreation.
- The cutting away of the flesh symbolized that the promised son would not come by normal human means, but God would cause Sarah to conceive by a specific miracle.
- The son promised to Abraham was a foreshadow of the ultimate Son Who also would be born by a virgin, requiring a specific miracle.
- Thus, the essence of the covenant, the very means by which the covenant would be fulfilled, was the promised Messiah.

- Paul teaches this in Galatians when he says that the "seed" (singular) is ultimately Yeshua:

  > Now the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. He does not say, "And to seeds," as referring to many, but rather to one, "And to your seed," that is, Messiah. (Gal 3:16)

- The immediate application of the sign to Abraham and Sarah was that God's covenant promises could not be obtain by human effort.
- The outward sign, in order to be rightly understood and received, must be matched by circumcision of the heart, that is, a full reliance upon God and not upon one's own efforts, abilities, or lineage.
- Circumcision called for trusting God (faith in God) rather than trusting oneself.

Changing the Significance of Circumcision

- In time, the nation of Israel disregarded the true significance of circumcision.
- Believing that their national identity secured them God's favor, they came to view circumcision as an ethnic marker.
  - circumcision = part of God's people
  - uncircumcision = not part of God's people
- God's people = righteous in God's sight
- Not God's people = unrighteous in God's sight
- The later rabbinic literature bases this view on Is 60:21

  > And all your people are righteous; they will possess the land forever, the branch of My planting, the work of My hands, that I may be glorified. (Isaiah 60:21)

- While from early times Israel viewed national identity as securing God's favor, it was particularly at the time of the Maccabees that circumcision became a primary mark of Jewish identity.

  > And Mattathias and his friends went about and tore down the altars; they forcibly circumcised all the uncircumcised boys that they found within the borders of Israel. They hunted down the arrogant men, and the work prospered in their hands. They rescued the Torah out of the hands of the Gentiles and kings, and they never let the sinner gain the upper hand. (1Macc 2:45f)

- It was during this Maccabean era that a conversion process for Gentiles was developed by which non-Jews could be awarded "legal Jewish status."
- Circumcision (for males) was the central part of this ceremony, the final component of the conversion process being a *mikveh*.

- Having fully explained the conversion process to a Gentile who wanted to convert:

  "If he accepted, he is circumcised right away… As soon as he is healed arrangements are made for his immediate immersion, when two learned men must stand by his side and acquaint him with some of the minor commandments and some of the major ones. When he comes up after his immersion he is deemed to be an Israelite in all respects." (b.*Yevamot* 47a-b)

if you practice (πράσσω, *prassō*) ***the Torah***

- This does not mean keeping the Torah perfectly.
- The word *prassō* means "to accomplish something," "to live in a way consistent with a set pattern."
- Paul is describing a lifestyle of obedience, growing in holiness.

but if you are a transgressor of the Torah

- This phrase describes a lifestyle of disobedience.
- But how could Paul describe religious Jews of his day as living a lifestyle of disobedience?
  - theft, adultery – vv. 21–21
  - hypocrisy – teaching one thing and doing another
  - setting aside the Torah for the sake of tradition
  - rejecting Yeshua Who is the very goal of the Torah

your circumcision has become uncircumcision.

- Those who relying upon their Jewish identity to be accepted by God will be condemned by God in the same way that they expect God to condemn the Gentiles.
- If circumcision of the flesh is not matched by circumcision of the heart, it counts for nothing as far as standing righteous before God.

Applications

- What does it mean to be "circumcised in heart"?
- What is my primary motivation for serving God and others?
- Are there areas of my life where I fail to rely upon God's promises and instead "do it my own way"?

notes by Tim Hegg

Roman 2:26–29

So if the uncircumcised man keeps the requirements of the Torah, will not his uncircumcision be regarded as circumcision?

And he who is physically uncircumcised, if he keeps the Torah, will he not judge you who though having the letter of the Torah and circumcision are a transgressor of the Torah?

For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh.

But he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that which is of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter; and his praise is not from men, but from God.

The Context

- Paul's mission: "… to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles for His name's sake" 1:5

  Paul's teaching in the previous context:
  - The gospel is the power of God resulting in salvation to those who accept it by faith.
  - All are in need of salvation because all, Jew and Gentile, are guilty before God.
    - ~ This is obvious with regard to the Gentiles because of their immorality and idolatry.
    - ~ But it is equally true of Jewish people who, though religious, fail to live out what they know is true.
- Our present text continues Paul's words to the Jewish community regarding their need of salvation.
- Paul is therefore addressing Jews in our text, not Gentiles.

Romans 2:26

So if the uncircumcised man keeps the requirements of the Torah, will not his uncircumcision be regarded as circumcision?

- "uncircumcised man" = the common way the Jewish community referred to Gentiles.
  - "uncircumcised" could refer to Gentiles in general, regardless of gender.
  - "uncircumcised" defined those without "legal Jewish status," i.e., no membership in Israel

- "keeps" describes a lifestyle, not sinless perfection
- "requirements" = δικαίωμα, *dikaiōma*, "righteous actions required by the Torah"
- "will not he be regarded as within God's chosen people even though you do not regard him as such?"
- The key to understanding Paul's statement here is to answer the question: "Who is the one doing the regarding?"
- The word "regarding" is λογίζομαι (*logizomai*), the same word used by the Lxx in Gen 15:6, Abraham "believed in Adonai; and He reckoned it to him as righteousness." (cf. Rom 4:3ff)
- This same word is used throughout Romans by Paul to describe God reckoning righteousness to those who believe.
- Thus, the One Who is doing the regarding is God.
- Even though the Jewish community would not receive Gentiles, God does, if they have been born again by faith in His Son, Yeshua.
- *Paraphrase*: "If the believing Gentile keeps the requirements of the Torah (the very thing that is the mark of being born again), will not God accept him as a member of His chosen people?"
- The answer to this rhetorical question is "Yes!"

Romans 2:27

And he who is physically uncircumcised, if he keeps the Torah, will he not judge you who though having the letter of the Torah and circumcision are a transgressor of the Torah?

- The word translated "physically" here is φύσις, *phusis*, the same word we encountered in v. 14 which described Gentiles as not having the Torah "by nature," that is, "as part of their natural upbringing."
- *Better translation*: "And he who is uncircumcised by nature…." = "he who is not born into the Jewish community"
- "judge you," not in the sense of acting as a judge, but more as a witness for the prosecutor.
- The Torah pursuant Gentile will be evidence of what the Jew ought to have been and could have been.
- Paul sometimes uses "letter" to mean "seeking to obey the Torah in one's own strength without the power of the Spirit."

> …being manifested that you are a letter of Messiah, cared for by us, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts. (2Cor 3:3)

… Who also made us adequate as servants of a new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life. (2Cor 3:6)

- The "letter" that "kills" is the Torah without the work of the Spirit writing it upon the heart.
- In our verse, "letter" and "circumcision" are parallel thoughts.
- This means, "having the letter of the Torah and being raised within Judaism, but not having the indwelling Ruach HaKodesh."
- The proof that the "letter of the Torah and being raised within Judaism" is not sufficient for righteousness is affirmed by the last phrase, "…are a transgressor of the Torah."
- This emphasizes Paul's leading thought in this section: v. 13 – "for it is not the hearers of the Torah who are just before God, but the doers of the Torah will be justified."

Romans 2:28–29

For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh. But he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that which is of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter; and his praise is not from men, but from God.

- In light of the epistle as a whole, especially 3:1–4 & chapters 9–11, it is impossible to claim that here Paul is saying believers in Yeshua are the "real Jews."
- Remember that Paul is talking to Jews in this passage.
- Here Paul adopts the Jewish community's use of "Jew" to mean "member of God's covenant."
- Paul recognizes that there is an "Israel within Israel," that is, a remnant of true believers, as he states in 9:6, "For they are not all Israel who are descended from Israel"
- He is speaking here of eternal salvation – a place in the world to come.
- He is saying that Jewish status, while having its benefits, is not sufficient to stand righteous before God.
- Remember, Paul is describing things from God's perspective (God is the One doing the "regarding").
- Man looks on the outward appearance; God looks on the heart. (1Sam 16:7)
- Thus, a Jew is what God intends him to be when by faith in Yeshua, the Torah is written on the heart.

- Here is the primary point: does one seek the commendation of men or of God?
- When all appear before God at the judgment day, those having only the outward marks of Jewishness will not be accepted.
- This does not mean that Gentiles who come to faith in Yeshua become Jewish. Paul is talking to Jews here, not Gentiles (cf. v. 17)
- This does not mean that God's covenant promises to Israel have been discarded.
- Paul is challenging his Jewish brothers & sisters to find their righteousness in Yeshua, not in their Jewish status.

Applications

- Paul affirms in this passage what is taught throughout the Scriptures, namely, that there is one and only one way to stand righteous before God: through faith in God's Messiah, Yeshua.

- Being a part of a certain group (church, religious community, etc.) or having Jewish heritage does not give a person right-standing with God.

- Outward signs of religion have no value in God's eyes unless they are matched with an inward reality.

- For what are we seeking: the praise of men or the praise of God?

A Study Through Paul's Epistle to the Romans
Romans 3:1–8

notes by Tim Hegg

Roman 3:1–2

Then what advantage has the Jew? Or what is the benefit of circumcision? Great in every respect. First of all, that they were entrusted with the oracles of God.

- Paul anticipates the objections of his readers.
- Having "leveled the playing field" by showing that right-standing with God is entirely dependent upon faith, the question obviously arises as to whether God still is maintaining His covenant with the Jewish people.
- By restating his question a second time, Paul is clarifying the terms he is using:

"advantage" (περισσός, *perissos*)	"benefit" (ὠφέλεια, *ōpheleia*)
"Jew" (Ἰουδαίος, *ioudaios*)	"circumcision" (περιτομή, *peritomē*)

- The question presupposes an obvious argument:
  - The Tanach teaches that God chose Israel out of all the nations (Gen 18:19; Ex 19:5-6; Deut 4:32–37; 7:6; Amos 3:2).

  For you are a holy people to the LORD your God; the LORD your God has chosen you to be a people for His own possession out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth. (Deut 7:6)

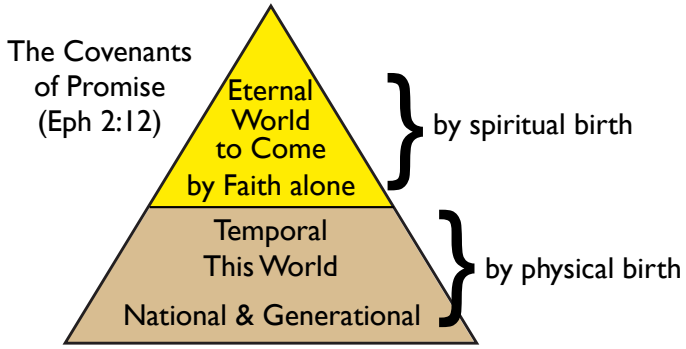
  You only have I chosen [known] among all the families of the earth; Therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities." (Amos 3:2)

  - If Paul is denying the chosen status of Israel, then he is denying the Scriptures & declaring God to be unfaithful.
- Paul's answer to the question: "Great in every way."
  - Paul's answer is shocking to many in the traditional Christian Church!

  "His Pharisaism–or shall we say, his patriotism?–was too deeply engrained for him to put right out of his mind the idea that somehow the divine covenant with mankind had a "most favored nation clause." (C. H. Dodd)

  - But Paul is simply affirming what the Scriptures teach.

- What does Paul mean by "Great in every respect"?
  - He does not mean that Jews outshine Gentiles in every aspect of life and being.
  - He means that the Jewish nation remains the object of God's covenant faithfulness.
  - This is proven by the fact that the Jewish nation is the only nation to receive God's special revelation.



- By "First of all," Paul means "most importantly."
- "entrusted" emphasizes that the oracles of God were given to Israel as a sacred trust to be given out to the rest of the world.
- "oracles of God" = The inspired Scriptures. This is Paul's view of the Tanach, which includes the Torah!

Romans 3:3

What then? If some did not believe, their unbelief will not nullify the faithfulness of God, will it?

- For Paul, "faith" always has its object in Yeshua. "Did not believe" and "unbelief" describe failure to receive Yeshua as the promised Messiah of Israel.
- Here Paul anticipates the "arrogance" of the emerging Church who taught that Israel's failure to believe caused God to annul His covenant with them.

Romans 3:4

May it never be! Rather, let God be found true, though every man be found a liar, as it is written, "that you may be justified in your words, and prevail when you are judged."

- Paul answers his rhetorical question with the strongest negative: "May it never be" = "No way! Impossible!"
- Our starting point is that God is always true and cannot lie.
- Paul alludes to Ps 116:11, and quotes Ps 51:4 as proof.

> I believed when I said, "I am greatly afflicted." I said in my alarm, "All men are liars." (Ps 116:10–11)

- The Psalmist is in great conflict, and may have been reproved by others as though God had forsaken him.
- Yet he refuses to believe people when he knows that God has not forsaken him.
- When people deny what God has said, they show themselves to be liars.

> Against You, You only, I have sinned and done what is evil in Your sight, so that You are justified when You speak and blameless when You judge. (Ps 51:4)

- David, in confessing his sin, recognizes that God is always just and blameless.
- He refuses to change his view of God in order to accommodate his sin.

Romans 3:5–8

> *But if our unrighteousness demonstrates the righteousness of God, what shall we say? The God who inflicts wrath is not unrighteous, is He? (I am speaking in human terms.) May it never be! For otherwise, how will God judge the world? But if through my lie the truth of God abounded to His glory, why am I also still being judged as a sinner? And why not say (as we are slanderously reported and as some claim that we say), "Let us do evil that good may come"? Their condemnation is just.*

- Who would have considered such an argument in Paul's day, that disbelieving Israel should be applauded because by their failure to believe, God's faithfulness was displayed?
  - A teleological argument based on Greek logic? (The end justifies the means)
  - Epicurean logic?
- Who were the ones slandering Paul and claiming he taught "let us do evil that good may come?"
  - Paul was being slandered as teaching the Jewish people not to keep Torah (Acts 21:21).
  - Some may have thought he was teaching this in order to make it easier for Gentiles to join the Messianic communities.

A Dialog between Paul & his Readers

Reader: Is there an advantage in being a Jew then?

Paul: Yes, God's covenant with Israel given in the written Scriptures is a great benefit.

Reader: But Israel has rejected Yeshua as Messiah. So doesn't that disqualify Israel and nullify the covenant?

Paul: No, not at all! Israel's failure to believe does not change God. God is always true and always faithful to His word. It is man who is the liar.

Reader: So in a way, Israel's unbelief has actually highlighted God's faithfulness and their disobedience has emphasized God's goodness. It seems unjust for God to punish Israel for something that works in His favor!

Paul: Stop right there! If God is unjust, then everything is lost and there's no way to know what is right and what is wrong!

Reader: But why should I get punished for something that makes God look good? Maybe my disbelief and disobedience actually brings about good!

Paul: People who think this way deserve the condemnation they will receive.

Reader: So if there is an advantage in being a Jew even in spite of their disbelief, does this mean that God considers Jews at least a little better than Gentiles?

Paul: No, I've already shown that Jews and Gentiles are both sinners in God's eyes, and that both are under the penalty of sin.

Summary

- The fact that God promised to bless the Gentiles by bringing those He has chosen into the remnant of Israel, and making them equal members of the covenant, in no way diminishes His covenant faithfulness to the nation of Israel.
- It remains forever true that God made a covenant with only one nation, and that nation is Israel.
- Yet this does not mean that Jews are better than Gentiles, nor that God loves Jews more than He loves those Gentiles who are equally members of His family.
- God remains faithful to fulfill His covenant promises, even to disbelieving Israel. God remains true to His word because He cannot deny Himself.
- Thus, Jew and Gentile alike stand guilty before God Who is holy, and are equally in need of a Savior, Who is Yeshua the Messiah.

A Study Through Paul's Epistle to the Romans
Romans 3:9–19

notes by Tim Hegg

Roman 3:9

What then? Are we better than they? Not at all; for we have already charged that both Jews and Greeks are all under sin;

- This is Paul's conclusion from the previous context:
  - There is a great benefit in being Jewish, because God gave His special revelation to Israel.
  - But this benefit does not make Jews better than non-Jews because all people are under sin.
- "Under sin" means "under the penalty and under the control of sin."
- Jew and Gentile alike suffer under the same penalty for sin, and the controlling force of sin over soul & body.

Roman 3:10

as it is written, "THERE IS NONE RIGHTEOUS, NOT EVEN ONE;

- Paul quotes from Ps 14:1, but incorporates the sense of the following verses as well (cf. v. 3)
- The Hebrew has "no one does good" (אֵין עֹשֵׂה טוֹב)
- For Paul, "doing righteous" is proof of "being righteous."
- This reinforces Paul's thesis: "it is not the hearers of the Torah who are just before God, but the doers of the Torah will be justified." (2:13)
- His point is that no one always does good; no one is without sin.

Roman 3:11–12

THERE IS NONE WHO UNDERSTANDS, THERE IS NONE WHO SEEKS FOR GOD; ALL HAVE TURNED ASIDE, TOGETHER THEY HAVE BECOME USELESS; THERE IS NONE WHO DOES GOOD, THERE IS NOT EVEN ONE.

- Paul continues to quote from Ps 14 (vv. 2-3) using the Lxx, with a bit of his own paraphrase.
- "sons of men" = humankind
- Paul states the obvious sense of the passage: "no one understands or seeks after God."
- All fallen mankind has a faulty view of God and is therefore unable to worship Him in truth.
- No one naturally seeks to know God in truth. Fallen man would rather think of God in his own terms.

- "All have turned aside" means "to accept one's own perspective as the reality."
- "Become useless" means "failing to glorify God, the very purpose for which mankind was created."
- "There is none who does good, there is not even one" means that no one measures up to God's standard of righteousness, i.e., what is good.

Roman 3:13

> THEIR THROAT IS AN OPEN GRAVE, WITH THEIR TONGUES THEY KEEP DECEIVING,
> THE POISON OF ASPS IS UNDER THEIR LIPS;

- Paul quotes Ps 5:10 and Ps 140:3[4]
- "open grave" = that which brings the worst defilement
- "deceiving" – Hebrew חלק (*chalaq*) means "to flatter," that is, "to lie in order to gain favor"
- "poison of asps" – lies always injure the person who believes them, and spiritually, lead to death.
- Only God's truth brings life.

Roman 3:14–18

> WHOSE MOUTH IS FULL OF CURSING AND BITTERNESS;
>
> THEIR FEET ARE SWIFT TO SHED BLOOD,
>
> DESTRUCTION AND MISERY ARE IN THEIR PATHS,
>
> THERE IS NO FEAR OF GOD BEFORE THEIR EYES.

- Paul quotes 3 texts from the Tanach: Ps 10:7, Isaiah 59:7–8a, and Ps 36:2, which all share a common theme.
- Ps 10:7 continues with the sin of the tongue.
- Life's trials bring cursing & bitterness instead of trust in God.
- Is 59:7–8a –"swift to shed blood" may also be speaking of gossip, which murders the reputation of others.
- "destruction & misery" – these inevitably result from a self-centered life.
- Ps 36:2 –"there is no fear of God" forms a fitting summary and conclusion.
- "fear of God" = willing submission to Him as Creator, Sovereign, Master, and Savior.

The Fear of the Lord

The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever; the judgments of the LORD are true; they are righteous altogether. (Ps 19:9)

The fear of the LORD is to hate evil; pride and arrogance and the evil way and the perverted mouth, I hate. (Prov 8:13)

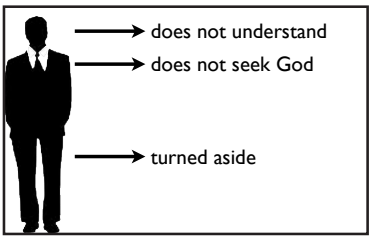
In the fear of the LORD there is strong confidence, and His children will have refuge. (Prov 14:26)

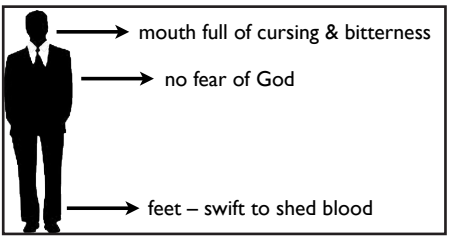
The fear of the LORD is a fountain of life, that one may avoid the snares of death. (Prov 14:27)

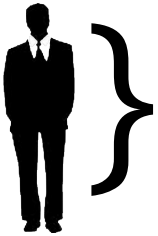
Better is a little with the fear of the LORD than great treasure and turmoil with it. (Prov 15:16)

Let's Summarize

- Paul's understanding of mankind's fallen state:
  - No person, by their own disposition, can know God in truth.
  - No one, of their own will, seeks for God.
  - Everyone, left to themselves, will turn away from God to fulfill their own desires.
  - Even those who are "good people" will not, on their own "goodness," be accepted as righteous by God.
  - No one, left to themselves, is able to please God.
  - Everyone's will or volition is bound by the sinful nature and thus no one has a "free will."







The whole person: mind, will, desires, passions, goals — Apart from God sovereignly drawing a person to Himself, that person will neither desire to know God nor be able to do so.

Romans 3:19

Now we know that whatever the Torah says, it speaks to those who are under the Torah, so that every mouth may be closed and all the world may become accountable to God;

- "under the Torah" is a bad translation.
- The Greek has: τοῖς ἐν τῷ νόμῳ, "those within the Torah"
- Note the translation of the CJB

Moreover, we know that whatever the Torah says, it says to those <u>living within the framework of the Torah</u>;

- This is the same expression as in 2:12 where "within the Torah" is contrasted by "those outside of the Torah."
- In this context, Paul is still addressing the Jewish people.
- His argument is *kal v'chomer*, "light and heavy"
- Since the privilege of being a Jew is that God gave His special revelation to Israel, then what the Torah states clearly must apply to all within Israel.
- Rather than imagining themselves exempt from the condemnations of human sinfulness, they ought to accept them as applying first and foremost to themselves.
- And if God's condemnation of sinners applies to Israel, God's own chosen nation, then it surely applies to all other people as well.
- What is the result? Everyone stands guilty before God.
- The only hope for mankind, whether Jew or Gentile, is to be rescued by God Himself.
- The "Good News" is that God has rescued sinners through the work of His Son, Yeshua!

A Study Through Paul's Epistle to the Romans
Romans 3:20–24

notes by Tim Hegg

Roman 3:20

because by the works of the Torah no flesh will be justified in His sight; for through the Torah comes the knowledge of sin.

- This verse forms the conclusion of the previous section (vv. 9–19).
- The word "because" (διότι, *dioti*) can mean "therefore" and should be taken that way here.
- Paul's conclusion is that even though the Jewish people have the Torah "naturally," obedience to the Torah by itself cannot make a person righteous in God's sight.
- Paul basis his conclusion on Ps 143:2.

  And do not enter into judgment with Your servant,
  For in Your sight no man living is righteous.

- What does Paul mean by "the works of the Torah"?
- Until the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered, no parallels to Paul's "works of the Torah" could be found in ancient Jewish literature.
- In one document from the Dead Sea Scrolls, the phrase "works of the Torah" is found coupled together with the phrase "reckoned to you as righteousness."
- These are precisely the same phrases Paul uses, showing us that the issue of how God reckons a sinner righteous was a debated topic in Paul's day.

  Now, we have written to you some of the works of the Torah (מִקְצַת מַעֲשֵׂי הַתּוֹרָה, *miktzat ma'asei hatorah*) those which we determined would be beneficial for you and your people, because we have seen [that] you possess insight and knowledge of the Torah. Understand all these things and beseech Him to set your counsel straight and so keep you away from evil thoughts and the counsel of Belial. Then you shall rejoice at the end time when you find the essence of our words to be true. And it will be reckoned to you as righteousness (ונחשבה לך לצדקה), in that you have done what is right and good before Him, to your own benefit and to that of Israel. (4QMMT, fC 25–32)

- 4QMMT was apparently a letter sent to someone or some group of people who were interested in joining the Qumran sect.
- It contained specific *halachot* that marked the Qumran sect out as distinct. They believed that only those who were part of their sect were the true Israel.

- Since "true Israel" was considered to be righteous in God's eyes, if you were part of the Qumran sect, you were "reckoned as righteous" before God.
- How did you "get into" the Qumran sect? By keeping the Torah in accordance with their traditions.
- Therefore, the way a person could have "righteousness reckoned to them" was to obey the Torah in accordance with the *halachah* of the Qumran sect.
- They taught "justification by group identity."
- Paul's point is that to be "justified" in God's eyes could only be achieved by faith in Yeshua and His work.
- It was not being "in Israel" that rendered a person righteous before God, but being "in Messiah."

Justified / Justification

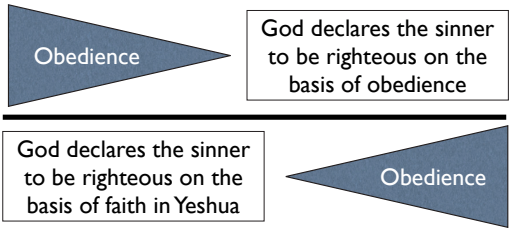
- The words "to justify" and "justification" are based upon the word for "righteous" (δίκαιος, *dikaios*).
- To "be justified" means "to be declared righteous," that is, "to be declared not guilty."
- Justification is something God does, not the sinner.



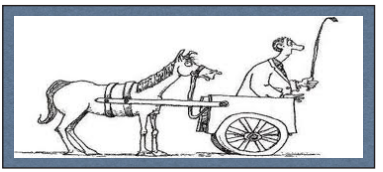
- When the verdict is reached, the Judge pronounces whether the defendant is "guilty" or "not guilty."
- To be "justified" in the court of Heaven means that the Judge of all the universe has declared: "You Are Not Guilty!"

- But can God be a righteous Judge and declare a sinner "not guilty" when, in fact, that person really is guilty?
- **How is God just to declare sinners righteous?**
- Through the sacrifice of His Son, Yeshua, God has paid the penalty of sin for those He is saving.
- God's purpose to save the elect secures their eternal salvation.
- Thus, God accepts all who are "in Messiah" as righteous because He has purposed to make them righteous.
- God treats us now in view of what we will be.
- Our growth in obedience is proof of God's purpose to make us completely holy.
- Paul pictures God as the Judge – "in His sight" (literally "before Him") speaks to God's eternal perspective.

- The works of the Torah cannot offset the guilt incurred by sin which has been committed.
- The Torah defines sin but it cannot erase sin nor can it pay the penalty for sin.



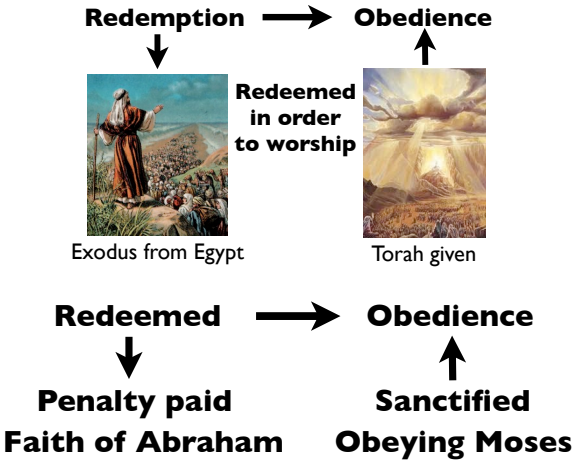
Obedience >> Justification



Roman 3:21

But now apart from the Torah the righteousness of God has been manifested, being witnessed by the Torah and the Prophets

- In context, "apart from the Torah" means "apart from the works of the Torah" as used in v. 20.
- The "righteousness of God" = the method by by which God declares sinners righteous.
- What is the method by which God declares sinners righteous? Through faith in Yeshua & His work.
- How was this method witnessed by the Torah and the Prophets?



Roman 3:22

even the righteousness of God through faith in Yeshua Messiah for all those who believe; for there is no distinction;

- Faith in Yeshua Messiah has always been God's method for declaring sinners righteous.
- This is the only method God has for declaring sinners righteous in His sight.
- Thus, "there is no distinction." Salvation for Jew and Gentile can only be obtained "in Messiah Yeshua."

Roman 3:23

for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

- Jew & Gentile share a common problem: all have sinned
- Both are equally in need of God's mercy and grace.
- Both "fall short" (ὑστερέω, *hustereō*) of God's glory = no one measures up to God's standard of holiness.

Roman 3:24

being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Messiah Yeshua

- "being justified" = the "all" of v. 23. All who are sinners, and who have put their faith in Yeshua, are being "declared not guilty" by the Judge of the universe.
- The present tense participle ("being justified") means this cannot be reversed. God constantly declares those in Yeshua as "not guilty."
- "as a gift by His grace" – Greek δωρεάν, *dōrean*, is often the Lxx translation of חִנָּם (*chinam*) which means "free," "without cause," "undeserved."
- We had nothing to contribute to our justification.
- "as a gift by His grace" – Grace is what God gives to those in Yeshua when they deserve His punishment.
- "through the redemption…" – Our salvation is free to us but it cost God everything!
- Redemption always involves payment of a price.
- "in Messiah Yeshua" becomes a phrase which is at the heart of Paul's message and theology.
  - by means of Messiah's saving work
  - fully associated & identified with Messiah Yeshua
  - resting in the finished work of Messiah Yeshua
  - protected by the work of Messiah Yeshua

A Study Through Paul's Epistle to the Romans
Romans 3:25–26

notes by Tim Hegg

Roman 3:24–25

being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Messiah Yeshua; whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith. This was to demonstrate His righteousness, because in the forbearance of God He passed over the sins previously committed;

- The Greek particle (ὃν, *hon*) here translated as "whom," can also mean "which".
- The Greek word translated "displayed publicly" (προτίθημι, *protithēmi*) can also mean "to purpose".
- Another way to translate v. 25:

being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Messiah Yeshua; <u>which</u> God <u>purposed</u> as a propitiation in His blood through faith. This was to demonstrate His righteousness, because in the forbearance of God He passed over the sins previously committed;

- The advantage of this translation is that it seems to fit Paul's primary point in this text.
- He is giving an answer to the obvious question: "How can God be just and still declare sinners righteous?"
- Further, it could appear to some that God did not require payment for sins during the many centuries before Yeshua came, but that He simply forgave sinners.
- The question is this: How can God be just and the justifier of sinners (v. 26)?
- The answer is that God always had purposed to send Yeshua, that by His death, payment (redemption) for the sins of His people would be made.
- By God sending His Son to die for the sins of His people, He demonstrated His own righteousness—that He does not overlook sin but requires payment for sin.
- Because God is holy, He cannot declare a sinner to be justified until full payment has been made for their sin.

Propitiation

- The word propitiation means "the place where payment for sin is made," thus "the place where guilt is removed."
- The Greek word (ἱλαστήριον, *hilastērion*) is only found here and in Heb 9:5 in the Apostolic Scriptures.
- But it is found 27 times in the Lxx, 21 of which refer to the top cover of the Ark of the Covenant, which is also the meaning in Heb 9:25.

> …the ark of the covenant covered on all sides with gold, in which was a golden jar holding the manna, and Aaron's rod which budded, and the tables of the covenant; and above it were the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat; but of these things we cannot now speak in detail. (Heb 9:25)

> You shall make a mercy seat of pure gold, two and a half cubits long and one and a half cubits wide. You shall make two cherubim of gold, make them of hammered work at the two ends of the mercy seat. Make one cherub at one end and one cherub at the other end; you shall make the cherubim of one piece with the mercy seat at its two ends. The cherubim shall have their wings spread upward, covering the mercy seat with their wings and facing one another; the faces of the cherubim are to be turned toward the mercy seat. You shall put the mercy seat on top of the ark, and in the ark you shall put the testimony which I will give to you. There I will meet with you; and from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim which are upon the ark of the testimony, I will speak to you about all that I will give you in commandment for the sons of Israel. (Ex 25:17–22)



being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Messiah Yeshua; which God purposed as a propitiation in His blood through faith. This was to demonstrate His righteousness, because in the forbearance of God He passed over the sins previously committed;

- "in His blood" – the penalty for sin is death, which Yeshua paid for His people through His death for them.
- All of the blood sacrifices in the Tabernacle and Temples were a foreshadow of Yeshua's ultimate sacrifice.

> For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins. (Heb 10:4)
>
> Yeshua said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me." (John 14:6)
>
> And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved. (Acts 4:12)

- "through faith" – relying entirely upon Yeshua for one's salvation; confessing Him to be one's Lord and Savior.
- "to demonstrate His righteousness" – It was God's plan, from all eternity, that Yeshua should make expiation for the sins of His people.
- It was God's intention all along to deal with the sins of His chosen ones through the cross.

Romans 3:26

for the demonstration, I say, of His righteousness at the present time, so that He would be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Yeshua.

- "at the present time" – God's righteousness is made clear through the cross and through the proclamation of the Gospel that is centered in the death & resurrection of Yeshua.
- "just and the justifier" – The expiation made by Yeshua for His people proves God is righteous even when He declares sinners justified.

Summary

- God, since He is infinitely holy and righteous, cannot overlook sin. Sin requires the payment of a penalty.
- How, then, could God be righteous and at the same time declare guilty sinner to be righteous? Only if the penalty for their sin has been paid.
- The penalty for sin is eternal death – eternal separation from God Who is holy.
- The only One whose death could be infinite and therefore eternal is Yeshua, since He alone is both the eternal, uncreated One and Who also became man.
- Therefore, the only way for a sinner to be at peace with God is by faith in Yeshua.

Lovingkindness and truth
have met together;
Righteousness and peace
have kissed each other.

Psalm 85:10

A Study Through Paul's Epistle to the Romans
Romans 3:27–31

notes by Tim Hegg

Roman 3:27–28

Where then is boasting? It is excluded. By what kind of Torah? Of works? No, but by a Torah of faith. For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from works of the Torah.

- Paul uses the word "boasting" here to describe those who believe that their own efforts or performance of *mitzvot* make them righteous before God.
- Paul has already shown that it is impossible for sinful mankind to please God on his own merits.
- But here, Paul adds a further argument as to why boasting is excluded.
- Paul asks "by what kind of Torah" is boasting excluded?
- By a Torah that offers right-standing before God as the reward for keeping its commandments? That cannot be!
  - If that were the case, then those who keep the commandments would have cause to boast. (cf. 4:1-2)
  - Since right-standing before God would be earned, those who achieved it could be proud of their work.
- Rather, the kind of Torah which excludes boasting is the the kind of Torah God gave to Israel at Sinai.
  - God's Torah is one which reveals God's method of making sinners righteous, that is, by faith in God and His promised Messiah, Yeshua.
  - The Torah of faith is the Torah which can only be rightly understood and obeyed through faith.
  - Apart from the gift of saving faith, the Torah will always be misinterpreted and misused.
  - Apart from faith, the Torah will be misinterpreted as teaching a righteousness based upon ethnic status ("legal Jewish status") which must be maintained through obedience ("works of the Torah").
  - In v. 20 we learned that by "works of the Torah" Paul means "keeping Torah in order to be accepted within a privileged people-group."

- The universal voice of the Scriptures declares that a person (ἄνθρωπος, *anthrōpos*) obtains right-standing before God by faith, not from the works of the Torah.
  - Paul's use of *anthrōpos* emphasizes that right-standing before God is not based upon one's ethnicity.
  - *Anthrōpos* is the Greek equivalent of אָדָם, *'adam*, "mankind."
  - This sets up Paul's next argument proving that justification is by faith, not by the "works of the Torah."

Roman 3:29–30

Or is God the God of Jews only? Is He not the God of Gentiles also? Yes, of Gentiles also, since indeed God who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith is one.

- What does Paul mean that "God is the God of Jews" as well as the "God of Gentiles"?
  - He means that God identifies Himself as having a covenant relationship with both Jews and Gentiles.
- Paul appeals to the *Shema* (Deut 6:4).
- Since the *Shema* affirms there is only one God, this means that He judges everyone by the same scale of righteousness, that is, His own infinite holiness.
- Since in the covenant He made with Abraham and his descendants, He promises to bless the Gentiles, this means He intends to bring both Jews and Gentiles into covenant relationship with Himself.
- This likewise means that He declares people righteous on the same basis, whether Jew or Gentile.
- The basis upon which a sinner may be declared righteous is by faith in Yeshua and His saving works.
- Gen 15:6, "Abraham believed in Adonai and He credited it (Abraham's faith) to him as righteousness."
- The two phrases, "by faith" and "through faith" do not suggest different aspects or methods of faith.
- Paul often uses the prepositions "by" and "through" as synonyms. (Cf. Rom 4:11; 5:10; 2Cor 3:11)
- Paul's conclusion, then, is that those who are saved, whether Jew or Gentile, enter into God's covenant of blessing the same way: by faith in God's Messiah.
- Therefore, justification cannot be based upon ethnic status, but only on faith in Yeshua.

Roman 3:31

Do we then nullify the Torah through faith? May it never be! On the contrary, we establish the Torah.

- The conclusion, that it is impossible to gain right-standing before God by the works of the Torah, raises the question about the value of the Torah.
- If faith in Yeshua alone is sufficient for God to declare a sinner righteous, is the Torah really needed?
- Has faith in Yeshua therefore rendered the Torah unnecessary?
- Paul answers with the strongest negative: "No way!"
- Then what value does the Torah have?
  - Some would answer that the Torah only has value to lead people to faith in Yeshua, and that once it has accomplished this, it has no further value.
  - But that is not Paul's answer here!
  - Paul affirms that those who have right-standing before God through faith in Yeshua actually establish the Torah.
  - to "establish the Torah" means that the Torah accomplishes what God intends.
  - The Torah leads sinners to faith in Yeshua, is written on the heart of those who believe, and thus becomes the divine guideline for living righteously.
- Remember Paul's primary thesis with which he began this entire section of his epistle.
- *"for it is not the hearers of the Torah who are just before God, but the doers of the Torah will be justified."* (2:13)
- Thus, to "establish the Torah" means "to live in obedience to the Torah."
- All who are born from above through faith in Yeshua are given the Spirit Who enables them to live in accordance with God's righteous instructions.
- The Spirit is the One Who writes the Torah on the heart (cf. Jer 31:31–34)
- Therefore, those who have the Torah written upon their hearts are those who "establish the Torah."

For what the Torah could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God did: sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin,

He condemned sin in the flesh,

so that the requirement of the Torah might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

Romans 8:3–4

A Study Through Paul's Epistle to the Romans
Romans 4:1-5

notes by Tim Hegg

Roman 4:1

What then shall we say that Abraham, our forefather according to the flesh, has found?

- Paul now proves his previous conclusion, that all who have right-standing with God have been justified by faith and not by the works of the Torah.
- Paul uses Abraham as the first and most obvious proof, and asks by what means Abraham found grace in God's eyes. ("found" = εὑρηκέναι used by the Lxx to translate the common expression מָצָא חֵן בְּעֵינֵי יהוה, "he found grace in the eyes of Adonai").
- Paul refers to Abraham as "our forefather according to the flesh."
- "according to the flesh" identifies Abraham as the father of Israel (Jacob) and thus of Israel as a nation.
- That Paul says Abraham is our forefather anticipates his teaching that Abraham is the father of all who are justified by faith, both Jew and non-Jew.

Roman 4:2

For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God.

- Perhaps already in Paul's day, there were those who believed that Abraham earned his right-standing before God through his willingness to sacrifice Isaac.
- Some of the later rabbis taught this.

  > But all is in accord with a man's merit.… And so it says with regard to the patriarch Abraham, may he rest in peace, "And Abraham was old and well along in years, and the Lord blessed Abraham in all things" (Gen. 24:1). We find that the patriarch Abraham kept the entire Torah even before it was revealed, since it says, "Since Abraham obeyed my voice and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws" (Gen. 26:5). [m.*Kiddushin* 4.14]

- But Paul disagrees! If Abraham could boast about obeying the Torah, he could not do so before God.

- For Paul, Abraham's righteous living was the result of God's grace not the means of obtaining God's grace.
- But does Paul agree that Abraham had something to boast about before men?
- No. But Abraham does present a model of obedience for others to emulate.
- What really counts is what God thinks, and before Him, no one can boast that they have earned His favor.

Roman 4:3

For what does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him for righteousness."

- Paul goes to the Scriptures (which in his day was the Tanach) to prove his point.
- Genesis 15:6 became one of the most important texts for Paul as he re-read the Torah with eyes of faith.

Paul: ἐπίστευσεν δὲ Ἀβραὰμ τῷ θεῷ καὶ ἐλογίσθη αὐτῷ εἰς δικαιοσύνην.
Lxx: καὶ ἐπίστευσεν Αβραμ τῷ θεῷ, καὶ ἐλογίσθη αὐτῷ εἰς δικαιοσύνην.

MT: וְהֶאֱמִן בַּיהוָה וַיַּחְשְׁבֶהָ לּוֹ צְדָקָה׃

- The word-group *'aman* can mean "to be faithful" or "to exercise faith, to believe."
- When *'aman* (hif) is followed by the preposition בּ (in, on), it always means "to trust in" or "believe in".
- The verb *chashav* has the basic meaning "to think, consider" or "to credit something to someone."
- "It" is in the feminine gender. The only feminine noun to which it could refer is the unspoken noun related to the verb "to believe," i.e., "faith" אֱמוּנָה, *'emunah.*

Romans 4:4-5

Now to the one who works, his wage is not credited as a favor, but as what is due. But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is credited as righteousness…

- Wages are owed. They are not a gift of one's employer.
- "credited" = λογίζομαι, *logizomai*, the same word used by the Lxx in Gen 15: 6 "Abraham believed God and it was credited to him as righteousness."
- "favor" is the same word often translated "grace" (χάρις, *charis*).
- "due" means something that is "owed," (οφείλημα, *opheilēma*)
- Note how Paul explains what it means "to believe" by the phrase "does not work."
- This proves that faith (believing) is not a work by which a person merits God's grace.
- Saving faith is a gift God gives to those He saves.

> For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Messiah Yeshua for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them. Eph 2:8-10

- The object of true saving faith is God, revealed to us in His Son, Yeshua.
- "justifies the ungodly" = "declares the ungodly not guilty"
- When God declares the ungodly "not guilty" He does so because the payment for their sin has been made by their substitute, Yeshua.
- "credited" (λογίζομαι, *logizomai*) is the same word used of Abraham (v. 3) and of the worker whose wages are "credited" as what is owed to him (v. 4).
- Here, "faith" is credited as righteousness to the one who believes.

> When God declares the guilty just, He does so on the basis that the debt owed by the guilty has been fully paid by them through their substitute, Yeshua, and that He intends, through the act of recreating them, to make them actually live in righteousness.
>
> In crediting righteousness now, to those who believe in Yeshua, God, Who always has existed outside of time, treats them now on the basis of what He knows He will inevitably make them to be.

Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is.

And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

1John 3:2–3

A Study Through Paul's Epistle to the Romans
Romans 4:6–12

notes by Tim Hegg

Roman 4:5–6

But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is credited as righteousness, just as David also speaks of the blessing on the man to whom God credits righteousness apart from works:

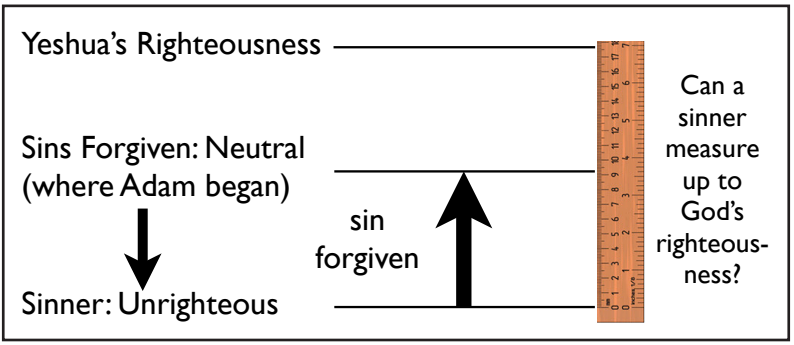
- Paul has made the axiomatic statement in v. 5 regarding God's method of declaring the ungodly "not guilty"–
- "does not work, but believes" means believing is not a work that gains credit in God's sight.
- faith = admitting I can do nothing; that I deserve nothing, but trusting God that He can and will save me from the penalty and bondage of sin.
- In the next verses Paul will quote David (Ps 32:1–2) as a second witness to Gen 15:6 to show that God credits faith as righteousness – that right-standing before God cannot be earned or merited.
- But the manner in which Paul introduces the quote from the Psalms offers his inspired commentary on David's words.
- He interprets David's words as stating that "God credits righteousness apart from works."
- But that is not what David actually wrote!

Romans 4:7–8

Blessed are those whose lawless deeds have been forgiven, and whose sins have been covered. Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord will not take into account. (Ps 32:1–2)

- David speaks of "sin" as "lawless deeds".
- He speaks of sin being forgiven and covered.
  - "forgiven" means "taken away" (נשׂא, "lifted off")
  - "covered" means "out of sight" (כסה "hidden")
  - David speaks of God not crediting sin to a person.
  - Paul has David saying that God credited righteousness to the one who believes.
  - Has Paul misunderstood David?

- Here we learn a very important truth: When God forgives our sin through the payment Yeshua made for us on the cross, He at the same time gives to us the righteous status of Yeshua Himself.



- God removes our sinful rags & clothes us in the righteousness of Yeshua our Messiah.

Romans 4:9

Is this blessing then on the circumcised, or on the uncircumcised also? For we say, "faith was credited to Abraham as righteousness."

- What is the blessing of which Paul writes?
- The blessing of being forgiven in Yeshua AND clothed with His righteousness!
- Paul uses the terms "circumcised" and "uncircumcised" to mean "Jew" and "non-Jew".
- He uses Abraham as a "test case" to give the answer.
- He first makes it clear that it was faith which was credited to Abraham as righteousness.
- He identifies the suffix הָ of וַיַּחְשְׁבֶהָ in Gen 15:6 to be Abraham's faith.
- But the question is "When?" When did God credit Abraham's faith to him as righteousness?

Romans 4:10

How then was it credited? While he was circumcised, or uncircumcised? Not while circumcised, but while uncircumcised;

- The statement that God credited Abraham's faith as righteousness is found in Gen 15.

- Circumcision was not given as the sign of the covenant until later, in Gen 17.
- Righteousness was imputed to Abraham by faith while he was an uncircumcised Gentile.

Romans 4:11

and he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had while uncircumcised, so that he might be the father of all who believe without being circumcised, that righteousness might be credited to them,

- Circumcision (which had become a sign of Jewish status in Paul's day) was not the means of gaining righteousness but a sign pointing to God's method of making sinners righteous.
- Circumcision did not make Abraham Jewish. Israel became God's chosen people by His sovereign choice.
- Circumcision was a sign given to Abraham to make known that the promised son (Isaac) would come by God's direct miracle, not by normal human procreation.
- The promised son, Abraham's seed, was a foreshadow of the ultimate Seed, Yeshua.
- Thus, circumcision was also a seal, a guarantee, of the righteousness which would be given to all who had faith in the promised Son, Yeshua.
- The success of the covenant depended upon the promised One in Whom "all the nations of the earth would be blessed".
- Abraham is the father of all who believe, whether Jewish or non-Jewish.
- "Father" means that all who have faith in Yeshua are part of Abraham's family & receive the blessings promised to him and to his descendants.
- Righteousness is credited to the non-Jew who has faith just as it was to uncircumcised Abraham.

Romans 4:12

and the father of circumcision to those who not only are of the circumcision, but who also follow in the steps of the faith of our father Abraham which he had while uncircumcised.

- "those … of the circumcision" means those who consider themselves as having "legal Jewish status."
- But "legal Jewish status," apart from faith, gains nothing in terms of right-standing before God.
- To have right-standing before God, Jewish people must have the same faith that Abraham had before he received circumcision (i.e., considered a Gentile by Jews in Paul's day).
- Thus, the only way to be righteous in God's sight, whether Jew or Gentile, is by faith in Yeshua.

He made Him who knew no sin
to be the sin offering on our behalf,
so that we might become the
righteousness of God in Him.

2Corinthians 5:21

A Study Through Paul's Epistle to the Romans
Romans 4:13–15

notes by Tim Hegg

Roman 4:13

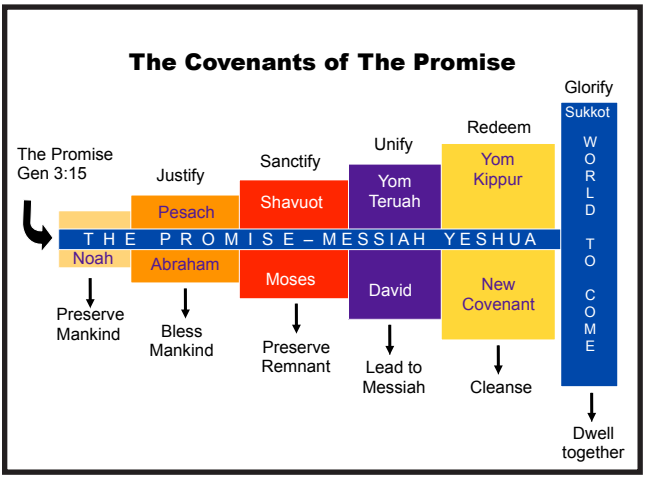
For the promise to Abraham or to his descendants that he would be heir of the world was not through the Torah, but through the righteousness of faith.

- Now Paul speaks to the primary & central point of the covenant God made with Abraham, and he uses the word "promise" to describe this.
- What was "the promise" God made to Abraham?
- "The Promise"
  - Paul uses the word "promise" to emphasize that the covenant was not dependent upon Abraham but upon God alone.
  - This is because the success of the covenant depended upon God's promise to give Abraham a son.
  - Since only God could guarantee that Abraham would father a son through Sarah, this means the success of the covenant was entirely in God's hands and did not depend upon Abraham.
  - Thus, Paul's use of the word "promise" emphasizes the one-sided nature of the Abrahamic covenant.
  - But note that the promise to Abraham is not completely fulfilled in Isaac.
  - The promise included that Abraham would be "heir of the world."
  - This is another way of saying "in you all the families of the earth will be blessed" (Gen 12:3)
- What, then, is the ultimate blessing promised in the Abrahamic covenant?
- The ultimate blessing is through the descendants of Abraham, God would bring the Promised Son, Yeshua, by Whom sinners can be righteous in His sight.
- Thus, the success of the covenant could not depend upon Abraham's obedience to God's commandments.
- That Abraham would be the "heir of the world" requires that God's method of making sinners righteous be established, i.e., righteousness on the basis of faith.
- Thus, for Paul "the promise" forms the central core of God's revelation about how He saves sinners.
- He sees "the promise" as uniting all of the covenants.

Ephesians 2:12

...remember that you were at that time separate from Messiah, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of the promise, having no hope and without God in the world.

Note: "covenants (plural) of the promise (singular)"



Romans 4:14

For if those who are of the Torah are heirs, faith is made void and the promise is nullified;

- By "those who are of the Torah" Paul means "those who trust their legal Jewish status, maintained by observance of the Torah, to guarantee right-standing before God.
- The believe they are "heirs" to the eternal blessings God promised through Abraham.
- Paul says essentially the same thing in Gal 3:18, 21.

For if the inheritance is based on Torah, it is no longer based on a promise; but God has granted it to Abraham by means of a promise. (Gal 3:18)

Is the Torah then contrary to the promises of God? May it never be! For if a Torah had been given which was able to impart life, then righteousness would indeed have been based on Torah. (Gal 3:21)

- The story of Abraham proves Paul's point:
- Abraham had no son, so he sought to bring the promise on his own strength, through Hagar.
- God said "no" to Ishmael and promised to give Isaac.
- Isaac was born when Sarah had no natural ability to bear children.
- God's way required Abraham & Sarah to trust Him, that He could and would do what He had promised, even when that seemed impossible from a human point of view.
- Therefore, Abraham's own example proves that the promise was based upon faith, not upon something Abraham could accomplish himself.
- Like Abraham, those who would receive the blessings promised in the covenant, must do so by faith.

Romans 4:15

for the Torah brings about wrath, but where there is no Torah, there also is no violation.

- The Torah reveals God's standards of righteousness and prescribes penalties when these standards are broken.
- But the Torah does not give a person the ability to keep God's commandments because the Torah cannot overcome the sinful nature.
- Since the Torah gives no ability for obedience, the promise could not have been based upon keeping Torah.
- Therefore, God's promise to bless "all the families of the earth" must be based upon faith.
- For God blesses those He reckons as righteous, and this is possible only through faith in the Promised One.

For what the Torah could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God did: sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh, so that the requirement of the Torah might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

Romans 8:3–4

Notes / Thoughts / Questions

A Study Through Paul's Epistle to the Romans
Romans 4:16–21

notes by Tim Hegg

Roman 4:16

For this reason it is by faith, in order that it may be in accordance with grace, so that the promise will be guaranteed to all the descendants, not only to those who are of the Torah, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all,

- The subject at hand is the covenant God made with Abraham and promised to all of his descendants.
- The covenant had to be unilateral, depending only upon God's sovereign faithfulness, because the "promise" of the covenant is ultimately Yeshua & His saving work.
- For man, receiving the eternal blessings of the covenant depends only on faith, not on keeping the Torah.
- Thus, the fulfillment of the covenant depends entirely upon God, and is therefore a matter of grace.
- If the success of the covenant depended in any way upon man, it would have failed from the start.
- But blessings of the covenant are guaranteed by God to all of Abraham's descendants.
- Those "of the Torah" = those who have the Torah first and then come to faith in Yeshua.
- Those "of the faith of Abraham" are those who come to faith first (like Abraham) and then embrace the Torah.
- Thus, Jewish as well as Gentile believers in Yeshua have Abraham as their father, meaning that they are counted as his descendants, those guaranteed the blessings of the covenant.

Romans 4:17

(as it is written, "a father of many nations have I made you") in the presence of Him whom he believed, even God, who gives life to the dead and calls into being that which does not exist.

- The sentence is interrupted with a quote from Gen 17:5. (Paul quotes the Lxx verbatim.)

- Note the past tense of the verb "have I made you" (נְתַתִּיךָ, τέθεικά σε) = "to place; appoint"
- God's covenant word is so sure that the future reality can be spoken of as though already accomplished.
- Taking out the parenthesis, it reads: "…those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all, in the presence of Him whom he believed…."
- This means that God is the One Who considers Abraham to be the "father of us all," even if this is denied by those who claim that he is the father of only the Jewish people.
- "Gives life to the dead" – besides referring to the final resurrection, this could be used to mean:
  - spiritual awakening
  - ability to conceive after being barren
  - escape from a near-death experience
- These apply directly to Abraham, Sarah, and Isaac.
- Paul's use of the word "calls" links this to the creation account in which God created by "speaking."
- The birth of Isaac, the promised son, was accomplished by the power God has to create out of (into) nothing.
- Here Paul lists four attributes of God:
  - "in the presence of" – God, not a set of truths, is the object of true saving faith; faith is a relationship.
  - "even God" – The God of Abraham is the true God.
  - "gives life" – God is the source of life.
  - "calls into being" – God alone is the Creator.
- In the same way that it seemed impossible for Sarah to give birth to the promised son, so it seems impossible that Abraham would be a father of many nations.
- Like the miraculous birth of Isaac, so every one who is "born from above" has experienced God "giving life to the dead and calling into being that which did not exist."
- We exercise our faith when we live in the reality of God's revealed character:
  - seeing our faith as a real relationship with God
  - undivided allegiance to the One, true God
  - finding true life from the Source of Life
  - trusting that God can do the impossible

Romans 4:18

In hope against hope he believed, so that he might become a father of many nations according to that which had been spoken, "so shall your descendants be."

- "In hope against hope" – even when all human possibilities were exhausted, he did not lose hope.
- His hope grew out of his faith in God: he believed.
- "according to that which had been spoken" – the word of God (Gen 15:5) was the foundation of Abraham's faith.
- "with the result that he is the father of many nations."
- Abraham is our "father" in two ways:
  - We receive the blessings promised to him, ultimately through his Seed Who is the Messiah.
  - He is a model of faith for us. When we live out that same faith, we prove that he is our father.

Romans 4:19–20

Without becoming weak in faith he contemplated his own body, now as good as dead since he was about a hundred years old, and the deadness of Sarah's womb; yet, with respect to the promise of God, he did not waver in unbelief but grew strong in faith, giving glory to God,

- "becoming weak in faith" means "not willing to believe that what God has promised He can and will do."
- Apparently Abraham thought he was too old to father children (though he did have sons later by Keturah).
- Sarah could not conceive, for it had "cease to be for Sarah as the manner of women" (Gen 18:11).
- Abraham accepted the fact that the promise God had given him was humanly impossible.
- How can we "grow strong in faith" like Abraham?
  - He focused on God's word: the promised of a son and blessing for the nations through the Seed (Gal 3:16)
  - He refused to allow unbelief to lodge in his heart.
  - His desire was to give glory to God.

Romans 4:21

and being fully assured that what God had promised, He was able also to perform.

- What happens when our faith is made strong?
  - we gain full assurance in God's promise/word.
  - "fully assured" = πληροφορέω, *plērophoreō* = "completely persuaded."
  - we rest in God's sovereign ability to do what He promised to do.

> "For faith does not think that God can do all things, while it leaves Him sitting still, but when, on the contrary, it regards His power in continual exercise, and applies it, especially, to the accomplishment of His word: for the hand of God is ever ready to execute whatever He has declared by His mouth." (John Calvin)

I have been crucified with Messiah; and it is no longer I who live, but Messiah lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

Galatians 2:20

A Study Through Paul's Epistle to the Romans
Romans 4:22–25

notes by Tim Hegg

Roman 4:22

Therefore it was also CREDITED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS.

- Paul now takes us back to where he began this section (v. 3) by quoting from Gen 15:6.
- His main point in this chapter is to show:
  - that right-standing before God (being righteous in His sight) is by faith, not on the basis of people-group status or by the "works of the Torah."
  - what it means "to believe," for Abraham "believed God" and his faith was "credited to him as righteousness."
- What does "saving faith" look like?
  - It is a faith in the "God Who is," and in the Savior He promised to send.
  - It is a faith that causes obedience to God seen in the way one lives.
  - It is a faith that refuses to be bound by human inability and trusts God for the impossible.
  - It is a faith that acts on the belief that what God has promised, He will do.

Romans 4:23–24

Now not for his sake only was it written that it was credited to him, but for our sake also, to whom it will be credited, as those who believe in Him who raised Yeshua our Lord from the dead,

- Abraham was not merely an important person in ancient history.
- Abraham is put forward in God's salvation history as a primary representative of true, saving faith.
- Abraham's faith was resurrection-type faith, meaning he believed God could bring the dead back to life.

By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises was offering up his only begotten son; was he to whom it was said, "IN ISAAC YOUR DESCENDANTS SHALL BE CALLED." He considered that God is able to raise people even from the dead, from which he [Abraham] also received him [Isaac] back as a type. (Heb 11:17-19)

- Paul has already emphasized this in our chapter, v. 17

  (as it is written, "A FATHER OF MANY NATIONS HAVE I MADE YOU") in the presence of Him whom he believed, even God, who gives life to the dead and calls into being that which does not exist.

- Thus, even as the faith of Abraham enabled him to trust God for life-after-death as it related to Isaac, so he believed that the covenant promised to him would eventually bring the ultimate Son, Yeshua our Messiah.
- Apparently God also revealed to Abraham the death of the ultimate Son and His resurrection.

  "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it and was glad." So the Jews said to Him, "You are not yet fifty years old, and have You seen Abraham?" Yeshua said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was born, I am." Therefore they picked up stones to throw at Him, but Yeshua hid Himself and went out of the temple. (John 8:56-59)

- We should not pass by the fact that Paul refers to "Yeshua" as "our Lord" (Ἰησοῦν τὸν κύριον ἡμῶν)
- "Yeshua our Lord" or "Messiah Yeshua our Lord" is only found 11 times in the Apostolic Scriptures. (Rom 4:24; 6:23; 8:39; 1 Cor 9:1; 15:31; Eph 3:11; Phil 3:8; 1 Tim 1:2, 12; 2 Tim 1:2; 2 Pet 1:2)
- The Greek term *kurios* (meaning "Lord") is used in the Lxx over 6000 times to translate יהוה, the ineffable Name.
- Paul uses *kurios* to define the "Name above all names" which is bestowed upon Yeshua.

  Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, so that at the name of Yeshua every knee will bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and that every tongue will confess that Yeshua Messiah is Lord (kurios), to the glory of God the Father. (Phil 2:8-11)

- In Phil 2:10, Paul is quoting from Is 45:23

  Who has announced this from of old? Who has long since declared it? Is it not I, Adonai (יהוה)? And there is no other God besides Me, a righteous God and a Savior; there is none except Me. Turn to Me and be saved, all the ends of the earth; For I am God (אלהים), and there is no other. I have sworn by Myself, the word has gone forth from My mouth in righteousness and will not turn back, that to Me every knee will bow, every tongue will swear allegiance. (Is 45:21–24)

- So here, once again, we are confronted with the great mystery of Yeshua's incarnation, for the One Who is without beginning or end, Who is the Eternal One (יהוה), became man so that He might be our representative in death and in life.

Romans 4:25

He who was delivered over because of our transgressions, and was raised because of our justification.

- So Paul concludes his teaching on "faith credited for righteousness" by bringing us to the object of our faith, Yeshua our Lord, in the saving work He has accomplished for us.
- Paul almost certainly has Is 53 in mind as he writes this.
- "delivered over" (παραδίδωμι) is found 3 times in the Lxx of Is 53:6, 12.

  v. 6 - *All of us like sheep have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; But Adonai has caused the iniquity of us all to fall (paradidōmi) on Him.*

  v. 12 - *Therefore he shall inherit many, and he shall divide the spoils of the mighty; because his soul was delivered over to death: and he was numbered among the transgressors; and he bore the sins of many, and was delivered over because of their iniquities.*

- Paul does not speak of Yeshua's death in isolation, but always combines it with His resurrection, since His death is meaningless apart from His resurrection.
- "because of our justification" = "the conclusion of His having been raised is our justification."
- Messiah paid our debt by His death, and gave us new life by His resurrection.

Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Messiah was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall also be in the likeness of His resurrection

Romans 6:4–5

Notes • Thoughts • Questions

notes by Tim Hegg

Romans 5:1

Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Yeshua Messiah,

- Here, we come to a new section in Romans, and in this first line of our text, Paul is summarizing what he has taught in 1:8–4:25.
- The key thought of the first section of Romans can be summed up in the word "justified" (δικαιόω, *dikaioō*)
- to "be justified" means that:
  - God has declared that He accepts a sinner as righteous before Him, that is, as "not guilty."
  - the sinner is accepted as righteous because he or she has, by faith, accepted God's payment for sin through the vicarious, substitutionary death of His Son, Yeshua.
  - the victorious resurrection of our Messiah guarantees that the payment He made has been fully accepted!
- What do we mean by "vicarious, substitutionary death?"
  - that Messiah died in my place.
  - that by His death He was punished for my sin.
  - that when He died and rose again, the Father reckoned it as though I died and rose again.
  - that Yeshua's death & resurrection was for me personally, individually, because He loved me.

(by W. N. Tompkins, 1866)

Christ's grave is vacant now,
Left for the throne above;
His cross asserts God's right to bless,
In His own boundless love.

'Twas there the blood was shed,
'Twas there the life was pour'd,
There Mercy gain'd her diadem,
While Justice sheath'd her sword.

And thence the child of faith,
Sees judgment all gone by,
Perceives the sentence fully met,
"The soul that sins shall die."

Learns how that God in love
Gave Christ the sins to bear
Of all who own His Lordship now,
That they His place might share,

And cries with wondering joy,
"As He is so am I,
Pure, holy, loved as Christ Himself—
Who shall my peace destroy?"

Reach my blest Saviour first,
Take Him from God's esteem,
Prove Jesus bears one spot of sin.
Then tell me I'm unclean!

Nay! for He purged my guilt
By His own precious blood,
And such its virtue not a stain
E'er meets the eye of God.

Romans 5:1

Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Yeshua Messiah,

- If you're reading the Complete Jewish Bible, you see a different translation here: "let us continue to have shalom with God…."
- Likewise (as we might expect) the older Roman Catholic Douay version has "let us have peace with God…"
- The difference between "we have peace with God" and "let us have peace with God" hinges on two different readings in the Greek manuscripts, a difference made by a single letter.
- Was the original word ἔχομεν, *exomen*, "we have" or ἔχωμεν, *exōmen*, "let us have"? (omicron or omega?) – indicative or subjunctive?
- The two readings most likely occurred because the two letters (omicron and omega) were pronounced the same (as long-o), and scribes often made copies of the manuscripts by listening to a reader.
- The earliest manuscripts give evidence for both readings.
- Which reading fits Paul's message in Romans so far?
  - In the first 4 chapters, Paul has used only one imperative (3:4) and only one hortative subjunctive ("let us…" 3:8), and this, in a hypothetical quote.

- In contrast, he has constantly used the "indicatives of faith" – stating the fact of justification by faith.

- Thus, the statement of fact, "we have peace with God," is surely the better reading as substantiated by the internal evidence of the epistle up to this point.
- Because God accepts us as righteous, we have shalom with Him. What does this shalom mean for us?
- The peace we have with God:
  - It is not merely a subjective, inner feeling.
  - It is an objective fact based upon what God has declared and revealed to us through His word.
  - It is the basis for a personal relationship of friendship with God that can grow and mature.
  - Justification is the "door" through which we are invited into God's presence, and peace describes the growing relationship which we enjoy with Him.
  - Peace with God means He will never act as our judge to declare us guilty, but He is our Father Who encourages, provides, strengthens, and, when needed, disciplines in love.
- All of this, our justification and the peace with God that this secures, is centered in Yeshua:
  - Lord (kurios) – the Eternal, Sovereign One Who is our Master.
  - Yeshua – Savior, Rescuer, Deliverer, Shepherd
  - Messiah – Promised One, Anointed King, Son of David

Romans 5:2

through whom we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in the hope of God's glory.

- "obtained access" – something we have which will never be taken away. The "door" (Yeshua) to the Father is always open for us.
- "into this grace" – the fullness of the shalom we have with God, meaning He is "for us," not against us (8:31).
- "in which we stand" – a position or place we have and will always have.
- Not only are we overwhelmed with joy because of the peace we have with God through Yeshua, but we also anticipate with great joy the return of Yeshua when all who are redeemed by Him will shine as trophies of God's grace, giving Him glory.
- "Hope" is the confident anticipation of that which we do not yet see (Heb 11:1).

What then shall we say to these things?
If God is for us, who is against us?
He who did not spare His own Son,
but delivered Him over for us all,
how will He not also with Him
freely give us all things?

Romans 8:31–32

A Study Through Paul's Epistle to the Romans
Romans 5:3–5

notes by Tim Hegg

Romans 5:3–4

And not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance; and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope;

- "And not only this" refers back to verses 1 & 2.
- What does the child of God possess?
  - peace with God = God is committed to our success for He has determined to make us like Messiah.
  - the grace of God = God has opened His infinite storehouse of grace to us through Yeshua our Messiah.
  - hope in God = assurance that what God has begun in us He will finish, bringing glory to Him.
- Being grounded in our righteous standing before God, strengthened by His grace, and possessing a settle assurance (hope) for the future, we can endure present trials since we know that God allows them for our good and His glory.

- What does it mean "to exult in our tribulations"?
  - "exult" (καυχάομαι, *kauxaomai*) is the same word used in v. 2, "we exult in hope of the glory of God."
  - In regard to tribulations or trials, this does not mean that we "look for trouble" or that we think we gain greater standing with God when we suffer.
  - It means that we face trials knowing that God will use them in the process of conforming us to Messiah.
  - We face trials with the knowledge that God is for us, that His grace will sustain us, and that the difficulties we face in life are God's tools to makes us like Yeshua.
- For the unbeliever, life's trials often bring anger and lead to a denial of God.
- For the believer, life's trials produce patience and perseverance.
- The Greek word translated "perseverance" is ὑπομονή, *hupomonē*, from the verb ὑπομένω, *hupomenō*, which means "to remain under."
- The word pictures someone carrying a heavy load and remaining under the load until it is delivered.

- How do we persevere under trials?
  - We exercise our faith in God. We confess that He is good and that He is in control even when the load seems too heavy to carry.
  - We pray – we ask God for the strength we do not have in ourselves.
  - We cling to God and rely on Him more and more.

- "And perseverance brings about proven character"
  - The Greek word for "proven character," δοκιμή, *dokimē* comes from metallurgy.
  - To purify metal, it is heated with fire until molten, which separates the pure from dross.
  - Godly character is produced by persevering in trials.

- "And proven character brings about hope"
  - "Hope" = that which is expected by reason of that which is certain.
  - The process of persevering under trials strengthens our resolve in faith and enables us to tighten our grip on the "hope of the glory of God" (v. 2).

Romans 5:3

and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit Who was given to us.

- "*this* hope does not disappoint"
  - "disappoint" is the Greek καταισχύνω, *kataisxunō* and can mean "to shame, dishonor, be ashamed."
  - Paul means that our hope (certain assurance) is real, not something imagined or self-made.
  - Paul likely has verses from the Tanach in mind (which use the same Greek word).

    To You they cried out and were delivered; In You they trusted and were not disappointed. (Ps 22:5)

    Indeed, none of those who wait for You will be ashamed; Those who deal treacherously without cause will be ashamed. (Ps 25:3)

    Sustain me according to Your word, that I may live; and do not let me be ashamed of my hope. (Ps 119:116)

    Therefore thus says the Adonai Elohim, "Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a tested stone, a costly cornerstone for the foundation, firmly placed. He who believes in Him will not be disturbed. (Is 28:16)

- "love of God"
  - our love for God or God's love for us? Is "God" the subject or the object of the word "love"?
  - The context would favor God as the subject, i.e., the source of "love." (v. 6ff adds weight to this view.)
  - It is God's love for us that sustains us in trials and strengthens us to persevere.

- "poured out"
  - The Greek verb ἐκχέω, *ekxeō* has the sense of
    * given in quantity = drenched in God's love
    * fully experienced = satisfied; satiated
    * total commitment = given without restraint

- "within our hearts" = via true knowledge based upon God's self-revelation in the Scriptures, opened to us through the illuminating work of the Spirit.

- "through the Holy Spirit"
  - through the presence the Holy Spirit.
  - through the active work of the Holy Spirit within us.

- "Who was given to us"
  - "Given" emphasizes that the Holy Spirit's indwelling presence is a gift, not something earned.
  - The indwelling Spirit is God's guarantee that we will be fully redeemed and saved eternally.

    …the Holy Spirit of promise, Who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God's own possession, to the praise of His glory. (Eph 1:13–14)

pledge = ἀρραβών – עֵרָבוֹן, *'erabôn*

Summary

- Our settled peace with God and the grace He has given us in Yeshua enables us to persevere in life's trials. Such perseverance strengths our faith and proves our character is a child in God's family.
- Even in the midst of life's trials we can endure because we know and confess that God is good and that He is for us. Thus trials are for our good and His glory.

- God's love for us is sure even during trials and the greatest proof of His love is His presence with us through the Ruach HaKodesh.
- Collectively, within the community of faith, we assist each other in the life of faith and perseverance as we "bear each other's burdens and fulfill the Torah of our Messiah" (Gal 6:2)

> *Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love Him.*
>
> James 1:12

A Study Through Paul's Epistle to the Romans
Romans 5:6–10

notes by Tim Hegg

Romans 5:6

For while we were still helpless, at the right time Messiah died for the ungodly.

- The opening "For" connects us back to the previous context.
- "… the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us. For while we were still helpless…."
- The greatest display of God's love for us was in at the cross where Yeshua gave His life to pay for our sins.
- Note that Paul includes himself in this statement: "while we were still helpless…."
- In this Paul reminds us of what he has already taught, namely, that both Jews and non-Jews stand guilty before God.
- Even Torah-oriented Jews (like Paul) cannot claim to have made themselves righteous in God's sight.
- "helpless" (ἀσθενής, *asthenēs*) has a range of meanings: "weak, powerless, feeble, and sick."
- Here it means "powerless" or "totally unable" to offer oneself as righteous before God.
- "at the right time" = "at the appointed time"
- The death of the Messiah was not determined by man but by God.

> this Man, delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put Him to death. (Acts 2:23)
>
> But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Torah… (Gal 4:4)
>
> All inhabitants of the earth will worship the beast—all whose names have not been written in the book of life belonging to the Lamb that was slain from the creation of the world. (Rev 13:8, NIV)

- Once again, Paul emphasizes that Yeshua died for the ungodly.
- Since Paul includes himself among the helpless, he also includes himself as being part of the ungodly.
- The word "for" (ὑπέρ, *huper*) emphasizes the one-for-one substitutionary aspect of Messiah's death.

Romans 5:7–8

or one will hardly die for a righteous man; though perhaps for the good man someone would dare even to die. But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Messiah died for us.

- "righteous man" may speak of a well-known public figure recognized for his outstanding character.
- "the good man" (note the article "the") may refer to a close friend or someone who has been a special help in time of need (a benefactor).
- Paul's point is clear: it is not a common occurrence that someone willingly gives his or her life to save someone else's life. There aren't that many heroes!
- In contrast, God gave His Son to die for those who were sinners (ungodly) and were His enemies (v. 10).
- Note that once again Paul includes himself: "while we were yet sinners, Messiah died for us."
- "yet sinners" – what we were and no longer are. Sin is no longer the major characteristic of our lives.
- "His own love" – God's love is unique because of His greatness. Even the highest form of human love does not equal the greatness of God's love.

  "while we were yet sinners" – God did not wait for us to respond to Him, for we were "helpless."
- "for us" = He took the penalty of death we deserved.
- "for us" – Yeshua's substitutionary death was specific, not general. He paid the debt of sin owed by sinners.

Romans 5:9–10

Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him. For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.

- Paul uses a *qal vechomer* argument: "if that is true, how much more is this true!"
- He states what God has already done ("that" which is true) which guarantees what He will do ("this" is true).

- Messiah's death (blood) paid our debt of sin, and therefore God has declared us righteous in His sight (justified).
  - Our salvation is present but also future (cf. 8:22ff).
  - When Yeshua returns, He will not come as our Judge but as our King, Redeemer, Savior, Shepherd, and Friend.
  - We have right-standing with God; our debt is paid!
  - God loved us even when we were His enemies!
  - He reconciled us to Himself: we're no longer enemies! "Now (not future) we have peace with God!"
- If that is true, how much more is this true!
  - "we will be saved" = our future is secure.
  - "by His life" – Yeshua lives forever to intercede for us!

Therefore if anyone is in Messiah, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.

2Corithians 5:17

I have been crucified with Messiah; and it is no longer I who live, but Messiah lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

Galatians 2:20

A Study Through Paul's Epistle to the Romans
Romans 5:11–12

notes by Tim Hegg

Romans 5:11

And not only this, but we also exult in God through our Lord Yeshua Messiah, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.

- "this" refers back, and summarizes the previous teaching (vv. 6–10) on our having been reconciled to God through the work of our Messiah– His death, resurrection and eternal life.
- "not only this" means "not only will we be saved from the wrath of God in the final judgment, but even now we exult in the reconciliation we presently enjoy."
- "exult" (καυχάομαι, *kauxaomai*) = "to boast, take pride in, be proud of."
- We boast, not in what we have done, but what has been done for us by the grace of God.
- Through the finished work of our Savior, we now experience the settled joy of reconciliation
- What is the reconciliation of which Paul speaks? It is peace (*shalom*) with God.

Romans 5:12

Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned–

- By opening this new section with the word "Therefore," Paul intends us to see that the gift of salvation which we now enjoy flows from what he has taught us in vv. 1-11.
- In this section Paul contrasts the effect of Adam's sin upon all who belong to him with the effect of Yeshua's work upon all who are His.
- By opening this new section with the word "Therefore," Paul intends us to see that the gift of salvation which we now enjoy flows from what he has taught us in vv. 1-11.
- In this section Paul contrasts the effect of Adam's sin upon all who belong to him, with the effect of Yeshua's saving work upon all who are His.

- This section of Romans (5:12-21) is one of the primary texts teaching us the doctrine of "original sin," that Adam was appointed by God as the representative of mankind, and that his willful sin and rebellion against God is imputed (reckoned) to all of his progeny.
- Consider Hebrews 7:9–10

  > And, so to speak, through Abraham even Levi, who received tithes, paid tithes, for he was still in the loins of his father when Melchizedek met him.

- The author Hebrews teaches that when Abraham gave a tenth of the spoils to Melchizedek, one could just as well hold that Levi, who generationally was related to Abraham, also gave tithes to the King of Salem.
- In the same way, all who are generationally related to Adam, participated in his sin and rebellion against God.
- Thus, the imputation of sin means that, since all mankind was "in Adam," God reckons (imputes) to everyone Adam's original sin.
- The opening words in v. 12, "just as," will not be answered until v. 18!
- So vv. 13–17 comprise a long explanation of how the condemnation of sinners can be overcome in Yeshua Messiah.
- "just as" all who are in Adam are reckoned as sinners, so all who are in Messiah Yeshua are reckoned as righteous.
- "through one man" – Notice that Adam, not Chavah, is the one held responsible for sin entering the world.
- This aligns with the biblical frame-of-reference that God created the male to be the head of the female.
- "But I want you to understand that Messiah is the head of every man, and the man is the head of a woman, and God is the head of Messiah." (1Cor 11:3).
- From the beginning, death (physical and spiritual) is tied to sin: "… in the day that you eat from it (the forbidden tree of the knowledge of good and evil) you will surely die." (Gen 2:17)
- Thus, death is proof of the presence of sin.
- Consider the genealogical lists at the beginning of Genesis: "So all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years, and he died.…So all the days of Seth were nine hundred and twelve years, and he died…So all the days of Enosh were nine hundred and five years, and he died…So all the days of Kenan were nine hundred and ten years, and he died…." (Gen 5:5ff)

- "death spread to all men" = "sin spread to all men"
- The incontrovertible truth that sin spread to all people is that in all generations after Adam, everyone died.
- The exception is Enoch (Gen 5:24), who is presented as proof that there is a way to escape death.
- How are we to understand "because all sinned"?
  - death results from each person's own choice to sin
  - death results from each person's own choice to sin, but because of Adam, everyone inevitably sins.
  - the proof that death passed to all men is that all sin and thus all die.
- Consider Heb 9:27

  …it is appointed for people to die once, and after that comes judgment…

Summary & Application

- Because God appointed Adam as the representative for all mankind, everyone receives the sinful nature from him and thus all are reckoned by God as sinners.
- Because we are all born sinners, we confirm our sinful nature by willfully sinning ourselves.
- Objection: Is this fair?
  - "I don't remember Adam asking me about his decision to sin and rebel against God!"
  - Why does God impute Adam's sin to me if I had nothing to do with it?
  - It seems unjust that Adam's sin and death should be passed on to me!
- But wait until you hear the rest of the story!
  - It is true that God, in His sovereignty, appointed Adam to be the representative for the human race.
  - It is also true that his sin and death are passed on to all who are "in him."
  - – But it is also true that God appointed Yeshua to be the representative for all who are "in Him."
  - – Just as mankind had no part in Adam's decision to sin and rebel, so we had no part in God's decision to send His Son to die for sinners.
  - – The "first Adam" acted on our behalf, and the "last Adam" died to pay the penalty of our sin!

So also it is written,

"The first man, Adam, became a living person";

the last Adam became a life-giving spirit.

1Corinthians 15:45

A Study Through Paul's Epistle to the Romans
Romans 5:13–17

notes by Tim Hegg

Romans 5:12–13

> *Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned — for until the Torah, sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no Torah.*

- In v. 13, Paul further explains what he has stated in v. 12, that "death spread to all men, because all sinned."
- He anticipates an important question that his readers will ask: "Paul, how do you define sin? Who decides what is, and what is not, sin?"
- "for until the Torah" means "until the Torah was revealed at Sinai."
- "sin was in the world" – how do we know that "sin was in the world?" – Because people died, and death is the result of sin.
- "sin is not imputed" means that legally, a person cannot be charged with breaking a law until that law is "on the books."
- This raises a second question: "Did the Torah exist before God revealed it to Israel at Sinai?"
- The answer is "Yes!" The Torah is the self-revelation of God, and in this sense, the Torah is eternal.
- Paul has already taught us (1:18–20) that God's "invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature" are evident in the creation (which includes the image of God in which mankind was created) so that all are "without excuse."
- Paul's argument is this:
  - There is no imputation of sin apart from the Torah.
  - The penalty for imputed sin is death.
  - People who live from the time of Adam to Sinai died.
  - Therefore sin must have been imputed even though the written Torah had not yet been given.

Romans 5:14

Nevertheless death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over those who had not sinned in the likeness of the offense of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come.

- Paul personifies sin as a King who rules over mankind.
- This sets up Paul's teaching that fallen mankind are slaves to sin.
- Yet mankind did not choose to be subjects to "King sin."
- After Adam, all were born already slaves to sin.
- Paul now reinforces his teaching of the sinful nature inherited from Adam.
- God did not offer the sons of Adam the same opportunity to obey or disobey Him as He offered Adam and Chavah in the garden.
- Yet that death characterized the common experience of mankind was proof that they were sinners.
- That each person following Adam died even though they were not given the same test as God gave Adam and Chavah proves that Adam's sin was imputed to all.
- Adam is a type of the Messiah, the "coming One."
- What is a type? It is a "form, figure, pattern, or example"
  [Like a coin struck with a die, the coin contains the "pattern" or "form" of the die. Greek τύπος = "type".]
- In the Bible, a "type" is a person or thing prefiguring (according to God's design) a person or thing fulfilling God's final plan or purpose.
- How is Adam a type of the Messiah, Yeshua?

Adam	Yeshua
Sin entered into the world through one man, and death through sin.	The gift of righteousness will reign in life through Yeshua (v.17).
By the transgression of one the many died (v. 15)	The grace of God and the gift of grace of the One Man, Yeshua, abound to the many (v. 15)
Judgment arose from one transgression resulting in condemnation (v. 16)	The free gift arose in respect to many transgressions resulting in justification (v. 16)
Through one transgression there resulted condemnation to all (v. 18)	Through one act of righteousness there resulted justification of life to all men (v. 18)
Through one man's disobedience many were made sinners (v. 19)	Through the obedience of One the many will be made righteous (v. 19)

Romans 5:15–16

But the free gift is not like the transgression. For if by the transgression of the one the many died, much more did the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Yeshua Messiah, abound to the many. The gift is not like that which came through the one who sinned; for on the one hand the judgment arose from one transgression resulting in condemnation, but on the other hand the free gift dealt with many transgressions resulting in justification.

- Adam is a type of the Messiah by way of opposites.
- How is the "free gift" not like "the transgression"?
  - the "free gift" is far more powerful, for it overcomes many transgressions.
  - one transgression brought death; the free gift brought life to many transgressors.
  - death from sin is deserved; the free gift of life is undeserved
- "the grace of God" is fully seen in the sending of His Son, Yeshua, to accomplish the salvation of sinners.
- "the gift by the grace of the one Man, Yeshua Messiah" is the gift of justification given to all who receive Him.
- Note also that Paul refers to "the one Man, Yeshua Messiah." The humanity as well as the deity of Yeshua are essential truths of our faith.

Summary

- Adam is a "type" of the Messiah: "Thus it is written, 'The first man Adam became a living being'; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit." (1Cor 15:45)
- In a positive sense, Adam prefigures Yeshua because Adam was put forward as the representative of his people (mankind), and Yeshua stands as the representative of all who are in Him.
- By way of opposites, Adam prefigured Yeshua because:
  - Adam's one transgression resulted in condemnation to all, while Yeshua's one act of obedience results in justification bringing life to all who are His.
  - Adam's one transgression condemned all who are "born from him," but Yeshua's one act of obedience justifies all who are "born again" in Him.

- While mankind deserves condemnation since all have sinned, justification is a gift of God's grace and is undeserved and unmerited.

Romans 5:17

For if, because of one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Yeshua Messiah.

A Study Through Paul's Epistle to the Romans
Romans 5:18–21

notes by Tim Hegg

Romans 5:18

So then as through one transgression there resulted condemnation to all men, even so through one act of righteousness there resulted justification of life to all men.

- Having shown how Adam is a type of Messiah by way of contrast (condemnation vs. righteousness), Paul now emphasizes how the "first Adam" and the "last Adam" are similar.
- They are similar because each directly affect the people they represent.
- The results of each "man's" actions are opposite:
  - Adam ⇨ transgression ⇨ condemnation
  - Messiah ⇨ righteousness ⇨ justification
- What is similar is that each "man" directly affected everyone they represented.
  - Adam ⇨ all die
  - Messiah ⇨ all live
- Is Paul teaching universalism, that in the end, everyone is saved and has a place in the world to come?
- We know that because Adam sinned, all people are born sinners. Is it also true that because of Yeshua all people will be saved?
- We know this cannot be what Paul means!

> …when the Lord Yeshua will be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Yeshua. These will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power… (2Thess 1:7–9)

> Do not fear those who kill the body but are unable to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. (Matt 10:28)

> Then He will also say to those on His left, 'Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels…These will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life. (Matt 25:41, 46)

- If Paul is not teaching universalism, how then are we to understand his words here?
- One common explanation is:
  - That Paul means "all people are given the opportunity to accept Yeshua and thus to gain eternal life."
  - But there is a problem with this explanation.
- This explanation does not fit Paul's comparison of Adam and Messiah:
  - Adam's sin did not result in everyone being given the opportunity to choose or reject a sinful nature.
  - Rather, everyone is inevitably born with a sinful nature because of Adam's sin.
  - The same must be true of Yeshua's "one act of righteousness."
  - His death & resurrection did not make salvation possible; it made salvation inevitable.

Romans 5:19

For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the One the many will be made righteous.

- In fact, Paul goes on in v. 19 to explain what he means in verse 18.
- Note the change from "all" in v. 18 to "many" in v. 19.
  - Paul is explaining why he used "all" in v. 18.
  - "All" who belong to Adam are made sinners.
  - "All" who belong to Messiah are made righteous.

- **What was the Purpose of Yeshua's Incarnation?**

  For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost." (Lk 19:10)

  She will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Yeshua, for He will save His people from their sins." (Matt 1:21)

  He made Him who knew no sin to be a sin-offering on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. (2Cor 5:12)

- **What was the Purpose of Yeshua's Death?**

  Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Yeshua Messiah, who gave Himself for our sins so that He might rescue us from this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father… (Gal 1:3–4)

For Messiah also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, so that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit;

When you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions, having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us, which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. (Col 2:13–14)

But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, and by His scourging we are healed. (Is 53:5)

…who gave Himself for us in order to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds. (Titus 2:14)

… let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, fixing our eyes on Yeshua, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. (Heb 12:1–2)

- What was "the joy set before Him"?
  - It was the very purpose for which He endured the cross.
  - The joy was His bride whom He would redeem.

- **Was Yeshua Successful in the Mission of His Incarnation & Death on the Cross?**

- Yes! He accomplished all He purposed to do!
  - This means He did not make salvation possible or potential, but He actually saved sinners.
  - This means His death was a real payment for sin, not merely a potential payment.
  - This means that all those for whom He died will inevitably be saved and possess eternal life.

Romans 5:20–21

The Torah came in so that the transgression would increase; but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more, so that, as sin reigned in death, even so grace would reign through righteousness to eternal life through Yeshua Messiah our Lord.

- Why does Paul suddenly bring in the issue of the Torah?
  - because a common teaching in Paul's day was that the Torah was given as a remedy for sin.
  - to show that the Torah, rather than being a remedy for sin, actually caused sin to increase.
- How did the Torah increase transgressions?
  - The Torah revealed sin for what it ultimately is: rebellion against God. It increased the weight of sin.
  - The Torah shows that sin is not culturally defined. God, not mankind, determines what is sin.
  - The Torah revealed (through the Tabernacle and sacrificial system) the horrible consequences of sin.
  - The Torah pointed to Yeshua, the "Promised One," Who would have to give His life as payment for sin.
- When sin is seen for what it truly is, the value of God's grace increases and its greatness is comprehended.
- When we come to know the greatness of God's grace, we are forever compelled to worship and serve Him as our Lord, Savior, and King.

For you know the grace of our Lord Yeshua Messiah, that though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, so that you through His poverty might become rich.

2Corinthians 8:9

A Study Through Paul's Epistle to the Romans
Romans 6:1–4

notes by Tim Hegg

Romans 6:1–2

What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin so that grace may increase? May it never be! How shall we who died to sin still live in it?

- "What shall we say then?" – used by Paul to introduce a false conclusion that might be drawn from what he has just taught. (cf. 3:3; 7:7; 9:14)
- What was it that some might have misunderstood from Paul's teaching in the previous chapter?
- Wrong conclusion 1: "Since Yeshua has already paid for all of my sins, it really doesn't matter if I continue to sin."
- Wrong conclusion 2: "In fact, my sin only shows how much God loves me, because the more I sin, the more His forgiving grace is made known!"
- "to continue in sin" means to continue to live the same sinful life I lived before I came to faith in Yeshua.
- Paul's answer: "May it never be!" = "No way! That's impossible!"
- Is Paul teaching that when a person truly believes in Yeshua, that they no longer sin at all?
- No! He is not teaching the false doctrine of "sinless perfectionism."

> For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh; for the willing is present in me, but the doing of the good is not. For the good that I want, I do not do, but I practice the very evil that I do not want. But if I am doing the very thing I do not want, I am no longer the one doing it, but sin which dwells in me. (Rom 7:18–20)
>
> My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Yeshua Messiah the righteous One… (1John 2:1)

- What is Paul's answer?
- Since we have died to sin, we have left our old life and entered into a new life.
- An inward transformation has taken place in every person who has truly been born again.

- What is this inward transformation?
  - a "new heart" = a true desire to please God and to make choices that please Him.
  - the indwelling Ruach HaKodesh (Holy Spirit) Who enables the child of God to say "no" to sin and "yes" to righteousness.
- How have we died to sin?
  - in God's sight – (judicial)
  - in our own confession of faith (mikveh / baptism)
  - in our daily (hourly) choices (moral)
  - in hope of the resurrection (eschatological)

Mikveh / *Mikvah* (מִקְוֶה / מִקְוָה)

- A gathering of water used for ritual immersion
  - required "living" water, i.e., running water
  - required sufficient water for full immersion
  - could be a natural body of flowing water (river)
- Used to symbolize a change of status
  - from ritually unclean to ritually clean
  - from common duties to sacred duties (priest/nazirite)
- The *Mikveh* may have symbolized a "new beginning"
  - "For I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that our fathers were all under the cloud and all passed through the sea; and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea;" (1Cor 10:1–2)
  - Crossing through the Red Sea is like going through the waters of a *mikveh*. Israel entered the sea as slaves to Pharoah and came out as servants of the Most High.
  - The Israelites entrusted themselves to Moses as their leader and followed him to freedom from slavery.
  - The Red Sea was like a *mikveh* that marked a dramatic change in status for Israel.
- This picture of a *mikveh* was also used of the work of the Ruach HaKodesh
  - "For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit." (1Cor 12:13)

Romans 6:3

Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Messiah Yeshua have been baptized into His death?

- Paul now uses the picture of the *mikveh* to make his point:
  - going under the water = dying with Yeshua
  - coming up out of the water = rising with Yeshua
- Paul's main point: not only did Yeshua die and rise again for us but we also died and rose again with Him.
- This means that not only did His death and resurrection pay for our sins and make us righteous in the court of heaven. His death and resurrection also effected a life change within us through the indwelling Spirit.

Romans 6:4

Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Messiah was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.

- To be "baptized into Messiah Yeshua" means to reckon oneself to have died with Him and to have risen to a new life.
- "through the glory of the Father" means that in the resurrection, the power & glory of God was seen in the most majestic of ways, for in Yeshua sin and death were conquered for all of His people!
- In the same way that the glory & power of God is seen in Yeshua's resurrection when sin & death were conquered, so the glory of God is seen when we who have died and risen with Messiah walk in newness of life.
- How do we "walk in newness of life"?
  - affirming who we are in Yeshua: we've died to our old self and have been recreated to a new life in Him.
  - being diligent and disciplined to engage in the pursuit of holiness: prayer, meditating upon the word of God, putting to death the deeds of the flesh.
  - This will be Paul's message in the coming chapters.

Therefore if you have been raised up with Messiah, keep seeking the things above, where Messiah is, seated at the right hand of God.

Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth.

For you have died and your life

is hidden with Messiah in God.

Colossians 3:1–2

A Study Through Paul's Epistle to the Romans
Romans 6:5–11

notes by Tim Hegg

Romans 6:5

For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall also be in the likeness of His resurrection,

- Paul now states his main thesis for this section: The believer is in union with the Messiah. This means:
  - The believer has died with the Messiah
  - The believer has risen with the Messiah
- What does it mean to be "united" with Messiah?
  - The Greek word σύμφυτος (*sumphutos*) has the sense of "to grow together," "be united," as children growing up in the same family.
  - Like placing one's hands on the head of the lamb, picturing the person's union with the sacrifice.
  - When the sacrificial animal is slain, it is symbolic of person himself has dying.
- But the parallel with the animal sacrifice falls short:
  - Note that our union with Yeshua involves being united with His death and with His resurrection.
  - The Temple sacrifice only pictured death = payment for transgressions or removal of impurity
  - Union with Messiah means we have also been made alive with Him.
- Therefore, our union with Messiah secures:
  - our justification through dying with Yeshua
  - our sanctification through being raised with Yeshua
- Just as it was impossible that Yeshua could have remained dead, so it is impossible that the believer could remain "dead in trespasses and sins" (cp. Eph 2:1)
- The power to live in this resurrected life begins by knowing and affirming what is true.
- Our old self (literally "old man/person") has been crucified with Yeshua.

Romans 6:6

knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin;

- Our old self (literally "old man/person") has been crucified with Yeshua.
- What does Paul mean by "old self" or "old man"?
  - Paul uses the same expression in Eph 4:22 & Col 3:9

    Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its evil practices… (Col 3:9)

- This parallels Paul's teaching in our Romans text, for the "old self" was crucified with Messiah, and thus it was "laid aside" = no longer active.

  … that, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit… (Eph 4:22)

- Here, however, it appears as though the "old self" is still active within the believer's life. How is this possible if the "old self" has been crucified with Messiah?
- But the grammar allows a different translation: "…in reference to your former manner of life, you laid aside the old self, which was being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit."
- What then does Paul mean by "old self" or "old man"?
  - He does not mean "the sinful nature" because it is clear that the sinful nature remains.

    "I find then the principle that evil is present in me, the one who wants to do good." (Rom 7:21)

    "My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Yeshua Messiah the righteous One. (1Jn 2:1)

  - He uses "old self" to refer to the "heart," or the "old mind" where "sin reigned" and persuaded one's will to make sinful choices.

    "Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.

  - In the "old self," "sin reigned," viewing the "old self" as a king ruling over his subjects.

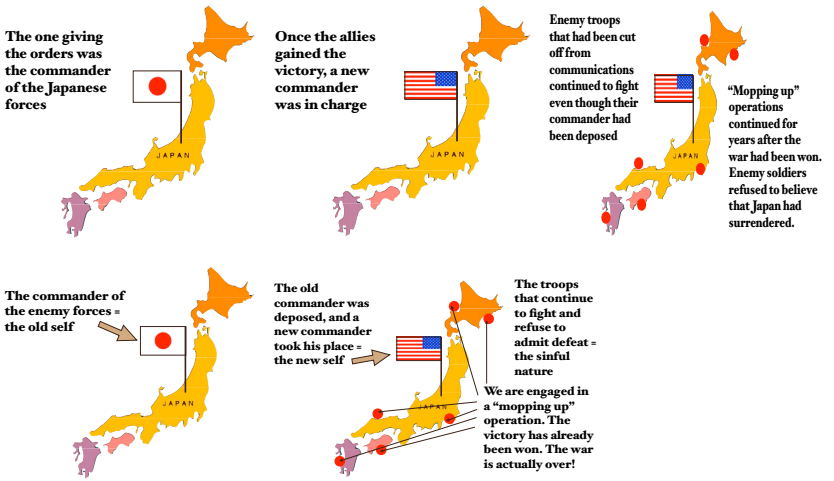
- Here, the "old self" is viewed as a master requiring his slaves to sin. (cf. 6:14, "For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law but under grace.")

- What is the outcome of our "old self" having been crucified with Yeshua?
  - the "body of sin" will be done away with, meaning that the "sinful nature" will be more and more subdued and eventually destroyed.
  - that we would no longer be slaves to the sinful nature

Romans 6:7

...for he who has died is freed from sin.

Illustrating the "Old" & "New" Self



Romans 6:8–11

Now if we have died with Messiah, we believe that we shall also live with Him, knowing that Messiah, having been raised from the dead, is never to die again; death no longer is master over Him. For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all time; but the life that He lives, He lives to God. Even so count yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Messiah Yeshua.

- Even as Messiah died once and conquered sin, so we have died with Him and are no longer slaves to sin.
- The "old self" is no longer in command! We have been liberated to serve a new Master!

And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

Romans 12:2

A Study Through Paul's Epistle to the Romans
Romans 6:12–14

notes by Tim Hegg

Romans 6:8–11 (for review)

Now if we have died with Messiah, we believe that we shall also live with Him, knowing that Messiah, having been raised from the dead, is never to die again; death no longer is master over Him. For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all time; but the life that He lives, He lives to God. Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Messiah Yeshua.

- In the same way that Yeshua will never again "become obedient to death," i.e., need to "submit" to death as His master, so never again will we be forced to submit to sin as our master. We have been freed from the slavery of sin.
- We have been freed from the slave master of sin, and have been given the will (new self) and the power (the indwelling Spirit) to live for God.

Romans 6:12

Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its lusts…

- Why then does Paul admonish us not to let sin reign?
  - Note the change of language: Paul no longer speaks of the believer in Yeshua as a slave but as in charge.
  - The old-self was a slave to sin; the new-self is freed from the bondage of sin and can say "NO!" to sin.
  - "mortal body" = the sinful nature which remains
  - The "old-self" = the sinful will/heart, which died with Messiah
- The believer in Yeshua has no obligation to "obey" the desires (lusts) of the sinful nature.
- However, the believer must "put to death" the desires of the sinful nature. This is the work of sanctification.

Romans 6:13

and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God.

- "do not go on presenting" – once again, the believer is viewed as "in charge" and able to say "no" to sin. The "new-self" is not required to obey the sinful nature.
- When the believer "presents" himself or herself to sin as an instrument of sin, he or she is serving the enemy!
- Remember the battle in which we are engage!

> For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. (Eph 6:12–13)

- What constitutes the "armor of God"?
  - your loins girded with truth = God's revealed truth
  - breastplate of righteousness = Yeshua's righteousness
  - Gospel of peace = the realty of peace with God
  - shield of faith = the daily exercise of faith in God
  - sword of the Spirit, the word of God = the Bible
- We have risen with Messiah and are His servants!
- Therefore, we have become His people to
  - glorify and magnify Him as the one true God & King
  - to serve Him by expanding the kingdom of His Son

Romans 6:14

- The sin nature remains but has lost its commander because the "old self" died at the cross.
- Therefore, it is a sure thing: sin is no longer our master.
- Here is the reality: those who are in Messiah are no longer under Torah. Instead, we are under grace.

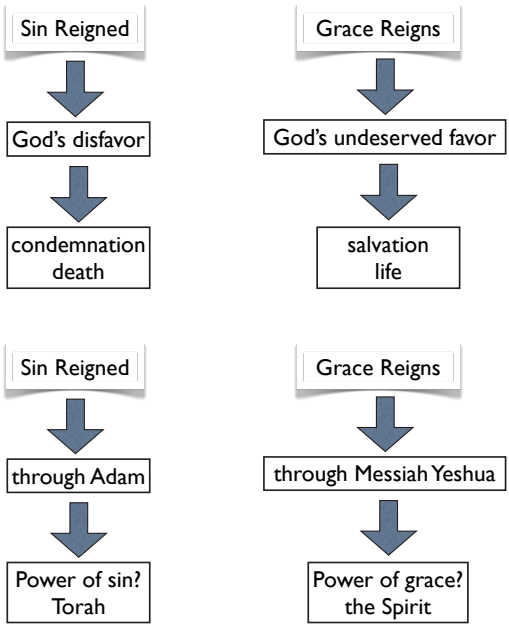
What does "not under Torah" Mean?

- This Pauline phrase has often been interpreted to mean that the authority of the Torah has been abolished for believers in Yeshua.
- Initial factors that stand against this interpretation:
  - Paul refers to the Torah as "the Torah of God" (7:22, 25; 8:7) which is still active in the believer's life.

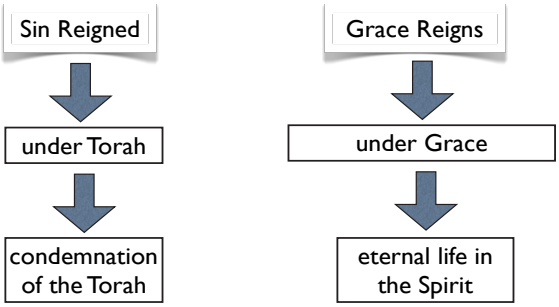
> For I joyfully concur with the Torah of God in the inner man… (Rom 7:22)
>
> Thanks be to God through Yeshua Messiah our Lord! So then, on the one hand I myself with my mind am serving the Torah of God, but on the other, with my flesh the law of sin. (Rom 7:25)

sinful nature **"new self"**

  - "under Torah" is put in contrast to "under grace" which in our context relates to the two "masters."



> The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the Torah; but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Yeshua Messiah. (1Cor 15:56–57)



- Therefore, "not under Torah" means "not under the condemnation of the Torah."
- Instead, we have received God's undeserved favor, His grace in Yeshua and the gift of the Ruach so that we might live unto righteousness.
- The Torah (which includes all of Scripture) is God's revelation and teaching of righteousness.

So then, the Torah is holy,
and the commandment
is holy and righteous and good…
For I joyfully concur with the Torah of God
in the inner man….
Romans 12:2

A Study Through Paul's Epistle to the Romans
Romans 6:15–19

notes by Tim Hegg

Romans 6:15

What then? Shall we sin because we are not under Torah but under grace? May it never be!

- Let's review the meaning of "under the Torah" vs. "under grace."
  - v. 14 – "For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under Torah but under grace."
  - "under Torah" = under the condemnation which the Torah demands for rebellion against God.
  - "under grace" = under the declaration of "not guilty" (justification) made on the basis of being "in Messiah."
- It seems that Paul is just repeating the question he asked in 6:1 – "What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin so that grace may increase?"
  - in 6:1 Paul is seeking to overturn the false inference, that if where sin abounds, grace abounds even more (5:20), then sinning more would actually make God's grace even greater and more evident.
  - Here, however, Paul is defeating a second false inference: that if the Torah no longer condemns the one who is "in Messiah" when that person sins, then what apparently used to be sin no longer is sin.
- Paul answers with the strongest negative: "No way!!"
  - the believer's "no condemnation" status does not make sin irrelevant.
  - In fact, sins that used to be common and even acceptable ("everyone does it!") now are seen for what the truly are: rebellion against the One Who has paid the penalty for my sin.
  - For those who are "in Messiah," sin has become more sinful because we know the price that had to be paid for our justification.
  - Further, a life of sin is contrary to the renewed nature of the redeemed soul.

Romans 6:16

Do you not know that when you present yourselves to someone as slaves for obedience, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin resulting in death, or of obedience resulting in righteousness?

- Paul begins with an obvious fact: "Surely you know!"
  - First, obeying a master means one is a slave to that master.
  - Second, Paul presents only two scenarios:
    ~ slave to sin (thus sin is one's master)
    ~ slave to obedience (thus God is one's Master)
- Paul's conclusion is obvious: the character of one's life identifies one's master.
- Remember Rom 2:13, "…for it is not the hearers of the Torah who are just before God, but the doers of the Torah will be justified."
- Paul gives two options in parallel:
  - slave to sin ⇨ death
  - slave to obedience ⇨ righteousness
- The parallel terms Paul uses are insightful:
  - We would expect "death" to be paralleled by "life"
    ~ slave to sin ⇨ death
    ~ slave to obedience ⇨ life
- What are we to learn from Paul's choice of words?
  - life & righteousness are equated
  - life results from imputed righteousness, not from our good works
- We learn another important lesson from this verse:
  - Everyone is a slave to a master:
    ~ A person being "free" in the sense of having no master is a myth.
    ~ Being "one's own master" is to be a slave to the sinful nature.
- If we have "died with the Messiah" then we have died to self and became His slaves.
- If we have not "died with the Messiah," then we are slaves to our own sinful desires.
- Here Paul defeats the notion of "free will," for slaves are not "free" to do as they please. They are obligated to obey their master.

Romans 6:17

But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed,

- "you were slaves to sin" – note the past tense!
  - If you are "in Messiah," you are no longer a slave to sin.
  - Sin no longer is your master, meaning you have the right and the power to say "no!" to sin.
- "you became obedient from the heart"
  - Paul most likely uses the metaphor of a "slave" in order to use the "exodus motif" as an illustration of freedom from sin.
  - By what means were we freed from the slavery of sin & death? – "Thanks be to God!"
  - Obedience that brings life flows from a changed heart, a work only God can do.
- "form of teaching"
  - The true Gospel unshackled from man's additions.
  - Particularly the Gospel as presented to the Gentiles.
- "to which you were committed"
  - With a "new heart," the redeemed child of God is both willing and able to commit oneself wholly to God and His truth.

Romans 6:18–19

having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness. I am speaking in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness, resulting in further lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness, resulting in sanctification.

- "freed from sin / slaves to righteousness"
  - Once again the exodus from Egypt may form the background for Paul's words.
  - "Send forth My people [freedom from Egypt's slavery] so that they might serve Me [slaves of righteousness]."
- Paul uses an illustration to nail home his point, but he realizes that it does not "work" in every detail.
- The believer's relationship to God through Messiah is not the same as the degrading, unjust, humiliating, and grievous thing that slavery has always been.

- In fact, the relationship is better characterized by the love a husband and wife have for each other.
- The one point Paul's illustration emphasizes is that of "heart motivation."
  - Slaves to sin are engulfed in pleasing their sinful nature.
  - The passion to fulfill one's sinful desires drives one's whole life so that "master sin" is constantly served.
  - In the same way that sinful passions characterized one's life before faith, so a passion for righteousness should characterize the child of faith.
- Note Paul's Terminology

Sin as Master	Righteousness as Master
slave to sin	slave to righteousness
impurity & lawlessness anti-Torah	obedience & sanctification pro-Torah
death	life

Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life.

John 5:24

A Study Through Paul's Epistle to the Romans
Romans 6:20–23

notes by Tim Hegg

Quick Review: Romans 6:15–19

> *15 What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? May it never be!*
> *16 Do you not know that when you present yourselves to someone as slaves for obedience, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin resulting in death, or of obedience resulting in righteousness?*
> *17 But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed,*
> *18 and having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.*
> *19 I am speaking in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness, resulting in further lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness, resulting in sanctification.*

- Paul overturns a second false inference that might be implied when he stated that "there is therefore now no condemnation for those who in Messiah Yeshua" (6:1)
- The false inference is that since the Torah no longer condemns those who have been saved by faith in Yeshua, then what used to be "sin" is no longer "sin" for the believer.
- Rather than "sin" becoming irrelevant in the life of the believer, the renewed heart has become far more sensitive to what sin really is, i.e., rebellion against God.
- Before salvation we were slaves to sin; now, having been redeemed, we willingly become slave/servants to God and thus to righteousness.
- Thus everyone is a "slave" to someone or something: either to sin (self) or to righteousness (God).
- When, by God's grace, we were delivered from the slavery of sin through faith in Messiah Yeshua, we received a "heart change" [Torah written on the heart].
- The "old self" (old man) was crucified with Messiah.
- In rising with Messiah, the "new self" (new man) desires to serve God and is no longer a slave to sin.
- In the same way that sinful passions characterized one's life before faith, so a passion for righteousness now characterizes the the life of faith.

Romans 6:20

For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness.

- What does Paul mean by "free in regard to righteousness"?
  - It means "having no connection with righteousness."
  - In the same way that the believer is "free from condemnation" (i.e., has no connection to condemnation), so "slaves to sin" have nothing that can give them right-standing before God.
- Thus, one cannot be the slave of sin and the slave of righteousness at the same time.
- This accords with the words of Yeshua:

> *No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth. (Matt 6:24)*

Romans 6:21

Therefore what benefit were you then deriving from the things of which you are now ashamed? For the outcome of those things is death.

- Literally, "What kind of fruit, therefore, were you getting? Things of which you are now ashamed!"
  - Formerly, as slaves to sin, lawlessness led to further lawlessness.
  - Habits of life (both "likes" and "dislikes") only increased passions which led to lawlessness.
- "from the things of which you are now ashamed"
  - Having been born again, we now see sin for what it truly is, and rather than liking it, we despise it and seek to turn from it.
  - As those who love God and seek to please Him, sin is contrary to our renewed heart.
- "For the outcome of those things is death."
  - "death" = eternal death, i.e., separation from God and forever objects of His wrath.
  - "death" = spiritual death; reaping the fruit of sin in one's present life.
    ~ self-centered existence
    ~ broken relationships
    ~ discontent, i.e., never satisfied
    ~ trapped in sin: addictions, sickness, helplessness

- An important question for each of us to ask ourselves:
- "How do I view sin?"
  - Have I become numb to what sin really is?
  - Do I consider it wrong but still tolerable?
  - Do I find ways to rationalize sin as inevitable: "Nobody is perfect!"
  - Does sin cause me grief & sorrow?

Romans 6:22

But now having been freed from sin and enslaved to God, you derive your benefit, resulting in sanctification, and the outcome, eternal life.

- Paul asks us to compare the fruit of slavery to sin with the fruit of being enslaved to God.
- While the fruit of bondage to sin yields death (both temporal & eternal), being servants of God yields
  - sanctification
  - eternal life
- What is "sanctification" (ἁγιασμός, *hagiasmos*)?
  - The Greek word has the base meaning of "holiness"
  - "To separate something or someone for a holy use"
  - To become more and more like Yeshua in thought, word, and deed.
  - While "justification" is accomplished in the one act of God declaring a sinner righteous, "sanctification" is a process by which the redeemed sinner is more and more conformed to the image of Yeshua.
  - "Justification" is accomplished by God working alone (monergistic). "Sanctification" is accomplished by God and the person He has justified working together (sunergistic).
- What are the means God provides for our sanctification?
  - the abiding presence of the Ruach HaKodesh
  - the inspired word of God = Bible
  - communion with God through prayer
  - fellowship of believers in the body of Messiah
- "and the outcome (τέλος, *telos*), eternal life."

The goal to which our life in Messiah proceeds is eternal life.

Eternal life means life that never ends; is never interrupted by death, sorrow, sickness, or disappointment.

Eternal life is life as God intends, with people created in His image being everything He intends them to be, and able to give Him the glory He deserves.

- Beginning in the late 19th Century, liberal theologians began to teach that the concept of "eternal life" was the product of late, post-exilic Judaism, and that prior to this time the Israelites had no belief in the resurrection and life after death.
- The Bible speaks differently!

  As for me, I shall behold Your face in righteousness; I will be satisfied with Your likeness when I awake. (Ps 17:15)

  I would have despaired unless I had believed that I would see the goodness of the LORD In the land of the living. (Ps 27:13)

  Nevertheless I am continually with You; You have taken hold of my right hand. With Your counsel You will guide me, And afterward receive me to glory. (Ps 73:23–24)

  I shall walk before the LORD In the land of the living. (Ps116:9) Many of those who sleep in the dust of the ground will awake, these to everlasting life, but the others to disgrace and everlasting contempt. (Dan 12:2)

  As for me, I know that my Redeemer lives, And at the last He will take His stand on the earth. Even after my skin is destroyed, Yet from my flesh I shall see God; (Job 19:2)

  And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life. (Matt 25:46)

  I am the living bread that came down out of heaven; if anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread also which I will give for the life of the world is My flesh. (John 6:51)

  This is the bread which came down out of heaven; not as the fathers ate and died; he who eats this bread will live forever. (John 6:58)

Romans 6:23

For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Messiah Yeshua our Lord.

- Note the contrast:
  - "wages" = that which a person earns
  - "free gift" = that which a person does not earn
- Eternal death: eternal, conscious separation from God's love and grace, abiding in the terror of His wrath, is what awaits all those who stand condemned before God.
- Eternal life: forever living in the joy of God's favor and grace awaits all who, by faith in Yeshua, are free from condemnation and stand righteous in God's sight.

A Study Through Paul's Epistle to the Romans
Romans 7:1–4

notes by Tim Hegg

Romans 7 – Overview

- Chapter 6 – Union with Yeshua in His death & resurrection
  - All who have received God's grace through faith in Yeshua are "in Messiah"
    - ~ they have died with Him, meaning His death is counted by God as though they likewise died.
    - ~ they have raised with Him, meaning they have been given a new life.
  - The penalty prescribed by the Torah (i.e, the wages of sin is death, 6:23) has been paid.
  - The *mikvah* (baptism) stands as the proclamation that the believer has undergone a change of status.
- No longer a slave of sin, the believer is now "free" to serve God in his or her new life.
- Chapter 7 – What does this new life of service to God look like? What are the practical, everyday ramifications of this change of status?
  - 7:1–6, a reminder and further explanation of 6:14, "you are not under (the condemnation of) the Torah but under grace."
  - 7:7–25, correcting possible misunderstandings regarding the nature and function of the Torah in the life of the believer.

Romans 7:1

Or do you not know, brethren (for I am speaking to those who know the Torah), that the Torah has jurisdiction over a person as long as he lives?

- "do you not know?" – Paul uses this opening phrase as a way of saying "Surely you know!" (cf. Rom 6:3; 1Cor 6:2, 9, 16, 19).
- "brethren" – The messianic community in Rome included both Jews and non-Jews and Paul states that they all were knowledgable about Torah. (cf. Acts 15:21)
- This axiom of Torah is obvious: The Torah does not apply to a person who is deceased because one who is dead can neither obey nor transgress the Torah.
- Therefore, the Torah does not function as "master" (κυρειύω, *kureiuō*) over those who have died.

- Even the later rabbinic literature agrees with this basic axiom of Torah law:

> R. Johanan stated: 'What is the meaning of the Scriptural text, "Free among the dead?" (Ps 88:5[6], בַּמֵּתִים חָפְשִׁי, "Among the dead *I am* free…."). 'As soon as a man dies he is free from the commandments'." (b.*Niddah* 61b)

- The later rabbinic literature likewise applies this axiom to a wife's ability to remarry:

> A woman is acquired [in marriage] in three ways and acquires her freedom in two: …She acquires her freedom by divorce or by her husband's death. (m.*Kiddushin* 1.1)

Romans 7:2

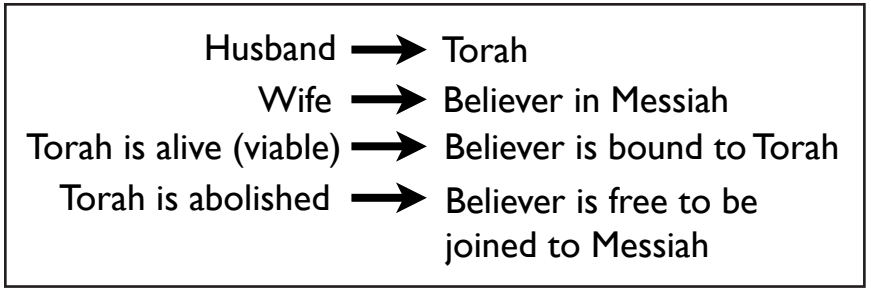
For the married woman is bound by Torah to her husband while he is living; but if her husband dies, she is released from the Torah concerning the husband.

- Now Paul applies the axiom of v. 1 to a specific case (marriage) in which the Torah prohibits in one situation but permits in another.
- The deciding factor between whether the Torah "prohibits" or "permits" pertains to a death.
- While the husband lives, the Torah prescribes a penalty upon the wife if she joins herself to another man.
- If the husband dies, however, the woman is free to be joined to another man.
- v. 1 states the principle, vs. 2-3 explain the principle by way of the marriage illustration, and v. 4 makes the application of the principle, i.e., death = change of status.

Romans 7:3

Therefore, my brethren, you also were made to die to the Torah through the body of Messiah, so that you might be joined to another, to Him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit for God.

- Typically, the Church has parsed Paul's illustration this way:



- But such an interpretation fails miserably on several accounts:
  - If no one could be "joined to Messiah" until the Torah "died," what about the people who lived before the coming of Yeshua? How could they have obtained salvation?
  - Paul says the believer has died, not the Torah.
  - It is the Torah that both prohibits the wife from being joined to another man while her husband lives, and gives freedom to the woman to marry another if her husband dies. The Torah has not died!

Romans 7:4

Therefore, my brethren, you also were made to die to the Torah through the body of Messiah, so that you might be joined to another, to Him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit for God.

- The Greek ὥστε (*ōste*), "Therefore," indicates that Paul is applying the principle he has taught, not making a one-to-one application of each part of the metaphor [in which case we would expect ὅυτως (*houtōs*) "in like manner."]
- The principle is that death changes one's status in relationship to the Torah.
- The believer has died, not the Torah.
- Before faith in Messiah, the sinner is bound by the condemnation of the Torah, since the Torah condemns all who are in rebellion against God.
- In addition, the Torah actually causes the unbeliever to sin more (v. 5).
- Union with Messiah in His death has released the believer from the Torah's condemnation in order to be joined to Messiah and thus obtain eternal life.

- The believer, in union with Messiah in His resurrection, by the power of the abiding Ruach, is able to obey the Torah and thus "bear fruit to God."
  - This reiterates once again the Exodus motif.
  - We were liberated from the yoke of slavery so that we might serve God.

For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Messiah Yeshua for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.

Ephesians 2:8–10

notes by Tim Hegg

Romans 7:5

For while we were in the flesh, the sinful passions, which were aroused by the Torah, were at work in the members of our body to bear fruit for death.

- Paul now speaks of the change that has taken place for those who have died with the Messiah and risen with Him to a new life.
- "For" – v. 5 explains what has taken place in our having died to the condemnation of the Torah and being joined to Yeshua (v. 4)
- Note the past (imperfect) tense: "we were in the flesh" which contrasts our present condition. We are no longer "in the flesh."
- What does Paul mean by "in the flesh"?
  - Paul is not using the word "flesh" to mean "skin."
  - Here "flesh" means "sinful nature." (contrast Gal 2:20)

> *"I have been crucified with Messiah; and it is no longer I who live, but Messiah lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.* (Gal 2:20)

physical, human existence

  - In our text, "in the flesh" means "controlled by the sinful nature."
  - Those who are "joined to Messiah" are no longer slaves to the sinful nature.
- How did the Torah arouse "sinful passions"?
  - Paul seems to be addressing the Jewish members of the community, since presumably many of the Gentile believers had no connection to the Torah before coming to faith in Messiah.
  - Yet a good number of the Gentile believers may have been "God-fearers," that is, Gentiles who were interested in the God of Israel and attended the synagogue without "converting" to Judaism.
  - The Torah claims God as King and mankind to be His servant.
  - The Torah requires a person to love his or her neighbor as oneself (Lev 19:18)
  - Thus the Torah requires a person to give up give up their self-centered ego.

- But to the unregenerate person, this comes as a personal attack, requiring them to give up their individual freedom.
- As a result, they rebel against God and what He requires as they cling to their self-centeredness.

• This rebellion against God affects the whole person
- the heart/mind – "I'll do what I want to do! Nobody can tell me what I can and cannot do!"
- the body – "I'll act the way I want to act! I'll do with my body whatever I want!"
- Thinking to be free, the unregenerate person is a slave to "sinful passions."

• The sinful, self-centered soul does bear fruit, but it is poison fruit.
- "fruit for death" = that which results in death
- "Death" here means "separation from God"
- inability to fulfill one's created purpose.
- "the wages of sin is death" (3:23)

• "released from the Torah" = released from the condemnation which the Torah prescribes for rebellion against God.
- The death of a woman's husband releases her from the covenant obligations of marriage.
- The believer, having died in Messiah, is released from the condemnation the Torah requires for rebellion.

Romans 7:6

But now we have been released from the Torah, having died to that by which we were bound, so that we serve in newness of the Spirit and not in oldness of the letter.

• Note the clear difference!
- Before faith–before dying with Messiah–we were self-centered, self-driven, rebelling against God's rule.
- Now, being in Messiah, we willingly serve Him.
- True freedom is not doing whatever we want to do; true freedom is the ability to do what God wants.

• Spirit & Letter – found 3 times in Paul's letters

But he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that which is of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter; and his praise is not from men, but from God. (Rom 2:29)

Not that we are adequate in ourselves to consider anything as coming from ourselves, but our adequacy is from God, who also made us adequate as servants of a new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life. (2Cor 3:5–6)

- each time "Spirit" refers to the Ruach HaKodesh, while "letter" refers to the written Scriptures, the Tanach.
- Paul's use of "Spirit" and "letter" has often been interpreted to mean "the Spirit" is contrary to "the letter."
- In this interpretation, "Spirit" indicates an "inward reality" while "letter" means "having only an outward appearance."
- But would Paul speak of the Tanach ("letter") this way? Consider His words in 2Timothy 3:16.

All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work. (2Tim 3:16)

- Yet it our Roman text, Paul speaks of the "oldness of the letter" and in 2Cor 3:6, he says the "letter kills"!
  - The key is understanding that the Scriptures read without the aid of the Spirit are just words written on stone, parchment, or paper.
  - The "letter" alone has no power.
  - Only when the Torah is written on the heart by the Ruach does the "letter" bring life.
- Paul uses the concept of "old" to mean "without faith."
- He uses the concept of "new" to mean "with faith."
- Thus, the "newness of the Spirit" means receiving the truth of the Scriptures with eyes and heart made new by the Spirit.
- "Oldness of the letter" means trying to "keep the Torah" without a changed heart and without the indwelling Spirit.
  - "oldness of the letter" = seeking to stand right before God while still being a slave to sin
  - "newness of the Spirit" = desiring to obey God from a heart made new and enabled by the Spirit

Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Messiah Yeshua. For the Torah of the Spirit of life in Messiah Yeshua has set you free from the Torah of sin and of death. For what the Torah could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God did: sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh, so that the requirement of the Torah might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. (Rom 8:1–4)

A Study Through Paul's Epistle to the Romans
Romans 7:7–12

notes by Tim Hegg

Romans 7:7

What shall we say then? Is the Torah sin? May it never be! On the contrary, I would not have come to know sin except through the Torah; for I would not have known about coveting if the Torah had not said, "you shall not covet."

- Having shown that the Torah, apart from the work of the Ruach (Spirit), brings condemnation and that through mankind's sinful pride, can be misused and misunderstood as a means of gaining righteousness before God, Paul now emphasizes that the problem is not with the Torah but with mankind's fallen nature.
- While the Torah announces death as the condemning penalty for sin, the Torah itself is not evil or identified with sin itself.
- This statement of Paul entirely dismisses the errant notion that the Torah is bad and something that needs to be discarded.
- "On the contrary" – just the opposite is true: The Torah is God's self-revelation given to mankind as a gift of His grace.
- The divinely appointed function of the Torah:
  1. The Torah, when applied by the Ruach, identifies sin which otherwise would not be known.
     a. The Torah reveals God's unchanging standards of what is right and what is wrong.
     b. Only the heart that desires to please God would care about what is sin and what is not sin.
  2. The Torah reveals the very core issue of sin itself: coveting = selfishness / self-centeredness
- What is the sin of coveting?
  - caring more about what others think of me than of how God sees me.
  - The Hebrew word חָמַד (*chamad*) means "to desire, to treasure something in one's heart."
  - Used both for good desires and selfish desires.

The fear of Adonai is clean, enduring forever; The judgments of Adonai are true; they are righteous altogether. They are more desirable than gold, yes, than much fine gold; Sweeter also than honey and the drippings of the honeycomb. (Ps 19:9–10)

So Achan answered Joshua and said, "Truly, I have sinned against Adonai, the God of Israel, and this is what I did: when I saw among the spoil a beautiful mantle from Shinar and two hundred shekels of silver and a bar of gold fifty shekels in weight, then I coveted them and took them; and behold, they are concealed in the earth inside my tent with the silver underneath it." Josh 7:20–21

Romans 7:8

But sin, taking opportunity through the commandment, produced in me coveting of every kind; for apart from the Law sin is dead.

- What is "the commandment"?
  - the singular word with article ("the") is often used to denote the whole Torah (cf. vv. 9–13)

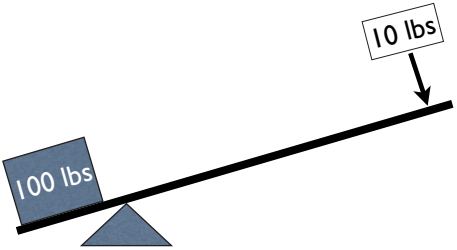
Now this is the commandment, the statutes and the judgments which the LORD your God has commanded me to teach you, that you might do them in the land where you are going over to possess it… Deut 6:1

Therefore, you shall keep the commandment and the statutes and the judgments which I am commanding you today, to do them. Deut 7:11

that his heart may not be lifted up above his countrymen and that he may not turn aside from the commandment, to the right or the left, so that he and his sons may continue long in his kingdom in the midst of Israel. Deut 17:20

The statutes and the ordinances and the Torah and the commandment which He wrote for you, you shall observe to do forever; and you shall not fear other gods. 2Kings 17:37

- What does Paul mean by "taking opportunity"?
  - the Greek word (used only by Paul in the Apostolic Scriptures) has the sense of "circumstances that give rise to a given action" or "the means by which something is done or accomplished."
  - think of the "fulcrum" that gives power to a lever.



- How did sin use the Torah as a fulcrum?
  - the fallen nature reacts with rebellion when confronted with God's righteous requirements
  - the fallen nature thinks that "looking religious," i.e., "performing Torah," is the same as being righteous before God.
- How is "sin dead" apart from the Torah?
  - Without an unchanging standard of righteousness, "sin" cannot be clearly defined.
  - Fallen mankind has a "sliding scale" of what is and what is not sin.
  - Sin can be easily rationalized and thus does not produce real conviction. Sin becomes irrelevant.

Romans 7:9–10

I was once alive apart from the Torah; but when the commandment came, sin became alive and I died; and this commandment, which was to result in life, proved to result in death for me;

- Paul now speaks from his own experience:
  - When was Paul "alive apart from the Torah"?
  - When in Paul's life had "the commandment" not come?
- Here we are given real insight into Paul's message:
  - Apart from the Ruach, the Torah cannot function to bring true righteousness.
  - The goal of the Torah is Yeshua (Rom 10:4)
  - As long as the Torah is veiled (2Cor 3:14–16), Yeshua and His saving work is not seen.

> *But their minds were hardened; for until this very day at the reading of the old covenant the same veil remains unlifted, because it is removed in Messiah. But to this day whenever Moses is read, a veil lies over their heart; but whenever a person turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away.* (2Cor 3:14–16)

- Before coming to faith in Yeshua, the Torah in Paul's life had no true convicting power.
- He viewed himself as "alive," as approved by God.
- But when the Ruach first blinded him physically, and then opened both his physical and spiritual eyes, the "commandment came," i.e., brought convicting power.
- Instead of proving that he was "okay," the Torah showed him that he was dead in his sin.

- Though he had been taught that the Torah was the means of standing right before God, he now realized that it was never intended to give life.
- The Torah, now empowered by the Ruach, rather showed him his own sinfulness and pointed him to Messiah.

Romans 7:11–12

for sin, taking an opportunity through the command-ment, deceived me and through it killed me. So then, the Torah is holy, and the command-ment is holy and righteous and good.

- Sin used the Torah as a fulcrum to leverage the sinful nature, deceiving a person into believing that they are okay in God's eyes.
- Such self-centered arrogance brings death, not life.
- On what grounds, then, can Paul claim the Torah to be holy, righteous, and good?
  - because the Torah became the means by which he could see himself as God saw him
  - because the Torah, through the Ruach, brought conviction which turned him to seek salvation through Yeshua

Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Messiah Yeshua. For the Torah of the Spirit of life in Messiah Yeshua has set you free from the Torah of sin and of death. For what the Torah could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God did: sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh, so that the requirement of the Torah might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. (Romans 8:1–4)

A Study Through Paul's Epistle to the Romans
Romans 7:13–25

notes by Tim Hegg

Romans 7:13

Therefore did that which is good become a cause of death for me? May it never be! Rather it was sin, in order that it might be shown to be sin by effecting my death through that which is good, so that through the commandment sin would become utterly sinful.

- Having shown that the Torah is good, Paul emphasizes that the Torah is not the cause of condemnation, but that sin is the cause.
- "Rather it was sin" – Paul expects us to complete the sentence: "Rather it was sin that caused death."
- The reward (wages) of sin is death (6:23).
- The Torah enacts the sentence of death (condemnation) upon the guilty sinner, showing that the Torah is righteous and good.
- Sin is rebellion against God, so the Torah, in punishing sin, upholds the righteousness of God.
- The Torah shows sin to be what it truly is.
- Those thoughts and actions which, to the sinner may seem "okay" or even "natural," when put against the righteous standard of God, are seen to be entirely contrary to Him.



When someone knocks a glass off of the table, is gravity responsible for breaking it?
No! Gravity is good!
We could not live without gravity.
Rather, the person who knocked it off of the table is responsible for it being broken.

Likewise, when we sin, we can't blame the Torah! The Torah is good.

We sin when we choose to yield to our sinful nature, so we bear the responsibility for our sin.

Romans 7:14

For we know that the Torah is spiritual, but I am of flesh, sold into bondage to sin.

- "the Torah is spiritual" means that only through the life-giving work of the Spirit can the Torah function in its positive role of sanctification.
- The Spirit is the One Who gives a "new heart" and new "spiritual eyes," Who creates the "new self" within us so that we desire to please God.

- "I am of flesh" – note the present tense. Paul is describing his current situation, as a believer in Yeshua, as an Apostle of Yeshua!
- "of flesh"means "having a sinful nature." Even though we are have come to faith in Yeshua, we still possess the sinful nature inherited from Adam.
- "sold into bondage to sin" – Paul is using the metaphor of a slave – "slave to sin" (6:6, 17, 20)
- "sold" is a passive verb – we had no choice in the matter because we inherited the sinful nature by birth.
- How could Paul, a believer in Yeshua, claim to be in "bondage to sin"?
- He is teaching us that until the final resurrection, we still have the sinful nature. We cannot rid ourselves of it in this life.
- This means that there will be a constant struggle between our renewed self and the sinful nature.

Romans 7:15–17

For what I am doing, I do not understand; for I am not practicing what I would like to do, but I am doing the very thing I hate. But if I do the very thing I do not want to do, I agree with the Torah, confessing that the Torah is good. So now, no longer am I the one doing it, but sin which dwells in me.

- "I do not understand" is literally "I do not know." How could Paul say he doesn't know what he is doing?
- Surely he knows, because he is greatly disturbed by his sin!
- The word "know" (translated "understand") can also mean "to approve," which makes more sense.
- Note the parallel: "I do not approve … I hate".

  Note the change in Paul: before coming to faith in Yeshua, he saw himself as "okay." After coming to faith, his "new self" hates sin and longs to do what is right.
- He "concurs with the Torah in the inner man" (v. 22)
- Paul is not making an excuse for his sin. He is contrasting the "new self" with the old, sinful nature.
- The "I" of the believer is at odds with the flesh.
- "no longer am I the one doing it" means "I (the new self) no longer agree with sin–rather, I hate it."

Romans 7:18

For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh; for the willing is present in me, but the doing of the good is not.

- Nothing good comes from the "flesh," that is, the old sinful nature.
- "the willing" to do good = the new self
- "doing of the good is not in me, i.e., in my flesh."
  - Paul once again speaks of the war between the new self and the sinful flesh
  - The sinful flesh can never produce what is good.

Romans 7:19–20

For the good that I want, I do not do, but I practice the very evil that I do not want. But if I am doing the very thing I do not want, I am no longer the one doing it, but sin which dwells in me.

- "practice the very evil that I do not want" - The Greek word (πράσσω, *prassō*) "practice" can simply mean "to do" and does not necessary give the sense of something done habitually.
- Paul reiterates the contrast between the "new self" and the sinful nature.
- Paul is not teaching that the believer is never able to live righteously and always ends up sinning! (6:1–2)
- He is teaching us that the true heart of a believer is to be totally done with sin, but such complete holiness will only become a reality in the final resurrection.

Romans 7:21–23

I find then the principle that evil is present in me, the one who wants to do good. For I joyfully concur with the Torah of God in the inner man, but I see a different law in the members of my body, waging war against the Torah of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin which is in my members.

- The word "law" (νόμος, *nomos*) is used in two ways in these verses, made distinct by the addition of the words "of God," "of my mind," and "of sin"
  - Law of God/Law of my mind = the Torah
  - Law of sin = the power of the sinful nature

- "making me a prisoner" = unable, in this life, to be totally free from the influence of the sinful nature

Romans 7:24–25

Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death? Thanks be to God through Yeshua Messiah our Lord! So then, on the one hand I myself with my mind am serving the Torah of God, but on the other, with my flesh the law of sin.

- Desiring to be completely free from sin, the believer longs for the day when the sin nature will be completely eradicated and every thought and action will be entirely pleasing to God!
- The true desire for holiness creates an equal longing for the world to come.
- Our complete sanctification is secure, for Yeshua's work – His death, resurrection, ascension, and His current intercession for us makes this certain.
- "For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it with a view to the day of Messiah Yeshua." (Phil 1:6)
- With our eyes upon the goal (the return of our Messiah), we reckon with the fact that we must engage the battle between the new self and the sinful nature.
- As we grow to be more and more like Messiah in thought, word, and deed, we take courage in the hope of our full and final redemption (8:18f)

And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body. For in hope we have been saved, but hope that is seen is not hope; for who hopes for what he already sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, with perseverance we wait eagerly for it.

Romans 8:23–25

A Study Through Paul's Epistle to the Romans
Romans 8:1–4

notes by Tim Hegg

Romans 8:1

Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Messiah Yeshua.

- In this verse, Paul summarizes chapters 5–7:
  - the penalty for sin is condemnation/death.
  - All have inherited condemnation & sin from Adam.
  - The Torah enforces the penalty for sin: condemnation.
  - Rather than being the remedy for sin, the Torah (apart from the work of the Spirit) both empowers sin and condemns the guilty sinner.
  - But this does not mean the Torah is evil! God never gave the Torah to provide redemption. He gave the Torah to those who were already redeemed.
  - God, from the beginning, revealed that redemption comes only through payment for sin, which requires death.
  - He made this known through the requirement of sacrifice and especially in the Tabernacle and priestly service.
  - In requiring sacrifice for sin and the promise of the coming Messiah, God was revealing that He would make the ultimate and final sacrifice to redeem sinners through His Son, the Messiah, Yeshua.
  - Therefore, the only way to overcome sin (both current and eternal) is for the individual to identify with (be in union with) the death and resurrection of Yeshua by faith.
- For those who are saved, God in His mercy
  - accepts the sacrifice of Yeshua as payment for the believer's sin
  - credits the righteousness of Messiah to the believer
  - creates a "new self" (new heart) within the believer
  - dwells within the believer through the Spirit Who comforts, leads, and sanctifies through the word (the Torah written upon the heart)
- "there is now"
  - For the those who have entrusted themselves to Yeshua, the full assurance of standing righteous in God's sight is a present reality.
  - Our sinful nature (flesh) as well as the enemy of our souls (satan) want us to think we're still condemned.
  - But faith accepts as true what God has declared and lives in the reality of that truth.

- “there is now no condemnation”
  - Paul’s statement of the present reality of “no condemnation” shows conclusively that our full righteous standing before God is a present reality, not something we achieve only in the world to come.
  - In God’s eyes, we are now as righteous as His Son.
  - When we accept this truth, we come to understand in a deeper way the love of God, which casts out fear.
  - But doesn’t our “no condemnation” status before God require that first we live righteously?
  - No! No one can live righteously in God’s eyes before they come to faith in His Messiah.
  - Some scribes felt the bold statement of Paul in this verse would lead people to spiritual lethargy, so they added “who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.” (note the KJV, NKJV)
  - This phrase is found in v. 4 but has very weak textual evidence for it being part of v. 1.
- “for those who are in Messiah”
  - For Paul, the position of being “in Messiah Yeshua” is the believer’s primary identity.
  - While we retain our ethnic identity (Jew and non-Jew), this is secondary to our primary identity in Yeshua.
  - In the body of Messiah, Jew and non-Jew form the “one new man” (Eph 2:15), all having the one, primary identity of being “in Messah Yeshua.”
- What does it mean to be “in Messiah Yeshua”?
  - From all eternity, God has chosen you to be part of His redeemed people.
  - God will never condemn you nor will He ever cut you off from His chosen people because you are in the Messiah, God’s beloved Son.
  - You have eternal life because you are in Messiah Yeshua Who has conquered sin and death.
  - You are part of the remnant of Israel because being in Messiah means you are one with the Israelite.
  - You have the happy privilege and responsibility to fulfill the mission given God ordained for His chosen people, to sanctify His Name upon the earth by becoming more and more like Yeshua.

Romans 8:2

For the Torah of the Spirit of life in Messiah Yeshua has set you free from the law of sin and of death.

- An explanation by way of an expanded paraphrase
  - For the Torah, when written on the heart by the Spirit Who gives life in Messiah Yeshua, has set you free from the tyranny (lordship) of the sinful nature which brings forth sin and its penalty, death.
  - The basic sentence: "For the Torah has set you free."
- How has the "Torah set you free"?
  - The Torah prescribes the penalty of death for rebellion against God.
  - The penalty has been paid for the believer in Yeshua's sacrifice upon the cross, thus the Torah declares the believer justified – "not guilty."
  - Through the work of the Ruach HaKodesh, the Torah in the life of the believer becomes a fountain of life, for illumined by the Ruach, the Torah is the "living word of God."

> For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. (Heb 4:12)

Romans 8:3–4

For what the Torah could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God did: sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh, so that the requirement of the Torah might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

- The weakness of the Torah is not in the Torah itself, but in the sinful nature which cannot obey the Torah as God intends—from a heart of faith to please God.
- "in the likeness of sinful flesh"
  - Yeshua did not have a "sinful nature" in the sense of sinning Himself. (1Pet 2:22–24; Heb 4:15; 7:26)
  - He had the "likeness" of sinful flesh in that He experience pain, suffering, sorrow, injury, and death, all of which are part of the fallen world & fallen mankind.

- "as an offering for sin"
  - Paul is clear in this matter: Yeshua's death on the cross was a sacrifice for sin, not His own sin, but for the sins of those He came to save.
- "He condemned sin the flesh"
  - "in the flesh" means "in His flesh," through His death as the incarnate Man.
  - He condemned sin in the sense of rendering sin unable to condemn those for whom He died.
- "the requirement of the Torah might be fulfilled in us"
  - Faith is the requirement of the Torah–believing what God has said and living in accordance with it.
  - The purpose of the Torah in the believer's life is to set the pattern of conformity to Yeshua. WWYD? He would obey the Torah.
- "who do not walk according to the flesh"
  - The one who is born from above has had a radical change in his or her thoughts, words, & actions.
  - Biblical "walk" means the pattern of one's life.
  - This does not mean "perfection" but it means that the overall characteristic of a believer's life is one of obedience to God, not the deeds of the flesh.
- "but according to the Spirit."
  - according to the leading of the Spirit as He illumines the word of God to the heart of the believer.
  - Spirit (Holy Spirit - Ruach HaKodesh) is a key to our chapter: 31 times in Romans; 20 times in chapter 8.

For as many as are led by the Spirit of God,
these are sons of God.

Romans 8:14

A Study Through Paul's Epistle to the Romans
Romans 8:5–11

notes by Tim Hegg

Romans 8:5

For those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit.

- The opening "For" refers back to the concluding phrase of v. 4.
  - Paul explains in greater detail what he means by "…who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit."
  - His explanation for what it means to "…not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit" is the theme that unites vv. 5–11.

Mind set on the flesh vs. Spirit

mind set on the things of the flesh	mind set on the things of the Spirit
mind set on the flesh is death	mind set on the Spirit is life & peace
mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God	mind set on the Spirit is at friendship with God
mind set on the flesh does not subject itself to God's Torah	mind set on the Spirit subjects itself to God's Torah
mind set on the flesh is unable to submit to God's Torah	mind set on the Spirit is able to submit to God's Torah
those in the flesh cannot please God	those in the Spirit are able to please God

- It is common for people to interpret Paul's contrast between the "mind set on the flesh" and the "mind set on the Spirit" as describing a "carnal Christian," i.e., a believer who is living in disobedience to God.
  - But it is clear by noting the contrasts that Paul is comparing a believer with a non-believer.
  - "dead" rather than "alive" in Messiah
  - "enemy" (hostile) vs. "friend" (reconciled)
  - "unable to submit to the Torah of God"
  - "unable to please God"
- What does Paul mean by the phrase "set their minds"?
  - He is emphasizing the change of "heart," which is the place of volition–the ability & desire to choose what pleases God.

- Paul expects us to supply "set their minds" with the last phrase as well: "…but those who are according to the Spirit, set their minds on the things of the Spirit."
- Those who have died and risen with Messiah have the indwelling Spirit of God (cf. 5:5).
- Thus, the "heart," where moral and ethical decisions are made, is controlled by the Spirit.
- The primary characteristic of those who have a new life in Messiah is the presence of the Holy Spirit in their lives.

Romans 8:6–7

For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace, because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the Torah of God, for it is not even able to do so,

- The contrast between the believer & unbeliever
  - "old self" (unbelievers) is ruled by the flesh, resulting in death (separation from God & others).
  - The "new self" submits to the Spirit, resulting in life & peace.
    - ~ Life: now & in the world to come (Jn 10:10; Rom 6:23)
    - ~ Peace: peace with God (cf. 5:1)
    - ~ A hendiadys: "Life as it should be, as God intends"
  - unbeliever: "hostile toward God" – an enemy of God: any who try to defeat God will surely fail (=death, cf. 5:10; 11:28).
  - unbeliever: characterized by rebellion: an unwillingness to submit to, i.e., obey God's Torah.
  - unbeliever: lacks the ability to obey God's Torah
    - ~ Note the use of ἀνομία, *anomia*, "lawlessness," e.g., Matt 7:23.
  - Paul considered himself very "Torah observant" before coming to faith in Yeshua but after coming to faith he realized that previously he was in rebellion against God.
  - believer: characterized by a true desire to obey God's Torah.
  - believer: characterized by actually living a Torah obedient life.

Romans 8:8

and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

- The contrast between the believer & unbeliever
  - unbeliever: characterized by:
    - ~ inability to submit to God

~ inability to obey God, and therefore
~ inability to please God.

- Conclusion: apart from faith in the Messiah Yeshua and the work of the Ruach Who indwells every believer, it is impossible to please God.

Romans 8:9

However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Messiah, he does not belong to Him.

- The hallmark of saving faith is the abiding presence of the Spirit in the life of the child of God.
  - a growth in holiness = "not in the flesh"
  - becoming like Yeshua = "in the Spirit"
  - Paul equates "Spirit of God" and "Spirit of Messiah"
  - If the fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:22–23) is lacking in a person's life, he or she has no right to think that they belong to Yeshua.

The Fruit of the Spirit: Gal 5:22–23

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

- Love: *agapē* – "self-giving," the opposite of self-centered
- Joy: characteristic of a thankful heart
- Peace: characteristic of a trusting heart
- Patience: a trusting heart perseveres
- Kindness: generous, caring about others; living out the kindness one has received from God
- Goodness: positive moral qualities; integrity in all spheres of life
- Faithfulness: reliable; persevering under trials
- Gentleness: not being overly impressed by a sense of one's own self importance; humility; supportive
- Self-control: restraint of one's emotions, impulses, or desires in order to live and serve as God intends

Romans 8:10

If Messiah is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, yet the spirit is alive because of righteousness.

- Note how easily Paul equates the indwelling Ruach with the indwelling Messiah.
  - "Spirit of God dwells in you" – v. 9
  - "if anyone does not have the Spirit of Messiah" – v. 9
  - "Messiah is in you" – v. 10
- Paul, like the other Apostles, presumes the utter unity of the Godhead: Father, Messiah, and Spirit (Ruach)
- His point here is that Messiah Yeshua is with us and in us through the indwelling Ruach, for they are One.
- The interpretation of the final clause hinges on whether the word "spirit" refers to the immaterial part of man, i.e., "his spirit" or to the "Spirit of God."
  - The Greek favors taking "spirit" to mean the "Spirit of God." Literally (τὸ πνεῦμα ζωή) "the Spirit is life" = "the Spirit is the source of life." (Note ESV, NET)
  - Paraphrase: "If the Messiah is in you, on the one hand the body is destined to die because of sin, but on the other hand, the Spirit will bring life because you have been declared righteous (justified)."
- Note once again the unity of the Godhead:
  - 4:24 – "…those who believe in Him who raised Yeshua our Lord from the dead…"
  - Jn 10:18 – "…I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again."
  - Rom 8:11 – "Spirit of Him who raised Yeshua…"

Romans 8:11

But if the Spirit of Him who raised Yeshua from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Messiah Yeshua from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.

- The resurrection of Yeshua not only proved that He is the Messiah, but also through His having conquered death, He has assured the resurrection to eternal life for all who have the indwelling Ruach.
- The victory in Yeshua is clearly seen in that the death of the body (which is the result of sin) is temporal, while the indwelling Spirit guarantees eternal life.

But now Messiah has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who are asleep. For since by a man came death, by a man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Messiah all will be made alive. But each in his own order: Messiah the first fruits, after that those who are Messiah's at His coming… (1Cor 15:20–23)

A Study Through Paul's Epistle to the Romans
Romans 8:12–17

notes by Tim Hegg

Romans 8:12

So then, brethren, we are under obligation, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh…

- The opening "So then" refers back to the preceding context.
  - Paul is reminding us that we are no longer slaves to "the flesh," i.e., the sinful nature.
  - Having died with Messiah and risen to newness of life, we are no longer "slaves to sin" (cf. 6:6).
  - Paul expects us to "finish the sentence" – "…we are no longer under obligation to the flesh, to live according to the flesh, but under obligation to the Spirit, to live according to the Spirit."

knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin; (6:6)

I am speaking in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness, resulting in further lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness, resulting in sanctification. (6:19)

- Why would Paul think that believers in Yeshua would even think they had an obligation to the "flesh"?
  - Paul's use of the term "flesh" not only references the "sinful nature" which resides in every person, but also takes into account the unrighteousness which exist in the fallen world which appeals to the sinful nature to adopt its worldview and manner of life.
  - The world "appeals" to the sinful nature through:
    - ~ unsaved family members who consider a life of righteousness to be weird or even divisive.
    - ~ peer pressure within the society
    - ~ the "sliding scale" of right & wrong offered by worldly culture

Romans 8:13

for if you are living according to the flesh, you must die; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

- Paul reminds us of the clear difference between a believer and an unbeliever:
  - To live "according to the flesh" is to live in bondage to the sinful nature and conformity to the world. This is the characteristic of those who are dead in sin, i.e., the result of unbelief is death (separation from God).
  - "you must die" – better translation: "you are about to die" – death is the outcome of living in the flesh.
  - To live "by the Spirit" means to live by the power of the indwelling Spirit Who enables the believer to put to death the deeds of the sinful flesh.
  - To live by the power of the Spirit is the overall characteristic of all who are in Messiah.
  - "you will live" – contrasts with the previous "you are about to die"
  - The unbeliever is heading for eternal death, but the believer's final destination is eternal life.

Romans 8:14

For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.

- Paul affirms that the genuine mark that a person has been redeemed is that they are led by the Spirit.
  - "led by the Spirit of God" in general means living a life of holiness or putting to death the deeds of the flesh.
  - This is a cooperative effort between the Spirit and the believer.
  - "The daily, hourly putting to death of the schemings and enterprises of the sinful flesh by means of the Spirit is a matter of being led, directed, impelled, controlled by the Spirit." (C. E. B. Cranfield)

But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the the condemnation of the Torah. (Gal 5:16–18)

- Those whose lives are marked by the Spirit's leading to live righteously are "sons of God."
  - "sons of God" = בְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים (*b'nei Elohim*) and would be better translated as "children of God."
  - We who have come to saving faith in Yeshua have joined a new family with God as Father.

Romans 8:15

For you have not received a Spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a Spirit of adoption as sons by Whom we cry out, "Abba! Father!"

- Is Paul describing the human spirit or the Spirit of God in this verse?
- It seems best to understand Paul's words as describing the role of the Spirit of God in the life of the believer.
- All who have come to faith in Yeshua have received the Spirit of God Who indwells the believer.
- What is the role of the indwelling Spirit in the life of the believer?
  - to make the child of God fearful that he or she is not holy enough to merit God's love & salvation? **NO!!!**
  - to reassure the believer that he or she is and always will be loved and saved by their Father.
  - to draw the believer closer and closer to the Father by becoming more and more like Yeshua.
- Since we have been adopted into the family of God, we address the Father as our own Abba.
  - "cry out" (κράζειν, *krazein*) is found in the Lxx mostly in the Psalms to denote prayer.
  - Whether a deep, silent prayer or a loud call; whether of joy and thanksgiving, or call for help and comfort, we call to our Father knowing that He will always respond to our call.

Romans 8:16

The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God…

- The indwelling Spirit makes His presence known by an inward communication to our own spirit.
  - by assuring us of our true identity as children of God
  - by opening the Scriptures to us and helping us apply them to our own individual lives and situations

- comforting us by His very presence so that we are able all the more to put our trust in God regardless of our current situation

Romans 8:17

and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Messiah, if indeed we suffer with Him so that we may also be glorified with Him.

- Being adopted into God's family means that we are covenant members with God.
  - All of the covenant blessings promised by God to Abraham are ours in Yeshua.
  - The Spirit opens the Scriptures to us, helping us apply them to our own individual lives and situations.
  - The Spirit comforts us so that we are able all the more to trust God regardless of our current situation.
- Being children of God's family does not mean we are promised a life without suffering.
  - Persevering under trials is proof of our true faith.
  - If the world hated Yeshua, we too will be hated.
  - Enduring suffering for the sake of Messiah can be a powerful witness to others of His grace.

"If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, because of this the world hates you." (John 15:19)

"These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world." (John 16:33)

For what credit is there if, when you sin and are harshly treated, you endure it with patience? But if when you do what is right and suffer for it you patiently endure it, this finds favor with God. (1Pet. 2:20)

A Study Through Paul's Epistle to the Romans
Romans 8:18–25

notes by Tim Hegg

The Context

- Those who are "in Messiah" have been set free from the tyranny of the sinful flesh. We are no longer slaves to sin.
- We have been given the indwelling presence of the Ruach and are being sanctified by His gracious and faithful work within us.
- The presence of the Ruach is proof that we will be finally and completely redeemed from all of sin's effects.
- Our present struggle against the sinful nature is proof that we have been given a new heart.
- We experience the new life in Messiah now, but its fulness is hidden– yet to be revealed when Yeshua returns.

Romans 8:18

For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us.

- What are the "sufferings of this present time"?
  - note v. 17 – "…we suffer with Him so that we may also be glorified with Him."
  - suffering by identifying with Yeshua: "If the world hates you, you know that it has hated Me before it hated you." (Jn 15:18)
  - suffering the effects of the fallen world itself and the on-going struggle against the sinful nature.
- But our present suffering pales in the light of the glory which is ours in the world to come.

  Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day. For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. (2Cor 4:16–18)

Romans 8:19

For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God.

- "anxious longing" (ἀποκαραδοκία, *apokaradokia*) = "stretching the neck, craning forward" (cf. Phil 1:20)

- The whole created universe is personified here, stretching its neck to get a glimpse of the future in which the effects of sin will be swept away.
- Redemption encompasses the whole universe, even as mankind's sin affected the whole creation.
- We are already children of God, proven by the indwelling Ruach and our progress in holiness through His sanctifying power.
- We are fully assured of our position in God's family only through the exercise of our faith.
- Our sonship is veiled in part because of our weaknesses and the remaining sinful nature but will be fully revealed at the final judgment day.

Romans 8:20–21

For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God.

- The personified creation is passive and did not cause its subjugation to the affects of sin. It was mankind's rebellion against God that effected the creation's demise.
- "futility" (*mataiotēs*) is the same Greek word used in Qohelet to translate Hebrew *hevel*, "vapor."
- Thus, the fallen world is marked by entropy or decay. Things just don't last! "Birth" is inevitably followed by "death."

Nature's first green is gold,
Her hardest hue to hold.
Her early leaf's a flower;
But only so an hour.
Then leaf subsides to leaf,
So Eden sank to grief,
So dawn goes down to day
Nothing gold can stay.
(Robert Frost - "Nothing Gold Can Stay")

- God subjugated the physical world (that which He declared to be good) to corruption, but did so within the scope of His eternal purpose to return the universe to its original goodness.
- When the "children of God" are fully and finally freed from the affects of sin, then the creation itself will share in their freedom.

Romans 8:22

For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now.

- Everyone knows this simply by common observation and experience.
- We know it because the Scriptures teach us this is so.
- "Cursed is the ground because of you; in toil you will eat of it all the days of your life." (Gen 3:17)
- The promise of a "new heavens & earth" indicates that the present creation needs to be made new. (cf. Is 65:17; 66:22; 2Pet 3:13; Rev 21:1)
- The metaphor of labor pains gives the sense of hope and expectation for a new life.
- Thus, from God's perspective, the subjugation of the creation because of mankind's sin always had in view the final consummation guaranteed by Yeshua's victory over death.

Romans 8:23

And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body.

- Believers in Yeshua now possess the "first fruits of the Spirit," i.e., the indwelling presence of the Ruach HaKodesh, assuring us that our redemption is secure.
  - The "first fruits" assure the final harvest.
  - The presence of the Ruach in our lives is the guarantee of our full, eternal redemption.
- The final phrase contains a tension:
  - Are we not already "children of God"? Yes!
  - Have we not been adopted into God's family? Yes!
- Why then do we "groan" and "wait eagerly"?
  - Paul explains by adding "the redemption of our body."
  - In our present existence, we still are part of the fallen world which is marked by sin & death. Our full redemption is yet future.

And on this mountain He will swallow up the covering which is over all peoples, even the veil which is stretched over all nations. He will swallow up death for all time, and the Adonai יהוה will wipe tears away from all faces, and He will remove the reproach of His people from all the

earth; for יהוה has spoken. And it will be said in that day, "Behold, this is our God for whom we have waited that He might save us. This is יהוה for whom we have waited; Let us rejoice and be glad in His salvation." (Isaiah 25:7–9)

For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality. But when this perishable will have put on the imperishable, and this mortal will have put on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written, "death is swallowed up in victory." (1Cor 15:53–54)

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Yeshua Messiah, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Yeshua Messiah from the dead, to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. (1Peter 1:3–5)

Romans 8:24–25

For in hope we have been saved, but hope that is seen is not hope; for who hopes for what he already sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, with perseverance we wait eagerly for it.

- We have been saved (past tense) with a view to eternity.
- In saving us and giving us His Spirit, God has set within our hearts an unfading hope.
- "Hope" focuses on something not yet possessed.
  - The life of faith thus includes struggles and trials.
  - The assurance of eternal life produces perseverance.

Oh that day when freed from sinning
I shall see Thy lovely face.
Full arrayed in blood-washed linen
How I'll sing Thy sovereign grace!
Come, my Lord, no longer tarry;
Bring Thy promises to pass.
For I know Thy pow'r will keep me
Till I'm home with Thee at last!

words edited by Bob Kauflin
Original poem by Robert Robinson
"Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing"

A Study Through Paul's Epistle to the Romans
Romans 8:26–28

notes by Tim Hegg

Romans 8:26

In the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us *with groanings too deep for words;*

- "In the same way…," connects our verse with the previous context. But what is the comparison?
  - The best explanation is the repeated use of "groaning."
  - In vv. 22–23 Paul teaches us that the creation groans and that we groan within ourselves.
  - The Ruach also groans, sympathizing with us in our weaknesses & our inability to verbalize our needs.
- "…the Spirit also helps our weaknesses;"
  - the Greek word translated "helps" (only here & Lk 10:4) has the sense of "carry," "bear up," or "assist."
  - The meaning may well be that the Ruach "carries" our burdens and presents them before the Father.
- συναντιλαμβάνομαι (*sunantilambanomi*) in the Lxx

Then I will come down and speak with you there, and I will take of the Spirit who is upon you, and will put Him upon them; and <u>they shall bear</u> the burden of the people with you, so that you will not bear it all alone. (Num 11:17)

I have discovered David, my servant. With my holy oil I have anointed him as king. My hand <u>will support</u> him, and my arm will strengthen him. (Ps 89:20–21)

- Paul speaks of our weakness in regard to prayer.
- Our inability in prayer is that we often lack knowledge of how we ought to pray.
  - we are not always fully certain what the will of God is in a given situation.
  - Yet we desire to pray in concert with God's will.

- An example of our weakness in prayer:
  - I find myself in a very difficult situation:
    - ~ Should I pray that God would remove it?
    - ~ Should I pray God will give me strength to bear it?
    - ~ Has God brought the trial to teach me something I need to learn?
    - ~ Is the trouble an attack of the enemy?
- Another example:
  - Praying for a fellow believer who is in trouble:
    - ~ Should I pray that God would remove the trouble?
    - ~ Should I pray God will give him strength to bear it?
    - ~ Has God brought the trial to teach him something he needs to learn?
- When we are unable to know God's specific will in how we should pray, the Ruach intercedes for us:
  - We can be confident that the Ruach understands!
  - We must always pray with this in our hearts: "If the Lord wills…"

> *Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, and spend a year there and engage in business and make a profit." Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away. Instead, you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we will live and also do this or that."* (James 4:13–15)

- What is meant by "groanings too deep for words"?
  - The Greek actually has: "with groanings unspoken"
  - Some have tried to interpret this phrase as giving a basis for modern "tongues" – an ecstatic utterance of indistinguishable syllables in rapid speech.
  - But these groanings are silent, not spoken.
  - They belong to the Ruach, not to the one praying.
  - The Ruach intercedes to the Father, so His "groanings" are in heaven, not upon the earth.

Romans 8:27

- The Father, Who knows the secrets of a person's heart, is one with the Ruach.
- Therefore, the Ruach always intercedes for the believers in full unity with the divine will and purpose.
- Once again, Paul characterizes true believers as those whose lives are holy = "saints" (literally, "holy ones").

Praying in the Spirit

> *With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints,* (Eph 6:18)
>
> *But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting anxiously for the mercy of our Lord Yeshua Messiah to eternal life.* (Jude 1:20-21)

- What does it mean to "pray in the Spirit"?
  - It means to pray "by means of the Spirit."
  - This means praying as the Spirit directs and leads us.
  - But the Spirit does not always give us specific and detailed direction in every situation.
  - It is in these cases where we commit ourselves to trust His perfect intercession to the Father with "groanings not spoken."

Discerning the Spirit's Leading

The Holy Spirit	The Flesh / Satan
Emphasizes God's holiness	Emphasizes my worthlessness
Focuses my attention on God and His will in concert with Scripture	Focuses my attention toward myself and my feelings
Brings clarity: specifics	Brings confusion: generalities
Brings correction	Brings accusations
Brings conviction	Brings condemnation
Reveals unconfessed sin	Focuses on past sins already confessed
Encourages obedience and gives hope	Brings discouragement: no hope
Brings shalom in the midst of trials	Brings pressure and frustration

Romans 8:28

And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.

- "And we know…" – The fact that the Ruach intercedes for us according to the will of God means we can be assured that God's purpose will be realized in our lives.
- How do we know this? We know this by faith.
- This verse forms the bridge to the following context, so this is where we will begin in our next lesson.

It is a trustworthy statement:
For if we died with Him, we will also live with Him;
If we endure, we will also reign with Him;
If we deny Him, He also will deny us;
If we are faithless, He remains faithful,
for He cannot deny Himself.
2Timothy 2:11–13

notes by Tim Hegg

Romans 8:28

And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.

- Verse 28 is tied to the previous context, for Paul begins the verse with the conjunction "And".
  - v. 20 – creation subjected to futility
  - v. 22 – creation groans and suffers
  - v. 23 – we ourselves groan
  - v. 26 – the Spirit groans & intercedes for us
- "we know" – Paul uses this same phrase 4 other times in Romans (2:2; 3:19; 7:14; 8:22), each time for something he is certain the readers know and with which they agree.
- The Tanach consistently teaches God's sovereign control over the affairs of mankind:

  See now that I, I am He, and there is no god besides Me; It is I who put to death and give life. I have wounded and it is I who heal, and there is no one who can deliver from My hand. (Deut 32:39)

  The LORD has made everything for its own purpose, Even the wicked for the day of evil. (Prov 16:4)

  The king's heart is like channels of water in the hand of Adonai; He turns it wherever He wishes. (Prov 21:1)

  All the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing, But He does according to His will in the host of heaven And among the inhabitants of earth; And no one can ward off His hand Or say to Him, 'What have You done?' (Dan 4:35)

- The Apostolic Scriptures continue this emphasis:

  At that time Yeshua said, "I praise You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and intelligent and have revealed them to infants. (Matt 11:25)

The God who made the world and all things in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands; nor is He served by human hands, as though He needed anything, since He Himself gives to all people life and breath and all things; and He made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed times and the boundaries of their habitation…. (Acts 17:24–26)

For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen. (Rom 11:36)

- The question for us is: Could Paul say the same thing of us, that "we know" – meaning we believe and accept the complete sovereignty of God over all things?
  - Living in the reality of God's sovereignty does not diminish our responsibility to live righteously.
  - The "reaping/sowing" principle still applies.

"And we know that <u>God causes all things to work together</u> …"

- Why do the English translations differ on this phrase?
  - And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. (ESV)
  - And we know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose (NET)
  - We know that all things work together for the good of those who love God: those who are called according to His purpose. (HCSB)
  - And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. (NIV)

  - The reason for the different translation is a variant in the Greek manuscripts.
  - What is the subject of the verb "works together"?
  - Some manuscripts include the word "God" as the subject, but others have no clear subject for the verb.
  - The context (cf. v. 29) makes it clear that God is the subject of the verb "works together." He is the One causing things to work together for good.

- Why, then, isn't everything good? Why do followers of Yeshua still experience bad things in this life?
  - When all things work together for good, "good" means fulfilling God's ultimate plan.
  - For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts. (Isaiah 55:9)

"…<u>to those who love God</u>, to those who are called according to His" purpose.

- Actually, this phrase comes at the beginning of the verse in the Greek text:
  - (translation according to Greek order) - "And [but] we know that, to those who love God, all things God works together for good, *that is*, to those who are called according to His purpose."
  - Thus, the final phrase, "to those who are called…," further defines "those who love God."
- Why did Paul feel the necessity to add the final phrase, "to those who are called according to His purpose"?
  - Because some might conclude that "all things work together for good" depends upon how we love God.
  - What we learn is that our desire and ability to love God are the result of His having called us to Himself.
  - "We love *Him*, because He first loved us!" (1Jn 4:19)

Applications

- The truth of this verse sums up a major theme of Scripture: God's sovereign plan for His people is the foundation for our persevering in all situations.
- Even though we "groan within ourselves" as we await our full redemption, we can have real shalom as we rest in God's promises.
- Resting by faith in the knowledge that God is working all things for good gives us strength to live life to the fullest.

> *For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man, so that Messiah may dwell in your hearts through faith; and that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Messiah which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God. (Eph 4:14–19)*

Notes • Thoughts • Questions

A Study Through Paul's Epistle to the Romans
Romans 8:29–30

notes by Tim Hegg

Romans 8:28

And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.

- Review of v. 28 (seeing the connections in context)
  - God's sovereign designs for His universe are being accomplished and will be completed.
  - God is not passive but active in bringing all things to His appointed purpose.
  - The Father's ultimate purpose & design for the universe is to exalt His Son, Yeshua. – the Spirit groans & intercedes for us

He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him [Yeshua] with a view to an administration suitable to the fullness of the times, that is, the summing up of all things in Messiah, things in the heavens and things on the earth. (Eph 1:9–10)

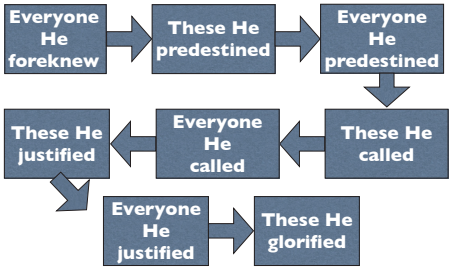
  - The whole scope and purpose of our salvation is to bring glory to God.

He predestined us to adoption as sons through Yeshua Messiah to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. (Eph 1:5–6)

Romans 8:29–30

He predestined us to adoption as sons through Yeshua Messiah to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved.

The Golden, Unbreakable Chain of God's Sovereign Grace



Romans 8:29

For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren;

- What does Paul mean by the term "foreknew"?
  - 1) that He looked into the future to see who would believe and who would not. Thus, to know about something before it happens (= pre-science)
  - 2) that from eternity He determined to establish covenant with those whom He chose to be His.
- Why option #1 cannot be what Paul means:
  - the grammar makes this clear: the object of the verb "foreknew" is "those."
  - Thus, here Paul is saying that God foreknew people, not what people would do or be.
- But what does it mean that God "foreknew" people?
  - the word "foreknew" is based upon the common Greek word γινώσκω (*ginōskō*), "to know."
  - In semitic or Hebrew culture, to "know" someone means to have covenant relationship with them.
  - To "foreknow" means to enact a covenant relationship in advance.

"Know" = Covenant Relationship

Now Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain, saying, "I have gotten a man with the help of Adonai." (Gen 4:1, ESV)

"For I have chosen him [literally "known him"], so that he may command his children and his household after him to keep the way of Adonai by doing righteousness and justice, so that Adonai may bring upon Abraham what He has spoken about him." (Gen 18:19)

"They will not teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, 'Know Adonai,' for they will all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them," declares Adonai, "for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more." (Jer 31:34)

You only have I chosen [literally "known"] among all the families of the earth; Therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities. (Amos 3:2)

- Thus, "those whom He foreknew" means:
  - that from all eternity God set His love upon those whom He would save.
  - that from all eternity God committed Himself to save those He had chosen from every nation, tribe, family, and language.
  - that God committed Himself in covenant to those whom He would give eternal life.
- *those whom He foreknew*: God's covenant commitment to save those upon whom He has set His love.
- *predestined to become conformed to the image of His So*n: the pre-ordained means by which God saves those whom He has chosen; pre-arranging all things to work together to bring about conformity to Yeshua in the lives of the elect.
- The salvation of the elect is not primarily for their own comfort or safety, but for the glory of Yeshua.
- Yeshua as firstborn:
  - having the pre-eminance; an exalted position
  - unique; the first among many
  - Our being conformed to the image of Yeshua is the primary means by which we give Him glory.

Romans 8:30

and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified.

- *these … He also called*:
  - This is the effectual call of God through the work of His Ruach, opening the heart of the elect to receive the Gospel and believe in Yeshua.
  - All who are called in this manner respond positively.
- *these … He also justified*:
  - Through the work of the Ruach, the elect respond positively to the Gospel, repenting of their sin and exercising faith in Yeshua.
  - As such, they are justified before God, i.e., they are declared to be righteous by God Himself.

- *these ... He also glorified*:
  - To be glorified means to be resurrected to eternal life; to have gained immortality, never again to be confronted with death or dying.
  - That Paul states this in past tense (aorist) means that our glorification, though future, is as sure as if it had already taken place.

God is not a man, that He should lie,
Nor a son of man, that He should repent;
Has He said, and will He not do it?
Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?
(Num 23:19)

For as many as are the promises of God,
in Him they are yes; therefore also through Him
is our Amen to the glory of God through us.
(2Cor 1:20)

A Study Through Paul's Epistle to the Romans
Romans 8:31–32

notes by Tim Hegg

Romans 8:28–32

And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren; and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified. What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?

- From all eternity God set Himself to save an innumerable host of people in accordance with His holiness, justice, and love.
- His plan of salvation began in eternity past (foreknew; predestined), is being accomplished in the present (called, justified), and will be completed in the future, in the world-to-come (glorified).

Romans 8:31

What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us?

- "these things" refers to the works of God by which He brings about His plan to save His elect ones; those grand truths enumerated in the previous context.
- Paul asks us to consider the obvious conclusion derived from the truths he has just listed.
- "If God is for us"should be understood to mean "Since God is for us."
- What does Paul mean by "for us" (ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν, *huper hēmōn*). The same language is used in Mk 9:40 "For he who is not against us is for us."
- "against us" means "not on our side"; "for us" means "on our side."
- Thus, when Paul says God is "for us," he means that God is "on our side."

- How is God "on our side"? He is for us
  - in His foreknowing us (covenant)
  - in His predestinating us to be like Yeshua (holiness)
  - in His calling us (relationship)
  - in His justifying us (mercy & grace)
  - in His glorifying us (gift of eternal life)
- "Who is against us?" means "Who can prevail against us?" or "Who could overcome us and cause our ultimate defeat?"
  - This is a rhetorical question with the implied answer being "No one!"
  - The victory won for the elect by Yeshua in His death, resurrection, ascension, and intercession is secure.

Romans 8:32

He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?

- Paul has the Akedah (the binding of Isaac) in mind:

Genesis 22:12, 16 (Lxx)	Romans 8:32
οὐκ ἐφείσω τοῦ υἱοῦ σου τοῦ ἀγαπητοῦ δι᾽ ἐμέ.	ὅς γε τοῦ ἰδίου υἱοῦ οὐκ ἐφείσατο
"…did not spare your son, the one you love, on My account."	"He is own Son did not spare."

  - Abraham, Isaac's father, did not spare his son but had bound him upon the altar and as ready to take his life.
  - God intervened and spared Isaac by providing the ram.
  - But when God the Father bound His Son, Yeshua, there was no one who could stop the inevitable.
  - Yeshua's death was determined from the beginning.
- "delivered Him over" – the same language is found in the Lxx of Is 53:6, 12.

  All we as sheep have gone astray; every one has gone astray in his way; and the Lord delivered Him up for our sins. (v. 6)
  Therefore He shall inherit many, and He shall divide the spoils of the mighty; because His soul was delivered up to death: and He was numbered among the transgressors; and He bore the sins of many, and was delivered up because of their iniquities. (v. 12)

- "delivered Him over for us all" – The Greek has "for us all" at the beginning of the clause, giving it emphasis.
- Paul is emphasizing the fact that the Father had a purpose in delivering His Son to the cross.
- Did the Father achieve that purpose in Yeshua's death and resurrection?

The Father's Goal in the Cross

But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, And by His scourging we are healed. (Is 53:5)

As a result of the anguish of His soul, He will see light and be satisfied; By His knowledge the Righteous One, My Servant, will justify the many, as He will bear their iniquities. (Is 53:11)

The Purpose for Yeshua's Incarnation

For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost. (Lk 19:10)

The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly. (Jn 10:10)

He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. (1Cor 5:21)

But Did Yeshua's Death Just Make Salvation Possible?

Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the ekklesia of God which He purchased with His own blood. (Acts 20:28)

Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body. (1Cor 6:19–20)

When you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions, having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us, which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. (Col 2:13–14)

And they sang a new song, saying, "Worthy are You to take the book and to break its seals; for You were slain, and purchased for God with Your blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation. (Rev 5:9)

- These texts (and many more) teach that Yeshua made salvation of the elect inevitable, not simply possible.
- This is also what our Romans text teaches:

He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all,
how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?

- The argument is *kal v'chomer*, "light and heavy" (*a fortiori* in the language of logic).
  - If God gave His Son, the supreme gift, to die for those He had foreknown, surely He will supply everything needed to bring His elect to Himself in fulness.
  - Everyone for whom Yeshua died receives from God everything necessary to assure eternal salvation.

- "freely give" – the Greek has χαρίζομαι, *charizoma*i, "to give freely as a favor; to cancel a debt; to forgive."
- The rest of the sentence favors the meaning "to give freely as a favor," since "with Him" is added.
- In the same way that the Father gave the Son as an act of His grace, so He gives all things necessary to those whom He is saving.
- Thus, all things necessary for our sanctification, our growth and persevering in faith, as well as our final redemption, are all freely given to us by God.
- He therefore receives all the glory for our salvation.

For from Him and through Him
and to Him are all things.
To Him be the glory forever.
Amen.
(Romans 11:36)

A Study Through Paul's Epistle to the Romans
Romans 8:33–34

notes by Tim Hegg

The Context (Romans 8:28–32)

And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren; and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified. What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?

- v. 28 – God has planned all things and is working out all things for His family whom He has chosen and called to be His own.
- v. 29 – Foreknew: His purpose in establishing covenant relationship with the elect is so that His Son, Yeshua, would receive the glory of having many siblings who are like Him.
- v. 30 – Predestined: Throughout earth's history, and within the individual lives of the elect, God is arranging all things to bring about His purpose.
- Called: God sovereignly prepared the heart of each of those He foreknew so that they would come to repentance and receive the Good News of Yeshua.
- Justified: Having believed the Good News and, by faith, received Yeshua as their Savior, God declared them "not guilty" – as righteous before Him.
- Glorified: Therefore, the eternal destiny of the elect is assured. They will forever stand as proof of God's sovereign love and grace, giving glory to Him.
- v. 31–32 – Proof of this: If God gave the supreme gift of His Son, then surely this proves His determination to fulfill His plan of salvation.
- Therefore, He will supply everything necessary for His chosen ones to obtain eternal life.

Romans 8:33

Who will bring a charge against God's elect? God is the one who justifies.

- In the previous verses, Paul has focused attention upon
  - the work of God on behalf of His chosen people
  - the work of God in the individual believer
- He has proven that
  - God, in all of His omnipotence, is for us.
  - The believer cannot "fall away" or "be eternally lost"
- Now Paul gives a challenge to any other being in the whole universe!
- This is like a law-court scene: "Is there any one else who can prove the defendant guilty?"
- Note carefully the precise terms Paul uses here: he does not say:
  - "Who will bring a charge against someone who has placed their faith in Yeshua?"
  - "Who will bring a charge against someone who is living a life of righteousness?"
- Rather, he says "Who will bring a charge against God's elect?"
  - Calling believers in Yeshua "God's elect" emphasizes the sovereign and thus successful work of God to accomplish His plan of salvation.
  - Those who are chosen must be eternally saved because God has determined this to be so.

God is the One Who justifies

- The answer to the question is stated: "God is the one who justifies!"
  - "justifies" = present participle (ὁ δικαιῶν, *ho dikaiōn*)
  - God is the justifier; justifying sinners is what He does.
  - Paul's final statement on justification: God makes us righteous. It is His work, not ours.
  - God makes the plan; works the plan; sits as judge; sees the sinner's debt is paid in full, declares the sinner to be "not guilty"; then declares the sinner to be as righteous as His own Son, Yeshua.
  - Who dares contradict the word of the Judge of all the universe?!

Romans 8:34

> *Who is the one who condemns? Messiah Yeshua is He who died, yes, rather who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us.*

- Yet a second time the challenge is given: "Who can rightfully overturn the verdict of the Almighty God?
- Who can condemn those God has chosen to save?
- Any who might think to condemn one of the elect are met with 4 aspects of Messiah's work on behalf of those who are being saved.
- "Messiah": appointed as redeemer from all eternity
- "Yeshua": "He will save His people from their sins" (Matt 1:21)
- **1.** "He Who died": an actual payment of the debt of sin for those whom He would save.
- "yes, rather…" – Paul cannot speak of the death of Yeshua without having in mind His resurrection.
- **2.** The resurrection of Yeshua forever affirmed the worth of His death.
- His death fully satisfied divine justice: "the wages of sin is death." (Rom 6:23)
- **3.** "Who is at the right hand" – This phrase expresses the Semitic idea of power and authority.
- The application to Yeshua is based upon Ps 80:17 and 110:1

> *Let Your hand be upon the man of Your right hand, upon the son of man whom You made strong for Yourself.* (Ps 80:17[18])

> *Adonai says to my Lord: "Sit at My right hand until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet."* (Ps 110:1)

- The posture of "sitting" at the right hand of Adonai emphasizes that Yeshua has finished His work of offering Himself as a sacrifice for sinners.
- The earthly priests never sat down in the course of their priestly duties because they were never finished; there were no articles of furniture for sitting.

But what about Stephen's vision of Yeshua?

> *But being full of the Holy Spirit, he gazed intently into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Yeshua standing at the right hand of God;* (Acts 7:55)

- Here we see Yeshua standing, a metaphor of activity.
- Thus, His sitting is a metaphor of being finished with the work of sacrifice, but His standing pictures His current and ongoing work of intercession.
- "at the right hand" emphasizes the authority and power of Yeshua to accomplish full redemption for the elect.
- His ascension is necessary in order to fulfill His role as Intercessor.
- His presence with us now is via the Ruach HaKodesh.
- **4.** "Who also intercedes for us"
  - Intercession means that Yeshua acts as our representative and advocate in the divine throne room.
  - He presents the value of His sacrifice on behalf of His people as full payment for their sins.

Yeshua's Heavenly Intercession

> *Therefore He is able also to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.* (Heb 7:25)

> *For Messiah did not enter a holy place made with hands, a mere copy of the true one, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us;* (Heb 9:24)

> *My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Yeshua the Messiah, the righteous One.* (1John 2:1)



> *The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the Torah; but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Yeshua Messiah. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord.* (1Cor 15:56–58)

A Study Through Paul's Epistle to the Romans
Romans 8:35–37

notes by Tim Hegg

The Context (Romans 8:34)



Who is the one who condemns? Messiah is He who died, yes, rather who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us. (Rom 8:34)

Yeshua's Intercession for Us

- Does John 17 give us the pattern of Yeshua's heavenly intercession?
  - His prayer was in the garden of Gethsemane. But note His words in Jn 17:4, "I glorified You on the earth, having accomplished the work which You have given Me to do."
  - Now consider Jn 17:11, "I am no longer in the world; and yet they themselves are in the world, and I come to You."
  - It seems clear that Yeshua is thinking beyond the cross, beyond His resurrection, and is approaching the Father as though He has already ascended to a place of ultimate and universal authority.
  - Let's look at His seven petitions to the Father, petitions which characterize His current intercession for us.

1. "Father, the hour has come; glorify Your Son, that the Son may glorify You, even as You gave Him authority over all flesh, that to all whom You have given Him, He may give eternal life." (Jn 17:1–2)

2. "Holy Father, keep them in Your name, the name which You have given Me, that they may be one even as We are." (Jn 17:11)

3. "I do not ask You to take them out of the world, but to keep them from the evil one." (Jn 17:15)

4. "Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth." (Jn 17:17)

5. "I do not ask on behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word; that they may all be one; even as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us, so that the world may believe that You sent Me." (Jn 17:20–21)

6. "Father, I desire that they also, whom You have given Me, be with Me where I am, so that they may see My glory which You have given Me, for You loved Me before the foundation of the world." (17:24)

7. "I have made Your name known to them, and will make it known, so that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them." (17:26)

The Law Court Scene

- 2:1–16, The whole human raced faces judgment before God without hope of any defense.
- 3:19–20, Both Jew and Gentile stand guilty before the Judge without hope of acquittal.
- 8:28–34, Now we look around for possible accusers and find none!
  - "Who will bring a charge against God's elect?" - (Silence)
  - "Who is the one who condemns?" - (Silence)
- But could circumstances change? Could I end up denying God and therefore become guilty and condemned?
  - "Who will separate us from the love of Messiah?"
  - The rest of the chapter gives the answer: "No one!"

Romans 8:35

Who will separate us from the love of Messiah? Will tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

- The word "separate" (χωρίζω, *chōrizō*) is sometimes used to depict divorce:
  - "What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate." (Matt 19:6)
  - We are joined together with God through the New Covenant which is unconditional.
- The covenant between the believer and God is secure because it is guaranteed by the Ruach (Rom 5:5; Eph 1:14).
- "Love of Messiah" = Messiah's love for us
  - He died for us; He rose again for us; He ascended for us; He ever lives to make intercession for us.
  - "the love of Messiah" = "the love of God"

- "and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us." (Rom 5:5)
- "…(nothing) will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Messiah Yeshua our Lord." (Rom 8:39)
- Here, once again, we see the mystery of plurality within the infinite and eternal oneness of God.
- tribulation: trouble that brings distress which one does not cause nor have control over.
- distress: difficulties that are part of living in a fallen world.
- persecution: being harmed for one's beliefs
- famine: lacking the very things necessary to sustain life
- nakedness: lacking the bare essentials for normal living
- peril: being in dangerous circumstances:

> *"I have been on frequent journeys, in dangers from rivers, dangers from robbers, dangers from my countrymen, dangers from the Gentiles, dangers in the city, dangers in the wilderness, dangers on the sea, dangers among false brethren;" (2Cor 11:26)*

- sword: war and all of the devastation that it brings
- The whole list covers the gamut of difficulties and troubles we experience in our fallen world.
- Are we being punished when we experience these kinds of things?

Romans 8:36

> *Just as it is written, "FOR YOUR SAKE WE ARE BEING PUT TO DEATH ALL DAY LONG; WE WERE CONSIDERED AS SHEEP TO BE SLAUGHTERED."*

- Paul quotes Ps 44:22 to show that he is not talking about divine punishment.

> *These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world. (Jn 16:33)*
>
> *For you have been called for this purpose, since Messiah also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps, (1Pet. 2:21)*

Romans 8:37

But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us.

- Rather than being separated from the love of Messiah through the worst experiences possible in life, we come through them victorious because of Yeshua's death, resurrection, ascension, and on-going intercession on our behalf.
- "through Him" – our victory is not because of our own strength but through the strength given to us by Yeshua through the indwelling Ruach.
- This is the perfect picture of God's method of sanctification:
  - He equips us, giving us the ability & strength to conquer.
  - Yet we must do the conquering.

"I have been crucified with Messiah;
and it is no longer I who live, but Messiah lives in me;
and the life which I now live in the flesh
I live by faith in the Son of God,
who loved me and gave Himself up for me."
Galatians 2:20

A Study Through Paul's Epistle to the Romans
Romans 8:38–39

notes by Tim Hegg

The Context: The Eternal Salvation of the Elect



Romans 8:35–37

> *Who will separate us from the love of Messiah? Will tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Just as it is written, "for your sake we are being put to death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered." But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us.*

Romans 8:38–39

> *For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Messiah Yeshua our Lord.*

For I am convinced …

- "convinced" translates the Greek *peithō* which can have the sense of "to be persuaded," "to be certain of something" or even "to be convinced so that one puts their trust in something or someone."

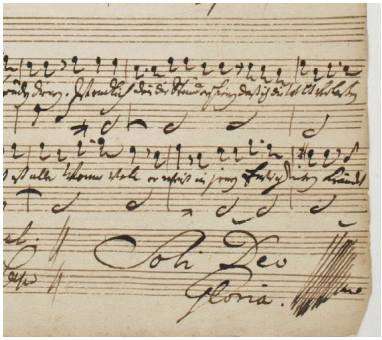
> *I know and am convinced in the Lord Yeshua that nothing is unclean in itself; but to him who thinks anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean. (Rom 14:14)*

> *And concerning you, my brethren, I myself also am convinced that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge and able also to admonish one another. (Rom 15:14)*

For I am mindful of the sincere faith within you, which first dwelt in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice, and I am sure that it is in you as well. (2Tim 1:5)

For this reason I also suffer these things, but I am not ashamed; for I know whom I have believed and I am convinced that He is able to guard what I have entrusted to Him until that day. (2Tim 1:12)

- This last sense, of a surety that brings a settled trust, fits our context: the gift of faith given to Paul had brought a settled conviction that what God had said was true and could be relied upon.
- Spiritual Inventory: How is my faith being strengthened?
  - Do I have the habit of prayer?
  - Do I have the habit of meditating in the Scriptures?
  - Is my life centered upon God or upon the world?



Soli Deo Gloria
"to God alone be the glory"

...neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing

- V. 35 listed things which exist and occur in our world.
- Now Paul draws our attention to that which exists beyond our world.

death – life
angels – principalities
things present – things to come

powers
height – depth
any other created thing

- death – life
  - Death brings separation which brings true sorrow.
    ~ Yet we know that while death is a sorrowful event, for those who are in Messiah, to be absent from this life means to be present with the Messiah.
    ~ It is this truth that strengthens us in this life.

Therefore, being always of good courage, and knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord — for we walk by faith, not by sight — we are of good courage, I say, and prefer rather to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord. (2Cor 2:6–8)

for if we live, we live for the Lord, or if we die, we die for the Lord; therefore whether we live or die, we are the Lord's.
For to this end Messiah died and lived again, that He might be Lord both of the dead and of the living. (Rom 14:8–9)

- angels – principalities
  - This two-word designation would seem to indicate that there exists a ranking among angels, some having more authority than others.
    ~ Used in early Jewish writings (1Enoch 61:10)

And He will summon all the host of the heavens, and all the holy ones above, and the host of God, the Cherubim, Seraphim and Ophannim, and all the angels of power, and all the angels of principalities, and the Elect One, and the other powers on the earth (and) over the water. (1Enoch 61:10)

~ Regardless of whether good or evil, no cosmic power can ever separate the believer from God's love.

- things present – things to come
  - When current events are bad, people tend to create even worse scenarios for the future.
  - For a person without faith, the unknown future can bring significant worry, stress, and anxiety.
  - "I don't know what the future holds, but I know Who holds the future!" – Faith in God brings shalom.

- powers nor height nor depth nor any other created thing
  - Now Paul concludes by opening the possibilities to any power or authority,
    - ~ wherever they may reside
    - ~ whatever their power may be
    - ~ any created being

- … will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Messiah Yeshua our Lord.
  - Nothing in this created universe can separate the child of God from the love of God!
  - Here again we see that the love of God guarantees the eternal salvation of those loved.
  - This love of God is active through the work of His Son, Yeshua Who is our Lord.

Even though I walk through the valley of the
shadow of death, I fear no evil,
for You are with me;
Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.
You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;
You have anointed my head with oil;
My cup overflows.
Surely goodness and lovingkindness
will follow me all the days of my life,
And I will dwell in the house of Adonai forever.
Psalm 23:4–6

A Study Through Paul's Epistle to the Romans
Romans 9:1–3

notes by Tim Hegg

Romans Chapters 9–11: Introduction

- Do these chapters interrupt Paul's current teaching, i.e., the doctrine of salvation which has been his subject from chapter 4 through chapter 8?
- How do these chapters fit within the larger message of Romans?

Romans 9–11: An Interruption?

- Some commentators have suggested that chapters 9–11 were added later or even written by someone other than Paul, because they seem to interrupt the theme of chapters 4–8, and even more, the conclusion of ch. 8 seems to fit perfectly with the opening verse of ch. 12.

  (8:38–39) For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Messiah Yeshua our Lord.

  Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. (12:1)

Chapters 9–11: Not an Interruption

- At the beginning of Romans Paul makes it clear that the Gospel is "to the Jew first and also to the Greek" (1:16)
  - This means the salvation of the Jews and Israel is an essential element of the Gospel.
  - Any form of the "Gospel" which excludes God's eternal promises to the descendants of Jacob is deficient and not the "Goodnews" of the Bible.
- In 1:5, Paul indicates that one of his primary purposes in this epistle was to call Gentile believers to the "obedience of the faith."
  - This "obedience" was not something new but is the very obedience of the faith taught in the Tanach.
  - Calling Gentiles to the "obedience of the faith" could have been construed to mean that they were replacing disobedient Israel in God's plan.
  - Therefore, Paul gives us these three chapters as a necessary corrective for such a conclusion.

- But if the ingathering of those chosen from the nations was not to replace Israel in God's plan, what would be the relationship between the remnant of Israel, the believing Gentiles, and the nation of Israel at large?
  - Paul writes these three chapters to answer this question.
  - He points to the difference between the temporal and eternal blessings contained in the covenant.
  - He explains the process of engrafting and the essential role of faith in the Messiah Yeshua.
- Paul's bold statements regarding God's method of saving sinners requires an explanation regarding Israel.
  - If the one whom God has chosen to salvation will ever be separated from His love, what about Israel?
    ~ God chose Israel (Ps 135:4; Amos 3:2).

    For Adonai has chosen Jacob for Himself, Israel for His own possession. (Ps 135:4)
    You only have I chosen among all the families of the earth; Therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities. (Amos 3:2)

    ~ God declared His love for Israel (1Ki 10:9)

    Blessed be Adonai your God who delighted in you to set you on the throne of Israel; because Adonai loved Israel forever, therefore He made you king, to do justice and righteousness. (1Kings 10:9)

    ~ Now Israel has rejected God's Messiah.
    ~ Doesn't this prove that someone God loves can still be separated from Him?
    ~ NO! And so Paul spends three chapters explaining God's faithfulness to wayward Israel.

Romans 9:1–3

I am telling the truth in Messiah, I am not lying, my conscience testifies with me in the Holy Spirit, that I have great sorrow and unceasing grief in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were accursed, separated from Messiah for the sake of my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh,

- The word order in the Greek is: "truth I am speaking in Messiah."
  - This would mean "the truth as one finds it in Messiah," i.e., the truth which Paul himself knew because of His having come to faith in Messiah.
  - Thus, Paul is giving his personal testimony, expressing what he knows to be true through his own walk of faith.

- Why does he feel the necessity to add this phrase?
  - Perhaps some people remembered the "old Shaul" who was an enemy of The Way.
  - More than likely the phrase is added for emphasis, perhaps akin to taking an oath.

"I'm not lying"

For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? Or am I striving to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a bond-servant of Messiah. (Gal 1:10)

The God and Father of the Lord Yeshua, He who is blessed forever, knows that I am not lying. (2Cor 11:31)

For this I was appointed a preacher and an apostle (I am telling the truth, I am not lying) as a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth. (1Tim. 2:7)

"my conscience testifies with me in the Holy Spirit…"

- Paul appeals to the Torah requirement for evidence, i.e., two or three witnesses (Num 35:30; Deut 17:6)
  - The witnesses are not for others to believe his words
  - The witnesses (his own conscience + the Ruach) are for Paul himself, to prove to him what is true.
  - This matter is not something Paul just "felt" or "hoped for." It was confirmed by the Ruach.

"…that I have great sorrow and unceasing grief in my heart."

- Paul grieved over the fact that many of his own people had rejected and continued to reject Yeshua as a false messiah.
- The repeated language, "great sorrow" / "unceasing grief" adds heightened emphasis to Paul's words.
- His grief is over the lost condition of his fellow Jews.

"For I could wish that I myself were accursed, separated from Messiah for the sake of my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh,"

- "wish" could also be translated "pray."
- The Greek might be understood to mean: "For I would pray (were it permissible for me so to pray and if the fulfillment of such a prayer could benefit them")…."
- Though impossible (for no one who is chosen can be separated from God's love), Paul uses similar language as Moses (Ex 32:32) –

But now, if You will, forgive their sin — and if not, please blot me out from Your book which You have written! (Ex 32:32)

- "brethren" – in the temporal sense, they are members of the covenant.
- But since "brethren" is regularly used of believers in Yeshua, whether Jewish or non-Jewish, Paul adds "kinsman according to the flesh" to designate Jews.
- Thus Paul recognizes lineage as important in order for the faithfulness of God to be recognized in history.

Summary & Conclusion

- Paul had been accused of forsaking the Torah and thus also of forsaking his people Israel (Acts 21:21f).
- In these opening verses, he wants us to know for certain that nothing could be further from the truth.
- For Paul, God could never abandoned Israel because to do so would be for Him to act contrary to His eternal, infinitely holy nature.
- Chapters 9–11 were written to show that God is always faithful to His word.

Now the angel of Adonai came up from Gilgal to Bochim.
And he said, "I brought you up out of Egypt
and led you into the land which I have sworn
to your fathers; and I said,
'I will never break My covenant with you…
Judges 2:1

A Study Through Paul's Epistle to the Romans
Romans 9:4–5

notes by Tim Hegg

The Context: Romans 9:3

For I could wish that I myself were accursed, separated from Messiah for the sake of my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh,

- Paul has used specific language to designate the Jewish people, those who possess physical lineage from Jacob.
- It is with this in mind that we continue with our study of vv. 4 & 5.

Romans 9:4

who are Israelites, to whom belongs the adoption as sons, and the glory and the covenants and the giving of the Torah and the temple service and the promises,

who are Israelites…

- "Israelite"
  - originally used to denote the whole nation of Israel
  - "Then you shall say to Pharaoh, 'Thus says Adonai, "Israel is My son, My firstborn."'" (Ex 4:22)
  - From 722 BCE on, the name "Israel" was applied to the southern kingdom of Judah:
  - *For the vineyard of Adonai of hosts is the house of Israel and the men of Judah His delightful plant.* (Is 5:7)
  - "Israel" and "Jew" were interchangeable in the Apostolic era:
  - *Pilate questioned Him, "Are You the King of the Jews?" And He answered him, "It is as you say."* (Mk 15:2)
  - *In the same way the chief priests also, along with the scribes, were mocking Him among themselves and saying, "He saved others; He cannot save Himself. Let this Messiah, the King of Israel, now come down from the cross….* (Mk 15:31–32)

to whom belongs the adoption as sons…

- This emphasizes the corporate election Israel
  - God reveals Himself to Israel as "Father" and adopts Israel as His firstborn (Ex 4:22).
  - Israel does not have sonship naturally, but as the result of God's grace in choosing the seed of Jacob to be His covenant people.

- Even though Paul views Israel as existing in unbelief, Israel is still the rightful, adopted son who remains God's adopted firstborn.
- Note the present tense: "to whom belongs…," not "belonged."

and the glory…

- This refers to the visible presence of God, the Shekinah
  - The outshining of God's glory on Sinai
  - In the Mishkan and wilderness journey
  - In the Temple
  - At the birth of Yeshua
  - On the mountain with Yeshua's disciples
- God's special revelation of Himself was first to Israel
  - Israel was to be His servant to take this revelation to the nations.
  - The glory of God was to be made know to all through the proclamation of the Gospel.

and the covenants…

- God chose Israel to be His covenant partner with whom He established the:
  - Abrahamic covenant
  - Mosaic Covenant (the Torah at Sinai)
  - Davidic Covenant (eternal dynasty of David)
  - New Covenant (Jer 31:31–34)
- All of the covenants work together to bring the "promise," that is, the final redemption in Yeshua.

> *...you were at that time separate from Messiah, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Messiah Yeshua you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Messiah.* (Eph 2:12–13)

and the giving of the Torah…

- Literally "the legislation," but by this term (used only here in the Apostolic Scriptures) Paul clearly is referring to the giving of the Torah at Sinai.
- That Paul includes "the giving of the Torah" in this list of God's gifts to Israel makes it clear that Paul viewed the Torah as a divine blessing.

and the Temple service…

- Literally "the worship" or "the service," but since Paul includes the article ("the worship") it seems clear that he is referring to the worship or service of the Temple.

- This means Paul considered the Temple service to be a divinely ordained mode of worship, including sacrifices.
- This must also mean that Paul saw the Temple service as revealing the work of the Messiah.

and the promises…

- The plural (which has the greater weight of manuscript evidence) takes into account the promises God has made to Israel in the covenants, culminating in the primary promise of the Messiah.
- The history of Israel proves the faithfulness of God in maintaining His covenant promises.

Romans 9:5

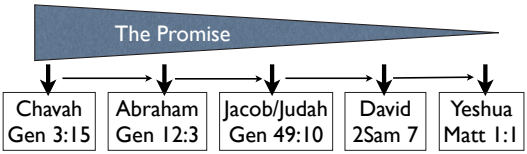
whose are the fathers, and from whom is the Messiah according to the flesh, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen.

whose are the fathers…

- This references the covenant established with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, which was the basis for Israel's exodus from Egypt.
- *So God heard their groaning; and God remembered His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.* (Ex 2:24)
- It also emphasizes that Abraham, the first of the Patriarchs, stands as the model of true faith:
  - *For this reason it is by faith, in order that it may be in accordance with grace, so that the promise will be guaranteed to all the descendants, not only to those who are of the Torah, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all.* (Rom 4:16)

and from whom is the Messiah according to the flesh…

- The "promise" of the Messiah is first found in Gen 3:15 and comes to completion in the birth of Yeshua in Bethlehem:



The record of the genealogy of Yeshua the Messiah, the son of David, the son of Abraham. (Matt 1:1)

- In His incarnation, Yeshua is an Israelite, a Jew, with physical lineage to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.
- "according to the flesh" is the same phrase Paul uses to describe his Jewish brothers and sisters in v. 3.

- Once again, the full humanity of Yeshua is affirmed in the inspired Scriptures.

  Who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen
- Ancient Greek had no punctuation, so the comma in our English translations is interpretive.
  - "Who (i.e., Messiah") is over all (and He is) God Who is blessed forever."
  - "Who (i.e., Messiah) is over all! May God be blessed forever."
  - "God (i.e., the Father), Who is over all, may He be blessed forever!"
  - "to whom (i.e., Israel) belongs the God Who is over all, blessed forever."
  - "who is God over all, blessed forever. Amen" (ESV, NET)
  - "who is God over all, forever praised! Amen." (NIV)
  - "who is over all. Praised be ADONAI for ever! Amen." (CJB)
  - "who is God over all, praised forever. Amen." (HCSB)
- Both the grammar as well as the context favors the meaning "Who (i.e., Messiah") is over all (and He is) God Who is blessed forever."
  - Having affirmed the complete humanity of Yeshua, Paul reinforces his sorrow (v. 2) by emphasizing that in rejecting Yeshua, Israel has failed to receive God's Messiah.
  - Here, once again, we see the Apostolic teaching affirming the mystery of the incarnation, that Yeshua is fully man and fully God.

Application

- Paul opens this section (chapters 9–11) by reinforcing the fact that the nation of Israel remains the recipient of God's blessings in spite of the fact that as a nation they have rejected God's Messiah, Yeshua.
- Having made this clear, he now will go on to explain the mystery of God's saving plan, a plan that encompasses both Israel and the nations.
- In addressing the non-Jewish believers, Paul wants them to know that Israel's rejection of Yeshua does not mean:
  - that God has been unfaithful to His promise
  - that Israel has been forever rejected
  - that Israel should be despised by those (both Jews and non-Jews) who have confessed Yeshua as Messiah
- The final doxolgy ("…God Who is blessed forever. Amen") thus stands as the proper response:
  - God is working out His plan
  - His plan includes both Israel and the nations
  - He is to be blessed even when His ways are beyond our ability to comprehend or explain.

A Study Through Paul's Epistle to the Romans
Romans 9:6–13

notes by Tim Hegg

Romans 9:6

But it is not as though the word of God has failed. For they are not all Israel who are descended from Israel;

- Paul reminds us of the primary issue at hand: the faithfulness of God to His covenant promises.
- Here the phrase "word of God" relates primarily to the covenant He made with Abraham.
- That "the word of God" does not fail can likewise be applied to all of Scripture.
- Here is a good example of how the proper noun "Israel" is used of both an individual and a nation.
  - "they are not all Israel" = national; covenant nation
  - "who are descended from Israel" = individual; Jacob
- Not all of the physical descendants of Jacob (Israel) are included in the national entity known as Israel.
- Therefore, not all of the physical descendants of Jacob participate in the national aspects of the covenant made with Abraham and confirmed to Isaac and Jacob.
- Paul is not teaching replacement theology here!
- He is simply affirming that God is dealing with the present nation of Israel in exactly the same way as He dealt with the patriarchs, that is, on the basis of His election–His sovereign choice.

Romans 9:7

nor are they all children because they are Abraham's descendants, but: through Isaac your descendants will be named.

- Note the parallel to v. 6

They are not all Israel	who are descended from Israel
↓	↓
nor are they all children	because they are Abraham's descendants

- The use of "children" here corresponds to the concept of "sonship," on the basis of Hebrew בָּנִים, which can mean "sons" or "children."
- The common use of בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, *benei Yisrael* to refer to the nation descended from Jacob, gave a covenant meaning to the use of "children" in this context.

- Paul's primary point here is that God continues to deal with the nation of Israel as He has from the beginning, through His sovereign election.
- Paul quotes Gen 21:12 as proof that from the beginning God chose the line of descendants who would constitute the covenant nation called "Israel."
- In sending away Hagar and Ishmael, Abraham was distressed.
- God comforts Abraham by revealing that He, not Abraham, had chosen Isaac to be the one through whom the covenant would continue.

Romans 9:8

That is, it is not the children of the flesh who are children of God, but the children of the promise are regarded as descendants.



children of the promise = descendants of Abraham who receive the covenant promises

... but the children of the promise are <u>regarded</u> as descendants.

- The word "regarded" translates the Greek *logizomai*, the same word translated "credited" in 4:3
- "Abraham believed and it was <u>credited</u> to him as righteousness."
- This stresses God's sovereign choice in determining who would become His covenant nation.

Romans 9:9

For this is the word of promise: "at this time I will come, and Sarah shall have a son." (Gen 18:10, 14)

- The "word of promise" relates to the birth of Isaac.
- This is in direct contrast with "children of the flesh."

- Abraham, in attempting to bring the promised son through his own strength, fathered Ishmael.
- Isaac was conceived miraculously, however, after Sarah was no longer physically able to conceive children.
- Paul's emphasis is upon the fact that both Jacob and Esau were, without a doubt, the physical sons of Isaac.
- They were both equally Isaac's descendants.
- This overcomes the difficulty in the example of Isaac and Ishmael who had different mothers.
- That Jacob & Esau were twins adds further emphasis to Paul's argument regarding God's sovereign choice.

Romans 9:11

for though the twins were not yet born and had not done anything good or bad, so that God's purpose according to His choice would stand, not because of works but because of Him who calls,

- The case of Jacob and Esau proves beyond question that Jacob's covenant status was the result of God's sovereign choice.
- Moreover, God's choice was not determined by the actions of Jacob and Esau.
- God did not "look ahead" to see what kind of people Jacob & Esau would be in order to make His choice.
- Note again Paul's use of the divine call as effectual.

Romans 9:12–23

it was said to her, THE OLDER WILL SERVE THE YOUNGER. *Just as it is written,* JACOB I LOVED, BUT ESAU I HATED.

- Paul quotes Gen 25:23 and Mal 1:2–3
- God determined before either of the twins had done good or bad, that the older (Esau) would serve the younger (Jacob).
- "loved" and "hated" should be understood as covenant language in which "love" means "to enter into covenant" and "hate" means "to have no covenant relationship."
- God chose Jacob, not Esau, to be the son through whom His covenant would be established.

Summary

- The question: If God has chosen Israel, and Israel has rejected Yeshua, how can it be true that no one who has been loved by God can be separated from Him?
- The answer: from the beginning God chose His covenant partners. Being physically related to Abraham was not enough (Isaac & Ishmael; Jacob & Esau)
- God's election of Israel is on two levels: corporate (national & in this world) and individual (in this world & in the world to come).
- Not everyone who has physical lineage to Jacob (part of the chosen nation) has been chosen for eternal life.
- The remnant (those who evidence true faith through living righteously) represent those chosen for eternal salvation in each generation.
- It is the remnant that demonstrates God's love from which His chosen cannot be separated.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Yeshua Messiah, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Messiah, just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love He predestined us to adoption as sons through Yeshua Messiah to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved.

Ephesians 1:3–6

A Study Through Paul's Epistle to the Romans
Romans 9:14–18

notes by Tim Hegg

The Context: 9:1–13 Summary

- Paul expresses his own, deeply held desire that his own people, the Jewish people, would accept Yeshua for who He is—the promised Messiah.
  - This makes it clear that Paul is not teaching some form of "replacement theology".
- He lists some of the covenant blessings given to the nation of Israel by God:
  - given the adoption as sons
  - experienced God's glory at Sinai; Tabernacle; Temple
  - given the covenants
  - given the Torah & Temple service
  - given the witness & example of the Fathers
  - the nation from which Messiah Yeshua came
- The major question: Is God faithful to the promises He made to Israel? Has He rejected Israel because, as a nation, Israel has rejected Yeshua?
  - God is faithful to Israel!
  - Not all physical descendants of Abraham and Isaac are part of the nation of Israel (e.g., Ishmael; Esau)
  - God's sovereign election/choosing is what gives Israel their true identity (e.g., Esau & Jacob).

Romans 9:14

What shall we say then? There is no injustice with God, is there? May it never be!

- Paul uses this phrase when he recognizes that a false conclusion could be drawn from what he has just said.
- The false conclusion that might be drawn from Paul's words is that God is unfair to choose one person over another.
- To act in an "unfair" way means to act unrighteously.
- If choosing one person over another is unfair, and if God has clearly chosen Jacob over Esau, not on account of their deeds but simply by His sovereign will, then one could conclude that God is unrighteous.
- Paul answers with the strongest negative: "No Way!!"

Romans 9:15

For He says to Moses, "I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion."

- Note Paul's line of reasoning, i.e., his presuppositions:
  - He rejects humanism: that truth begins with mankind's ability to reason.
  - His presupposition or starting point is this: God exists and has truthfully revealed Himself.
  - He takes the Bible as the true revelation of God (quoting Ex 33:19).
- The quote from Exodus 33:19 is in the context of the golden calf event, the display of God's wrath, the revelation of His utter holiness, and His promise to go with Israel as they journeyed to the Land.
- The section quoted is in connection to God's Name:

  "I Myself will make all My goodness pass before you, and will proclaim the name of יהוה *before you; and I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show compassion on whom I will show compassion."* (Ex 33:19)

- God has affirmed His favor toward Moses.
- But this affirmation should not be construed as meaning that Moses somehow persuaded God to do what He otherwise would not have done.
- God thus reveals an essential attribute of His character: He is self-determined and self-defined.

Romans 9:16

So then it does not depend on the man who wills or the man who runs, but on God who has mercy.

- To what does the word "it" refer in this translation?
  - The subject of the previous verse is God's mercy and compassion.
  - "It" refers to the situation in which God acts in mercy and compassion toward a person who deserves His condemnation.
- "does not depend upon the person who wills"
  - This refers to one's inner thoughts and choices.
  - God does not wait for a person to "make the right choice" before He shows them His mercy.
  - It is the mercy of God that leads them to make the right choice.

- "does not depend upon the person who runs"
  - This refers to one's actions or deeds.
  - God does not wait for a person to "clean up their life" before He shows them mercy.
  - Neither a person's desires nor actions are a magnet that attracts God's mercy.

Romans 9:17

For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, "for this very purpose I raised you up, to demonstrate My power in you, and that My name might be proclaimed throughout the whole earth."

- Once again Paul appeals to the Scriptures (Ex 9:16)
  - God placed Pharaoh on the throne of Egypt.
  - Pharaoh's defeat proved God's sovereignty over all of the false gods (demons) of Egypt.
  - Israel's victory over Egypt would demonstrate to the world that Israel's God is over all.
  - His Name would be proclaimed = His true character would be known through His works.
  - All events in the world fit into God's eternal purpose.

Romans 9:18

So then He has mercy on whom He desires, and He hardens whom He desires.

- The two quotes from Exodus have shown the clear distinction God made between Israel and Egypt
  - He shows mercy and compassion to Israel.
  - He hardens Pharaoh's heart which leads to Egypt's defeat.

Hardening Pharaoh's Heart

- Pharaoh's heart being hardened is mentioned 20 times in Exodus, utilizing three different verbs:
  - *chazaq* – חזק - to be or make strong
  - *qashah* – קשׁה - to be difficult or heavy
  - *kavad* – כבד - to encourage, honor

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- God is found as the subject of all three of these verbs.
- When Pharaoh is the subject, only *kavad* is the verb.
- It is clear that God actively hardens Pharaoh's heart.

Summary

- God is self-determined and self-defined.
- Thus, He acts in accordance with His divine purpose and not in reaction to other beings or events.
- Therefore, the unbelief of the nation of Israel, while sorrowful, is not outside of the scope of God's eternal purpose, which encompasses all the families of the earth, including Israel.

The heavens will praise Your wonders, ADONAI;
Your faithfulness also in the assembly of the holy ones.
For who in the skies is comparable to ADONAI?
Who among the sons of the mighty is like ADONAI,
A God greatly feared in the council of the holy ones,
And awesome above all those who are around Him?
O ADONAI God of hosts, who is like You, O mighty ADONAI?
Your faithfulness also surrounds You.
Psalm 89:5–8

A Study Through Paul's Epistle to the Romans
Romans 9:19–24

notes by Tim Hegg

The Context: 9:14–18 Summary

- Paul has affirmed the utter sovereignty of God over the affairs of mankind.
  - Quotes Ex 33:19 – "I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion."
  - Nothing mankind can do will attract God's mercy because God is self-determined and self-defined.
  - Paul then uses Pharaoh as an illustration:
    ~ God put Pharaoh into power.
    ~ He did so for His own purposes:
      1. to demonstrate His power
      2. to proclaim His Name throughout the world
  - Paul therefore reaches this conclusion:
    "So then He has mercy on whom He desires, and He hardens whom He desires." (9:18)

Romans 9:19

You will say to me then, "Why does He still find fault? For who can resist His will?"

- Paul anticipates the objections of his detractors:
- "Okay, if God sovereignly hardened Pharaoh's heart, how can He hold him responsible for disregarding Moses' request to let the people of Israel leave?"
- If God controls a person's choices, how can He hold someone accountable for their choices?
- This is the age-old dilemma: how can God be sovereign in the affairs of man and still hold people accountable for their actions?

Romans 9:20

On the contrary, who are you, O man, who answers back to God?

- On the contrary means "you're asking the wrong question!"
- Paul answers with a rhetorical question that gives the only answer possible: finite man cannot fully comprehend the infinite wisdom and ways of God.

- Man: created, mortal, finite, & foolish
- God: uncreated, immortal, infinite, & all wise
- Bottomline: questioning God's righteousness is a *non-sequitur* since we begin with the premise that God is righteous and thus all He does is righteous.

Romans 9:20–21

> *The thing molded will not say to the molder, "Why did you make me like this," will it? Or does not the potter have a right over the clay, to make from the same lump one vessel for honorable use and another for common use?*

- thing molded
- clay
- same lump

} mankind

- moulder
- potter

} God

- honorable use: most likely pots used for food.
- common use: most likely pots used for refuse.

Paul may have Isaiah 29:16 in mind

> *You turn things around! Shall the potter be considered as equal with the clay, that what is made would say to its maker, "He did not make me"; Or what is formed say to him who formed it, "He has no understanding"?* (Isaiah 29:16)

Romans 9:22–24

But what if God endured with much patience vessels of wrath, prepared for destruction (even though He wills to show forth His wrath and to make know His power) and He did so in order to make known the riches of His glory upon vessels of mercy, which He prepared beforehand for glory, whom He also called, even us, not only from among the Jews but also from among the Gentiles?

- Having mentioned Pharaoh & the exodus, Paul now considers the broader scope of Israel's history:
  - 430 years in Egypt – why so long?
  - Northern tribes exiled to Assyria (185 yrs)
  - Judah exiled to Babylon (70 yrs)
  - Conquered by Greece and by Rome
  - Worldwide diaspora since 70 CE
- Even though generation after generation of Israel rebelled against God, and in the final judgment will thus receive His ultimate wrath, God remains faithful to Israel–the nation survives throughout earth's history.
- God will make known His wrath and power against all unrighteousness (cf. Rom 1:18), but He also has the right to reserve His righteous wrath for the future.
- "vessels of wrath" = vessels into which God's wrath is poured.
- "prepared for destruction" = often pots used for carrying refuse were destined to be broken so that they would not ever be used for food.
- Remember the overall purpose of chapter 9–11
  - to show that God remains faithful to Israel.
  - to explain that the promise of blessing to Abraham envisions both Israel & the nations.
  - to emphasize that sovereignty of God in salvation.
- "vessels of mercy" = those into whom God's mercy is poured.
- "which He prepared beforehand" – note the parallel to Pharaoh vs. Israel
  - Pharaoh put into power to demonstrate God's conquering power.
  - Israel redeemed as the object of God's mercy.
- "for glory" = those who, like Abraham, have faith in God's Promised One, and are therefore reckoned by God as righteous and granted eternal life.
- "called" = the effectual call of God by the gospel which always results in bringing the one called to saving faith.

- Those who are called to eternal life are from:
  - the descendants of Jacob = the remnant of Israel
  - the elect from the nations who are grafted into the remnant of Israel
- Paul will go on to teach that Israel's rejection of Yeshua was used by God to bring salvation to the Gentiles (11:11–12).

Summary

- The sovereignty of God over the affairs of man brings a logical conflict: how can God hold man responsible for his or her actions if He pre-determines all things?
- Paul answers by simply saying that God has not enabled us to answer this question, but we nonetheless affirm that God has control, even as a potter has control to fashion a pot as he sees fit.
- Thus, even though Israel as a people have rejected Yeshua, this does not mean that God has been unfaithful to His covenant promises.
- Even as Pharaoh's rebellion against Israel's God was planned and used by God for His glory, so the partial hardening of the people of Israel is likewise being used by God to accomplish His purposes

For as the heavens are higher than the earth,
So are My ways higher than your ways
And My thoughts than your thoughts.
For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven,
And do not return there without watering the earth
And making it bear and sprout,
And furnishing seed to the sower and bread to the eater;
So will My word be which goes forth from My mouth;
It will not return to Me empty,
Without accomplishing what I desire,
And without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it.

Isaiah 55:9–11

A Study Through Paul's Epistle to the Romans
Romans 9:25–29

notes by Tim Hegg

The Context

- Paul is answering the question: "Has Israel been separated from the love of God?"
- His answer is: "No, Israel has not been separated from God's love! God remains faithful to the covenant He made with Israel."
  - Even from the beginning God's covenant was made with the chosen descendants of Abraham: Isaac & Jacob.
  - In God's sovereign election, He shows mercy and hardens whom He will: Pharaoh is a perfect example.
  - God's faithfulness is evident because there are those He brings (calls) to true faith, both Jews and Gentiles, in every generation (the remnant).

Romans 9:25–26

as He says also in Hosea, "I will call those who were not My people, 'My people,' and her who was not beloved, 'beloved.' And it shall be that in the place where it was said to them, 'You are not My people,' there they shall be called sons of the living God."

- Paul quotes Hosea 2:23 and 1:10

Hosea: His Story & Message

- We need to understand the story and message of Hosea to understand Paul's point here.
  - 8th Century BCE – period of material prosperity
  - Affluence had led to spiritual apathy as commerce with surrounding nations flourished.
  - Affluent Israelites sought to broaden their "religious" horizons by adding idol-gods into their worship.
- As a result, God called Hosea to deliver His word to Israel, both by illustration & written message:
  - God instructs Hosea to marry a prostitute, for in doing so this would picture God's marriage to Israel who, as His wife, was unfaithful to Him in that she had joined herself to false gods.
  - So Hosea marries Gomer and they have children:
    - ~ son: Jezreel, "like seed cast to the wind" = exiled
    - ~ daughter: Lo-Ruchamah = no compassion – Israel will not be given power to withstand Assyria

~ son: Lo-Ami = not My people – "You are not My people and I will not be for (or with) you." (1:9)

- But even though Israel's exile is certain, God promises a future restoration of the nation:
- The meaning of Jezreel will be reversed. Instead of "scattered in exile" – "planted in the Land" (2:23)
  ~ compassion upon "Lo-Ruchamah," No Compassion
  ~ To "Lo-Ami" God will announce: "Ami, My people"!
  ~ Israel will respond: "Elohayi" = "my God"

• The primary message of Hosea is thus two-fold:
- Because of Israel's unfaithfulness, they will be exiled to the land of their enemies, as promised in the covenant (Lev 26:14ff; Deut 28:15ff).
- But God will remain faithful to His promise, and He will bring them back to Himself and to the Land.
- Indeed, Israel's return to God will coincide with their being "sown" or planted in the Land.

Paul's Use of Hosea

• We can see why Paul uses Hosea for his prophetic message fits Paul's point perfectly:
- Israel has been unfaithful to God by rejecting His Messiah, Yeshua.
- Therefore Israel will be exiled out of the Land.
- But by God's faithfulness to Israel, they will return to Him & His Messiah, and thus to the Land as well.

• Furthermore, God's covenant faithfulness to Israel parallels His faithfulness to nations, for the covenant includes "in you all the nations/ families of the earth will be blessed."
- In the same way that Israel will receive God's compassion, so His compassion reaches to Gentiles as well.
- That many Gentiles were coming to faith in Paul's day was proof of God's faithfulness to those who did not deserve His compassion: both of Israel & the nations.

The Big Picture

• No one whom God has chosen to salvation can be separated from His love
- what about God's covenant promises to Israel?
  ~ Israel defined by God's choice
  ~ God is sovereign: shows mercy & hardens
  ~ Hosea: Israel is punished = God is faithful
  ~ Hosea: Israel shown compassion = God is faithful

- No one whom God has chosen to salvation can be separated from His love
  - God's covenant faithfulness to "all the nations of the earth"
    - ~ God has chosen Gentiles for salvation
    - ~ God is sovereign: shows mercy & hardens
    - ~ ingathering of Gentiles = God is faithful
    - ~ ingathering of Gentiles = God's way of bringing Israel back to Himself and to the Land

Roman 9:27–28

Isaiah cries out concerning Israel, "though the number of the sons of Israel be like the sand of the sea, it is the remnant that will be saved; for the Lord will execute His word on the earth, thoroughly and quickly."

- Paul now quotes from Isaiah 10:22–23
  - "sons of Israel" – same subject as previous verses
  - "sand of the sea" – carried over from Hos 1:10 [2:1]
  - "remnant" – That the majority of the Jewish nation rejected Yeshua is in line with Isaiah's prophecy
  - God is sovereign & executes His will.

Romans 9:29

And just as Isaiah foretold, "unless the Lord of Sabaoth had left to us a posterity, we would have become like Sodom, and would have resembled Gomorrah."

- Paul now quotes from Isaiah 1:9
  - "left us a posterity" – emphasizes a remnant
  - "like Sodom…like Gomorrah" – extinct nations

How Paul has been Misinterpreted

…even us, whom He also called, not from among Jews only, but also from among Gentiles. as He says also in Hosea, "I will call those who were not My people, 'My people,' and her who was not beloved, 'beloved.' (Rom 9:24–25)

- But "Not My People" (*lo' 'ami*) is not a designation for "Gentiles" but for Hosea's son as illustrative of Israel.
- Further, in Hosea the exiled Israelites have not forgotten who they are.

- In fact, in Hosea, the idea of "forgetting" means "to disregard the covenant," not to be ignorant of something.

Israel in Exile Knows They are Israel

Therefore, behold, I will hedge up her way with thorns, and I will build a wall against her so that she cannot find her paths. She will pursue her lovers, but she will not overtake them; and she will seek them, but will not find them. Then she will say, 'I will go back to my first husband, for it was better for me then than now!' (Hos 2:6–7)

"know" & "forget" = covenant terms

I will punish her for the days of the Baals when she used to offer sacrifices to them and adorn herself with her earrings and jewelry, and follow her lovers, so that she forgot Me," declares Adonai. (Hos 2:13)

My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also will reject you from being My priest. Since you have forgotten the Torah of your God, I also will forget your children. (Hos 4:6)

- Israel was not exiled because they were ignorant (lack of knowledge).
- "Lack of knowledge" = "rejected knowledge," where "knowing" refers to faithful, covenant relationship.
- "And you were not to know any god except Me" (13:4)
- Likewise, "to forget" = "to fail to keep the covenant."
- It does not mean lack of knowledge, for surely God does not lack knowledge about Israel's children.
- Rather, Israel's disobedience (forgetting the Torah) results in God withholding (forgetting) covenant blessings from generations that were exiled.

Summary

- Paul turns to the Prophets (Hosea & Isaiah) to prove his point:
- God remains faithful to Israel even though there are times when because of Israel's disobedience, He punishes the nation and leaves in their rebellion.
- Yet in every generation He calls a remnant of Israel to Himself in truth faith and obedience.
- In the same way, God is faithful to His covenant promises regarding the nations: He is also calling Gentiles to be part of His covenant people.

A Study Through Paul's Epistle to the Romans
Romans 9:30–33

notes by Tim Hegg

Romans 9:30

What shall we say then? That Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, attained righteousness, even the righteousness which is by faith;

- Paul uses his common question, "What shall we say?", to signal that he is giving us a summary statement.

Summary of the Previous Context

- That the majority of the Jewish people rejected Yeshua, while at the same time many Gentiles received Him, may have cause some to think that God had forsaken Israel and turned exclusively to the Gentiles.
  - Paul has labored to show that this is not the case: Israel's rejection of Yeshua must be understood in light of:
    ~ Not everyone who has physical lineage to Abraham is part of the covenant God made with Abraham.
    ~ God has chosen individuals to receive His grace and blessings, and He is righteous to do so.
    ~ God sovereignly chooses individuals to receive His saving grace, both from the nation of Israel as well as from the other nations/families of the earth.
    ~ He can bring those who are not "His people" to be His, whether Gentiles or descendants of Jacob.

9:30–33 as Introduction to Chapter 10

- Thus, Israel's disobedience as well as the obedience evidenced by Gentile believers will be described and form the central theme of Chapter 10.
- In our current passage (9:30–33), Paul is giving us an overview of what he will teach in greater depth in the coming chapter.

What shall we say then? That Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, attained righteousness, even the righteousness which is by faith;

- Paul is referring to Gentiles who have come to faith in Yeshua through receiving the Gospel.

- In their own pagan culture, Gentiles were confronted with the reality of the Creator God, but were not given God's direct revelation (Torah) to know what it means to be counted as righteous in God's sight.
- Without the light of the Scriptures, Gentiles could not have pursued a life of obedience to Israel's God.
- Paul is not suggesting that Gentiles have no sense of morality or "right & wrong" in their cultures.
- God created mankind with a conscience which, to a certain extent, demands standards of conduct.
- Rather, Paul means standing righteous before God.
- This is why he adds the explanatory phrase: "righteousness which is by faith."
- The only way to stand righteous before God is to accept the gift of righteousness granted through the saving work of Yeshua, God's Messiah.
- The language Paul uses is that of an athletic race:
- Those who enter race run in order to win: they pursue the crown or trophy which the winner receives.
- But in this case, those who were not even in the race (Gentiles) won and received the winner's crown.

Romans 9:31

but Israel, pursuing a Torah of righteousness, did not arrive at that Torah.

- We would have expected Paul to say: "But Israel, pursuing righteousness, did not arrive at that righteousness," but he does not say it this way.
- Instead, he substitutes "Torah of righteousness" for "righteousness" of the previous verse.
- What should we learn from this?
- First, we should not interpret "Torah of righteousness" to mean "a righteousness derived from the Torah."
  - If he had meant this, he would have used similar language as he did for "righteousness which is by faith" in v. 30
  - Paul finds no fault with "a Torah of righteousness."
- The reason Paul finds no fault with the "Torah of righteousness" is because the Torah is the foundational revelation from God revealing His method of making sinners righteous in His sight.

- The Torah contained instructions for sacrifice, priesthood, Tabernacle, atonement, etc.
- The Torah contained the story of Abraham and how he obtained righteousness by faith (Gen 15:6).

- "They did not arrive at that Torah" means they did not follow the path to standing righteousness before God which the Torah itself taught.
- As a nation, Israel has missed the very "finish line" of the race, i.e., the goal of the Torah, which is Yeshua (Rom 10:4).

Romans 9:32

Why? Because they did not pursue it by faith, but as though it were by works. They stumbled over the stumbling stone.

- But how did they "get sidelined"?
  - Paul does not fault Israel for pursuing the Torah of righteousness, but rather for the way they pursued it.
  - Instead of seeking righteousness through faith in God's appointed Redeemer (Who is revealed in the Torah) they relied upon their own status as God's chosen nation.

Works of the Torah

- Some manuscripts have "works of the Torah" but the better reading in v. 32 leaves off "of the Torah."
- A document in the Dead Sea Scrolls (4QMMT) actually uses the phrase "works of the Torah" and promises that if one does the "works of the Torah," it will be "reckoned to him as righteousness."
- The parallel to Paul's words is obvious.
- What was the prevailing view among 1st Century Judaisms regarding how one could be counted as righteous before God?
- Any one with "legal Jewish status" was part of God's chosen people and thus was righteous before God.
- Legal Jewish status: 1) by birth 2) by conversion
- One could lose one's legal Jewish status by being "cut off from his people," i.e., by failure to keep Torah.
- Thus, instead of relying upon the promised Messiah and His redemptive work, Israel as a nation relied upon their own privileged status as God's chosen nation.
- Instead of running well, they stumbled in the "race" for righteousness.

Romans 9:33

just as it is written, "BEHOLD, I LAY IN ZION A STONE OF STUMBLING AND ROCK OF OFFENSE, AND HE WHO BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED."

- Paul quotes Is 28:16 (with a few words from 8:14) to explain what he means in the previous verse by referring to Yeshua as a "stumbling stone."

Isaiah 28:16 & 8:14	Paul
28:16 Therefore thus says the Lord Adonai, "Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a tested stone, a costly cornerstone for the foundation, firmly placed. He who believes in it will not be disturbed. 8:14 Then He shall become a sanctuary; but to both the houses of Israel, a stone to strike and a rock to stumble over, and a snare and a trap for the inhabitants of Jerusalem.	Behold, I lay in Zion a stone of stumbling and rock of offense, and he who believes in Him will not be disappointed.

- Thus, Paul does not speak against the Torah nor against Israel's pursuit of the Torah.
- Israel's failure as a nation to obtain right-standing before God is not because they failed to keep the Torah as they should.
- National Israel failed to obtain right-standing before God because they rejected God's Messiah.
- But God remains faithful to Israel, proof of which is this: in every generation there exists a remnant of Israel who trust in Yeshua for their righteousness and who therefore honor Yeshua as the promised Messiah.

(Read Ezekiel 37:21–24 & John 10:16)

A Study Through Paul's Epistle to the Romans
Romans 10:1–4

notes by Tim Hegg

Romans 10:1–13 (The Larger Context)

Brethren, my heart's desire and my prayer to God for them is for their salvation. For I testify about them that they have a zeal for God, but not in accordance with knowledge. For not knowing about God's righteousness and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God. For Messiah is the end of the Torah for righteousness to everyone who believes. For Moses writes that the man who practices the righteousness which is based on law shall live by that righteousness. But the righteousness based on faith speaks as follows: "DO NOT SAY IN YOUR HEART, 'WHO WILL ASCEND INTO HEAVEN?' (that is, to bring Messiah down), or 'WHO WILL DESCEND INTO THE ABYSS?' (that is, to bring Messiah up from the dead)." But what does it say? "THE WORD IS NEAR YOU, IN YOUR MOUTH AND IN YOUR HEART" — that is, the word of faith which we are preaching, that if you confess with your mouth Yeshua as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation. For the Scripture says, "WHOEVER BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED." For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, abounding in riches for all who call on Him; for "WHOEVER WILL CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED."

I. Verses 1–4, **Missing God's method of righteousness**
   A. The Jewish community at large has missed God's method of accepting sinners as righteous.
   B. They have a proper zeal for God but not based upon the knowledge of the truth.
   C. They seek to establish their own righteousness rather than accepting God's way to be righteous.
   D. God's way of making sinners righteous, which the Torah itself teaches, is vested in Messiah Yeshua.

II. Verses 5–9 **Paul & Moses Teach the Same Gospel**
   A. True faith is evident in how one lives, Lev 18:5.
   B. Standing righteous before God means accepting the "Word," that is, the Messiah as the means by Whom one stands righteous before God.
   C. Moses also taught this: Deut 30:12–14
   D. Confessing Yeshua is the only way to be saved from the penalty of sin, to be righteous before God.

III. Verses 10–13 **God's Way of Righteousness Explained**

A. Belief (faith) in Yeshua followed by confession

B. God's way of righteousness is the same for Jew and for non-Jew, Is 28:16; Joel 3:5

I. Verses 1– 4, **Missing God's method of righteousness**

II. Verses 5–9 **Paul & Moses Teach the Same Gospel**

III. Verses 10–13 **God's Way of Righteousness Explained**

Romans 10:1

Brethren, my heart's desire and my prayer to God for them is for their salvation.

- Paul calls his readers "brothers," stressing the unity of Jew & non-Jew within the "household of God."
- Note 9:3 - Paul refers to his Jewish kinsmen as "brethren," but there he adds "according to the flesh."
- Here "brethren" (believers in Yeshua) are distinguished from "them," Paul's non-believing kinsmen.
- Paul clearly saw Jewish people who had not confessed Yeshua as outside of the "household of God."
- Previously (9:2) Paul's would have even "wished" to be destroyed if that would bring about the salvation of the Jewish people.
- Here, he gives the reality: the salvation of the Jewish people can only be effected by God, and thus Paul submits his heart's desire to God in prayer.
- That Paul prays to God for the salvation of his Jewish "brethren according to the flesh" makes it clear that in his view, those who had not yet confessed Yeshua remained under the condemnation of the Torah.

Romans 10:2

For I testify about them that they have a zeal for God, but not in accordance with knowledge.

- Paul is not judging the zeal for God which his unbelieving Jewish brethren had.
- Their zeal for God is genuine and good.

"Indeed, orthodox Judaism puts to shame much that passes for Christianity, and even much true Christianity, in respect of the seriousness of its zeal and

by the fact that its zeal is really zeal for God." (C.E.B. Cranfield, *Romans*, 2.514)

- Israel knows God in the sense of having God's divine revelation in history and in the Torah & Prophets.
- In this sense, Israel's zeal for God is good.
- Yet their zeal is deficient because it is not based upon a comprehension of God's method of making sinners righteous in His sight.

Romans 10:3

For not knowing about God's righteousness and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God.

- righteousness of God = God's method by which He makes a sinner righteous in His sight.
- Israel fails to know, i.e., to acknowledge or accept:
  - the means by which God is able to remain just and at the same time justify (declare righteous) the ungodly.
  - that God does not accept the criteria by which they consider themselves to be righteous.
- In their zeal, which lacked knowledge, they:
  - sought their own righteousness, based upon their people-group identity.
  - refused to accept God's method of righteousness as an underserved and unearned gift of His grace in Yeshua.

Romans 10:4

For Messiah is the end of the Torah for righteousness to everyone who believes.

- The word translated "end" (*telos*) can mean:
  - fulfillment; completion
  - goal, i.e., the final purpose for which something exists
  - termination
- The meaning here is "goal," as the context makes clear.
- The context: Paul is explaining how Israel, though zealous for righteousness, lacks true knowledge of God's method of righteousness.
- By opening the verse with "For," Paul is giving us the specifics about Israel's lack of knowledge.

- They lacked knowledge about Messiah as the means by which God declares sinners righteousness.
- As Paul will teach us in the next section, Moses proclaimed the same gospel as Paul.
- This means Moses & the Torah teach that it is through Yeshua that God declares sinners righteous.
- "Messiah is the One to Whom the Torah points when it teaches about being righteous."
- The Torah was not deficient in teaching Israel about God's way of righteousness in Yeshua!
- The Tabernacle, Temple, priesthood, sacrifices, festivals, Shabbat – these all taught the faith of Abraham.
- They "stumbled over the stumbling stone" (9:32)
- The means of standing righteous before God is to accept the work of Yeshua for one's own self, and to confess Him as one's Lord and Savior.
- Such right-standing before God is for all who believe, without distinction.
- Note the connection Rom 1:16, "… to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek."

But Adonai was pleased to crush Him,
putting Him to grief; If He would render Himself as a guilt offering,
He will see His offspring, He will prolong His days,
and the good pleasure of Adonai will prosper in His hand.
As a result of the anguish of His soul, He will see light and be satisfied;
by His knowledge the Righteous One, My Servant,
will justify the many, as He will bear their iniquities.
(Isaiah 53:10-11)

A Study Through Paul's Epistle to the Romans
Romans 10:5–8

notes by Tim Hegg

Romans 10:1–13

I. Verses 1– 4, **Missing God's method of righteousness**

II. Verses 5–9 **Paul & Moses Teach the Same Gospel**

III. Verses 10–13 **God's Way of Righteousness Explained**

Romans 10:5–6a

For Moses writes that the man who practices the righteousness which is based on Torah shall live by that righteousness. But the righteousness based on faith speaks as follows…

- Paul begins v. 5 with "For" making it clear that he reads Moses as agreeing that "Yeshua is the goal of the Torah."
- His point is that Moses also considered the Messiah to be the goal of the Torah!
- But the next verse seems to be contrasting "righteousness by faith" with "righteousness by works."
- Did Moses teach that a person could be righteous before God by keeping the Torah?

Leviticus 18:5 & Context

So you all shall guard My statutes and My judgments which, the person who does them, also will live by them, I am Adonai.

- **18:1–5**
  - exhortation not to adopt the ways of pagan nations
  - exhortation to Israel to live by God's standards
  - doing what God commands sustains life (v. 5)
- **18:6–24** – laws relating to proper sexual conduct
- **18:25–30** – consequences: obedience vs. disobedience

Paul & Moses

- Did Paul hold that Moses and he taught two different ways to be righteous in God's sight? NO!
  - Paul has already used Abraham & David as examples of being righteous by faith, not works (Rom 4)
  - Paul stated: "by the works of the Torah no flesh will be justified" (3:20)
  - In 1:17 (cf. Gal 3:11) Paul quotes Hab 2:4, "the righteous shall live by faith." If Habakkuk disagreed with Moses, he would have been counted as a false prophet.
  - In our own passage, he will quote Deut as proof that both he and Moses taught the same "word of faith."
- Did Paul think that God gave Israel the Torah as an "impossible task" so that when given the opportunity, they would discard it in favor of Yeshua? NO!
  - Paul teaches: "not the hears of the Torah are just before God, but the doers of the Torah will be justified." (2:13)
  - Paul states that "by faith we establish the Torah" (3:31)
  - He teaches that the "requirements of the Torah are fulfilled in us… who walk according to the Spirit." (8:4)
- How, then, are we to interpret the verses in our text which appear to have Moses teaching that one can gain righteousness before God by keeping the Torah?

For Moses writes that the man who practices the righteousness which is based on Torah shall live by that righteousness. But the righteousness based on faith speaks as follows….

- First, v. 6 does not need to open with the contrastive conjunction "But." The Greek (δε) could just as well be translated with our English word "And."
- Second, it is not necessary to interpret "shall live" to speaking of eternal salvation.
- Rather, in context, Lev 18:5 is talking about how those who have already been redeemed (Israel) are to live, and how living righteously brings fullness of life.
- Third, Paul goes on to quote from Deut 30 so as to show how Moses understood obeying God by obeying the Torah: obedience begins by internalizing the word of Torah

Romans 10:6–7

But the righteousness based on faith speaks as follows: "DO NOT SAY IN YOUR HEART, 'WHO WILL ASCEND INTO HEAVEN'" (that is, to bring Messiah down), or 'WHO WILL DESCEND INTO THE ABYSS?' (that is, to bring Messiah up from the dead)."

- Paul first quotes the opening words of Deut 8:17 or 9:4

  Do not say in your heart when Adonai your God has driven them out before you, 'Because of my righteousness Adonai has brought me in to possess this land,' but it is because of the wickedness of these nations that Adonai is dispossessing them before you. (Deut 9:4)

- Don't say in your heart – "My righteousness is the result of who I am and what I've done."
- Paul next quotes from Deut 30:12–14
- This same text is mention in 4QMMT, relating to the restoration of Israel in the final days. They take it to mean that all of Israel will accept the halachah of the Qumran sect (the recovered word of Torah) and will thus be restored.
- Deut 30 promises the restoration of Israel.
- It was interpreted both at Qumran and by other early Jewish writings to describe the restoration of Israel in the last days.
- How will Israel be restored? Through the work of the Messiah: His incarnation, death, and resurrection.

For this commandment which I command you today is not too difficult for you, nor is it out of reach. It is not in heaven, that you should say, 'Who will go up to heaven for us to get it for us and make us hear it, that we may observe it?' Nor is it beyond the sea, that you should say, 'Who will cross the sea for us to get it for us and make us hear it, that we may observe it?' But the word is very near you, in your mouth and in your heart, that you may observe it. (Deut 30:11–14)

Messiah is the Goal of the Torah

- "that is, to bring Messiah down"
  - The Word, the Messiah, the goal of the Torah, has already descended! He has come!
- "that is, to bring Messiah up from the dea"
  - The Word, the Messiah, the goal of the Torah, has risen from the grave! He is alive!

Romans 10:8

But what does it say? "the word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart" — that is, the word of faith which we are preaching

- Paul sees the restoration promised in Deut 30 to have begun with the coming of Yeshua.
- The "word," that is, the very goal, the very essence of the Torah has come in the person of Yeshua.
- Thus, even as God required the Israelites of old to lay hold of His promise by faith, so He now has made evident the Promised One Who is the very object of true faith.
- Thus, Paul's point is clear: the Gospel he preaches and the Gospel Moses preached is one and the same Gospel.
- It was this Gospel which was preached to Abraham: "In your Seed all the nations of the earth will be blessed" (Gen 22:18, cp. Gal 3:8)

There is one body and one Spirit,
just as also you were called in
one hope of your calling;
one Lord, one faith, one baptism,
one God and Father of all who is
over all and through all and in all.

Eph 4:4–6

A Study Through Paul's Epistle to the Romans
Romans 10:14–15

notes by Tim Hegg

The Context: Romans 10:9–13

... that if you confess with your mouth Yeshua as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation. For the Scripture says, "whoever believes in Him will not be disappointed." For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, abounding in riches for all who call on Him; for "whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved."

Romans 10:14–15a

How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how will they hear without a preacher? How will they preach unless they are sent?

- Note the sequence:

Calling on Him requires
↳ **Believing in Him** requires
↳ **Hearing about Him** requires
↳ **Sending a Messenger**

- Who does Paul have in mind here?
  - The previous "whoever will call…" might indicate that he has all people in mind, i.e., Jew & Gentile.
  - But because in this section of Romans Paul especially has Israel in mind, he may be focusing on the Jewish people in particular.
- Paul's inspired words apply equally to Jew & Gentile:
  - God's method of declaring a sinner righteous is the same for Jew & Gentile.
  - Hearing & accepting the message of the gospel; calling upon Yeshua for salvation, believing in Yeshua, and confessing Yeshua to be one's Savior.
- Paul did not believe that Jewish people who try to keep the Torah are accepted as righteous in God's eyes.

- Consider Paul himself: before believing in Yeshua, he considered himself to be very righteous, but after coming to faith realized he was entirely unrighteous in God's eyes— in fact, that he had been a blasphemer.

> If anyone else has a mind to put confidence in the flesh, I far more: circumcised the eighth day, of the nation of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the Torah, a Pharisee; as to zeal, a persecutor of the *ekklesia*; as to the righteousness which is in the Torah, found blameless. (Phil 3:4–6)

> I thank Messiah Yeshua our Lord, Who has strengthened me, because He considered me faithful, putting me into service, even though I was formerly a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent aggressor. Yet I was shown mercy because I acted ignorantly in unbelief; (1Tim 1:12–13)

> *And how will they hear without a preacher? How will they preach unless they are sent?*

- What does Paul mean by using the terms "preacher" and "preach"?
  - He is not talking about a person who delivers a sermon from a pulpit.
  - He is not describing a formal speech before an audience.
- The Greek word behind the translation "preacher" and "preach" is κηρύσσω, *kērussō*, which means "to make an official announcement," "to proclaim publicly."
- In one sense, then, all believers in Yeshua are His witnesses, proclaiming publicly the "good news" that He has come and made salvation for His people.
- If everyone who believes in Yeshua is to proclaim publicly the "Good News" regarding Yeshua, why does Paul indicate a requirement that those who proclaim the gospel be sent?
- Here we are given insight into the Apostolic teaching about sending out workers from the local assembly.

Models of Sending Workers into the Harvest

Yeshua Sends the Twelve

> *These twelve Yeshua sent out after instructing them: "Do not go in the way of the Gentiles, and do not enter any city of the Samaritans … Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves; so be shrewd as serpents and innocent as doves …. He who receives you receives Me, and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me.* (Mt 10:5, 16, 40)

- Sent out by their Master & given instructions regarding a specific mission.
- Given instructions regarding the mission and warnings about the hardships they will encounter.
- The 12 went with the authority of Yeshua. To receive them was to receive Yeshua, and to reject them was to reject Yeshua.
- They were commissioned to teach and lead in Yeshua's Name = in His authority.

Paul & Barnabas Sent Out

> *Now there were at Antioch, in the assembly that was there, prophets and teachers: Barnabas, and Simeon who was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. While they were ministering to the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." Then, when they had fasted and prayed and laid their hands on them, they sent them away. So, being sent out by the Holy Spirit, they went down to Seleucia and from there they sailed to Cyprus.* (Acts 13:1–4)

- Paul & Barnabas were actively serving in the Messianic community at Antioch along with other leading men.
- The Spirit directed the community as a whole to send out Barnabas and Paul – it was not their own idea.
- They recognized the Divine authority by which they were sent out to be Yeshua's servants.
- They were commissioned by the leaders of the Antioch assembly & therefore went with their blessing & support.

Romans 10:15b

> Just as it is written, "HOW BEAUTIFUL ARE THE FEET OF THOSE WHO BRING GOOD NEWS OF GOOD THINGS!" (quote from Is 52:7)

- To support his claim that messengers must be sent with the Gospel if the elect from all the nations should hear, receive, believe, and be saved, Paul quotes Is 52:7.
- He changes the singular of the Hebrew ("How beautiful are the feet of the one who announces…") to the plural, no doubt envisioning the Apostles and their disciples.

- The notion that in the Semitic cultures "feet" were considered ugly and therefore even the most undesirable are made beautiful when carrying the Gospel, is entirely unfounded.
- Rather, the Prophet, in poetic fashion, is ascribing true beauty to the one who carries such a wonderful message of Shalom.

Application

- We all are to be witnesses for Yeshua, making the Gospel known in deed and in word, so that others might hear, receive the good news, call upon Yeshua, believe in Him, confess Him to be their Savior, and be eternally saved.
  - When God is directing workers to be sent out from the local assembly to do the work of evangelism, teaching, and establishing believing assemblies, they should be sent out by the assembly and not presume to go on their own authority.
  - This method gives credibility, strength, and support for the work to be done according to the leading of the Spirit.

Then He said to His disciples,
"The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few.
Therefore beseech the Lord of the harvest
to send out workers into His harvest."

(Matthew 9:37–38)

A Study Through Paul's Epistle to the Romans
Romans 10:14–15

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A Study Through Paul's Epistle to the Romans
Romans 10:16–21

notes by Tim Hegg

The Context: Romans 10:14–15

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Romans 10:16

*However, they did not all heed the good news; for Isaiah says, "*LORD, WHO HAS BELIEVED OUR REPORT?*"*

- Were "preachers" sent to give the message to Israel?
- Yes! The Prophets came proclaiming the "good news," God's message of salvation.
- Even the Messiah Himself came "to His own" (Jn 1:11) as the Prophets had foretold.
- The problem is not that Israel has not been given the good news, the Gospel.
- The problem is that they did not "hear" the good news, that is, they refused to obey the Gospel.
  - "hear" (*shema*) often means "to listen and obey"
  - Paul quotes Is 53:1 to prove his point.

Isaiah 53:1–2

Who has believed our message? And to whom has the arm of Adonai been revealed? For He grew up before Him like a tender shoot, and like a root out of parched ground; He has no stately form or majesty that we should look upon Him, nor appearance that we should be attracted to Him.

- Who is talking in these opening verses of Isaiah 53?
  - The nation of Israel is speaking.
  - This prophecy pictures the national repentance of Israel and their acceptance of Yeshua.

- "to whom" = עַל-מִי could be translated "about whom" – "And the arm of Adonai: about Whom has it been revealed?"
- The Gospel is centered in Yeshua and this was revealed to Israel by the Prophets.
- Paul's point in quoting Is 53:1 is therefore two-fold:
  - that the prophecy describes Israel in the end-days repenting and believing in Yeshua proves that they initially rejected Him.
  - that they rejected the Gospel proves that it did come to them through Prophets who were sent.

Romans 10:17

So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Messiah.

- Now Paul further explains his previous statement regarding hearing the Gospel:
  - The message of the Gospel is the God-ordained means of planting saving faith in those He redeems.

For indeed Jews ask for signs and Greeks search for wisdom; but we preach Messiah crucified, to Jews a stumbling block and to Gentiles foolishness, but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Messiah the power of God and the wisdom of God. (1Cor 1:22–24)

- The core of the Gospel is Messiah and always has been.
- Hearing" = accepting the word of Messiah
- "word of Messiah" = the truth about Messiah

Romans 10:18

But I say, surely they have never heard, have they? Indeed they have; "their voice has gone out into all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world."

- Paul now turns his thoughts to the Gentiles. Did God also give His self-revelation to them?
  - Yes, He has, in the creation itself (cf. 1:20), so that they are without excuse.
  - In the same what that the nation of Israel refused to believe the "word of Messiah," so the Gentiles refused to accept the Creator, Who is Yeshua.
  - To prove this, Paul quotes Ps 19:4[5]

The heavens are telling of the glory of God; and their expanse is declaring the work of His hands. Day to day pours forth speech, and night to night reveals knowledge. There is no speech, nor are there words; their voice is not heard. Their communication has gone out through all the earth, and their utterances to the end of the world. (Ps 19:1–4)

Romans 10:19

But I say, surely Israel did not know, did they? First Moses says, "I will make you jealous by that which is not a nation, by a nation without understanding will I anger you." (quoting Deut 32:21)

- The answer to Paul's rhetorical question is "Yes, they did not know."
- But he has just proven that they were given the true message by the Prophets! How is this reconciled?
- Paul first quotes from the Torah to show that indeed, God did make His truth known to Israel but that they refused to accept it.
- Thus Moses prophecies that God will make Israel jealous by gathering in the Gentiles.

Romans 10:20

And Isaiah is very bold and says, "I was found by those who did not seek Me, I became manifest to those who did not ask for Me." (quoting Is 65:1)

- Next Paul quotes from Isaiah, who also prophecies of the ingathering of the Gentiles.
- This is parallel to 9:30 –

What shall we say then? That Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, attained righteousness, even the righteousness which is by faith. (Rom 9:30)

Romans 10:21

But as for Israel He says, "all the day long I have stretched out My hands to a disobedient and obstinate people." (quoting Is 65:2)

- This brings Paul back to his main subject: God has not abandoned Israel but continues to call the nation back to repentance and acceptance of His Messiah, Yeshua.

- What does Paul want us to know by these 3 quotes?
  - God revealed Himself and His method of righteousness to Israel. Israel cannot plead ignorance.
  - Yet Israel has rejected God's revealed truth, the "word about the Messiah."
  - God is gathering in the elect from the nations, and this will inevitably bring Israel to jealousy.

For from Him and through Him
and to Him are all things.
To Him be the glory forever. Amen.

Romans 11:36

A Study Through Paul's Epistle to the Romans
Romans 11:1–6

notes by Tim Hegg

Romans 11 – Outline

I. vv. 1–10

Israel's national rejection of Yeshua will continue, yet God's unfailing grace to Israel will be known by the presence of a remnant in every generation.

II. vv. 11–24

Israel's national rejection of Yeshua will not last forever. There is coming a time with the majority will overtake the remnant

III. vv. 25–32

Even the disobedience of Israel and their national rejection of Yeshua is within the mystery of God's sovereign plan and will, in the end, bring Him glory.

IV. vv. 33–36

Doxology of God's greatness and majesty.

Romans 11:1

I say then, God has not rejected His people, has He? May it never be! For I too am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin.

- Once again Paul asks a rhetorical question to which the obvious answer is "No!"
- But even question itself, using the word "rejected," (ποθέω, *potheō*) connects to several texts in the Tanach (Lxx) which use the same word in the same way.

For ADONAI will not abandon (ποθέω) His people on account of His great name, because adonai has been pleased to make you a people for Himself. (1Sam 12:22)

For ADONAI will not abandon (ποθέω) His people, nor will He forsake His inheritance. (Ps 94:14)

- Thus, even the way Paul asks the question makes clear what the answer will be, because the Scriptures have already given the answer!
- Paul constantly proves his teaching by showing how it rests upon the inspired word of God.

- Thus, Paul uses the strongest possible negative to answer his own question: “Has God rejected His people? No! Never! No Way! Absolutely not!
- Paul’s second line of proof is his own personal testimony:
  - He speaks to his physical, Jewish lineage to prove that he is part of God’s chosen nation, Israel.
  - Note that he calls himself an “Israelite” even though he was of the tribe of Benjamin. “Israelite” and “Jewish” were equated terms in Paul’s day.
  - He sees himself as representing the believing remnant of Israel who have confessed Yeshua.
  - He sees in his own apostolic commission that God is fulfilling His plan to make Israel a light to the nations, for Paul was an apostle to the Gentiles.

Roman 11:2

God has not rejected His people whom He foreknew. Or do you not know what the Scripture says in the passage about Elijah, how he pleads with God against Israel?

- Paul’s third line of proof is God’s sovereign election and foreknowledge of Israel, which was clearly made known by Israel’s prophets.

Thus says ADONAI who made you and formed you from the womb, who will help you, ‘Do not fear, O Jacob My servant; And you Jeshurun whom I have chosen. (Is 44:2)

Thus says ADONAI, your Redeemer, and the one who formed you from the womb, “I, ADONAI, am the maker of all things, stretching out the heavens by Myself and spreading out the earth all alone, (Is 44:24)

- Paul’s fourth argument is the record of the remnant in the days of Elijah.
- The Prophet Elijah is pleading with God that He would punish wayward Israel because the entire nation has forsaken Him.

Romans 11:3

"Lord, THEY HAVE KILLED YOUR PROPHETS, THEY HAVE TORN DOWN YOUR ALTARS, AND I ALONE AM LEFT, AND THEY ARE SEEKING MY LIFE."

- Paul gives a general paraphrase of the actual text.
- From Elijah's own perspective, the whole nation, all but himself, had forsaken God and turned to idolatry.
- But what is the reality?

Romans 11:4

But what is the divine response to him? "I HAVE KEPT for Myself SEVEN THOUSAND PEOPLE WHO HAVE NOT BOWED THE KNEE TO BAAL."

- Paul again gives a general paraphrase, adding "for Myself" to highlight God's sovereign action.
- Elijah was not the only one left who had remained faithful! There were 7000 others unknown to Elijah.
- The number of 7000 people may be a general figure, but it may also offer the sense of a complete number, i.e., those who, by God's sovereign design, were saved from turning to idolatry.
- Paul uses this notice from 1Ki 19:18 as proof that God sovereignly maintains a remnant in all generations.

Romans 11:5–6

In the same way then, there has also come to be at the present time a remnant according to God's gracious choice. But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works, otherwise grace is no longer grace.

- Even as the remnant in Elijah's day was clearly the result of God's sovereign grace, so it is true in every generation.
- God proves His faithfulness to Israel by always maintaining a remnant who have true saving faith.
- Thus, the remnant does not exist because of physical lineage, nor on the basis of religious observance.
- The remnant exists because of God's election by grace.
- Since Paul is part of the remnant in his day, he knows from his own salvation experience that his faith in Yeshua was the result of God's sovereign action.

- If the remnant are those who stand righteous before God, and it exists by God's grace, then it is clear that they are not righteous on the basis of their ethnicity.
- For the majority of ethnic Israel are not righteous before God because they have rejected Yeshua.
- Here we see Paul's understanding of "works"
  - the belief that one "gets in" by having "legal Jewish status."
  - that one "stays in" by keeping Torah.
- But such a teaching denies God's grace, for grace is not something that is earned or else it is no longer grace.
- This proves that the remnant of Israel in each generation exists by God's sovereign, gracious election.
- Thus God receives the glory for the existence of the remnant within Israel, for He remains faithful to His covenant promises in spite of the fact that the majority of Israel refuses to accept God's Messiah, Yeshua.

And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us,
and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten
from the Father, full of grace and truth.
For of His fullness we have all received,
and grace upon grace.
For the Torah was given through Moses;
grace and truth were realized through
Yeshua the Messiah.

John 1:14–17

A Study Through Paul's Epistle to the Romans
Romans 11:7–11

notes by Tim Hegg

Romans 11:1–24

I. vv. 1–10

Israel's national rejection of Yeshua will continue, yet God's unfailing grace to Israel will be known by the presence of a remnant in every generation.

II. vv. 11–24

Israel's national rejection of Yeshua will not last forever. There is coming a time with the majority will overtake the remnant

Romans 11:7

What then? What Israel is seeking, it has not obtained, but those who were chosen obtained it, and the rest were hardened;

- Having demonstrated that God has not rejected national Israel, proven by the presence of a believing remnant in every generation, Paul gives a further explanation of what he wrote in 9:31 –

but Israel, pursuing a Torah of righteousness, did not arrive at that Torah. (Rom 9:31)

- Israel as a nation did not attain to the righteousness based upon faith because they tried to gain righteousness by the flesh, i.e., people-group status.
- A chosen remnant within Israel is reckoned as righteous before God because they are granted faith.
- This agrees with the premise Paul taught in 9:18, "So then He has mercy on whom He desires, and He hardens whom He desires."
- What is clear is that the hardening was the direct act of God and though unexplainable, should be received as such. There is no basis for anti-Semitism here!
- The KJV and NKJV have "were blinded" instead of "were hardened," but this meaning for the Greek word *pōroō* developed over time.
- The original sense of the word was "to be hard" and this fits the picture given in the Tanach of a heart of stone.

And I will give them one heart, and put a new spirit within them. And I will take the heart of stone out of their flesh and give them a heart of flesh, (Ezek.11:19)

Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. (Ezek. 36:26)

Romans 11:8

just as it is written, "GOD GAVE THEM A SPIRIT OF STUPOR, EYES TO SEE NOT AND EARS TO HEAR NOT, DOWN TO THIS VERY DAY."

- Once again, Paul goes to the Scriptures to support his teaching.
- He combines words from Deut 29:4[3] and Isaiah 29:10, primarily following the Lxx.
- "a spirit of stupor" is from Is 29:10, "For Adonai has poured over you a spirit of deep sleep …." where "deep sleep" is understood to be "drowsiness or insensitivity" – unable to discern reality.
- Paul has cast the language of Deut 29:4[3] in a positive mode but this has the same sense:

Yet to this day Adonai has not given you a heart to know, nor eyes to see, nor ears to hear. (Deut 29:4[3])

just as it is written, "GOD GAVE THEM A SPIRIT OF STUPOR, EYES TO SEE NOT AND EARS TO HEAR NOT, DOWN TO THIS VERY DAY." (Rom 11:8)

- "down to this very day" = "Yet to this day," meaning that from the time of Moses even until Paul's day, the spiritual blindness remained.

Romans 11:9–10

And David says, "LET THEIR TABLE BECOME A SNARE AND A TRAP, AND A STUMBLING BLOCK AND A RETRIBUTION TO THEM. LET THEIR EYES BE DARKENED TO SEE NOT, AND BEND THEIR BACKS FOREVER."

- Now Paul quotes from Ps 69:22–23[23–24] (which is 68:23-24 in the Lxx).
- Paul uses this quote as yet another example of how God is able to harden the hearts of people.

- In the context of Ps 69, these verses are David's prayer that God would ensnare his enemies and bring His retribution upon them "forever" ("continually").
- Paul is not suggesting that David's words pertain directly to national Israel, but that his prayer gives evidence that God is able to harden hearts.

Romans 11:11

I say then, they did not stumble so as to fall, did they? May it never be! But by their transgression salvation has come to the Gentiles, to make them jealous.

- Paul has made it clear that national Israel's rejection of Yeshua is fulfilling God's mysterious plan.
- But having quoted David who asks God to bring retribution upon his enemies "continually," Paul's important question is this: Is Israel's rejection of Yeshua permanent? Did they fall so as to never get back up?
- Once again, Paul answers with the strongest negative: "No!" "No way!" "Never!" "Impossible!"
- And so he gives us the first notice of an explanation for why God has hardened the majority and only chosen a remnant of Israel in each generation.
- It is God's way of bringing salvation to the Gentiles, which will, in turn, make Israel jealous.
- This use of "jealousy" is based upon Deut 32:21, which Paul has already quoted in 10:19 –

"They have made Me jealous with what is not God; They have provoked Me to anger with their idols. So I will make them jealous with those who are not a people; I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation." (Deut 32:21)

- Quite clearly, Israel becomes jealous when, as a nation, they see the elect of the nations, Gentiles, enjoying the very blessings promised to Israel in God's covenant.
- Has this happened in the nearly 2000 years since the rise of the Christian Church? No – still only a remnant of Israel has received Yeshua as the true Messiah.

- How, then, will the salvation of the elect from the nations bring Israel to jealousy?
  - When a significant number of those who confess Yeshua are upholding the Torah as a way of life.
  - When those who profess Yeshua live obediently and therefore are evidently blessed by God.
- Is this, then, perhaps one of the primary reasons that in our times there is a Torah awakening taking place?
- Is one reason God is raising up Messianic communities so that they might bring Jewish people to jealousy and be a means of maintaining the remnant in our day?
- Have we as a Messianic community considered how together we may used of God to stir up jealousy within the wider Jewish community?

Behold, My Servant, whom I uphold;
My chosen one in whom My soul delights.
I have put My Spirit upon Him;
He will bring forth justice to the nations.
He will not cry out or raise His voice,
nor make His voice heard in the street.
A bruised reed He will not break
and a dimly burning wick He will not extinguish;
He will faithfully bring forth justice.
He will not be disheartened or crushed
until He has established justice in the earth;
and the coastlands will wait expectantly for His Torah.
Isaiah 42:1–4

A Study Through Paul's Epistle to the Romans
Romans 11:12–15

notes by Tim Hegg

Context

II. vv. 11–24

Israel's national rejection of Yeshua will not last forever. There is coming a time with the majority will overtake the remnant

Romans 11:11

I say then, they did not stumble so as to fall, did they? May it never be! But by their transgression salvation has come to the Gentiles, to make them jealous.

- Paul has introduced the mysterious plan of God by which He will fulfill His promise to Abraham:
  - Israel's rejection of Yeshua became the catalyst for the Gospel to be taken to the Gentiles.

Romans 11:12

Now if their transgression is riches for the world and their failure is riches for the Gentiles, how much more will their fulfillment be!

national Israel elect from the nations

- Paul is talking about national Israel's rejection of Yeshua.
  - Israel's rejection of Yeshua became the catalyst for the Gospel to be taken to the Gentiles. (Acts 18:6)
  - The Gentiles' acceptance of the Gospel will result in Israel becoming jealous for the covenant blessings God promised to the descendants of Jacob.

But when they resisted and blasphemed, he shook out his garments and said to them, "Your blood be on your own heads! I am clean. From now on I will go to the Gentiles." (Acts 18:6)

- Paul, like Yeshua & the Twelve, went first to the "lost sheep of Israel." Cf. Rom 1:16, "to the Jew first…."
- Only after the large-scale rejection of Yeshua by the Jewish people did he turn his efforts to the Gentiles.

- "transgression" and "failure"
  - Both are singular = the rejection of Yeshua
  - Rejecting Yeshua is the worst transgression because Yeshua is the very goal of the Torah.
  - Their failure = their inability to attain righteousness (9:30–31).

- Why does Paul use the word "riches" to denote salvation that has come to the Gentiles?
  - He is speaking of the "riches" of God's grace.
  - He is speaking of the supreme value of Yeshua's sacrifice by which our debt of sin has been paid.
  - He is talking about Yeshua's righteousness being imputed to all who believe in Him.

He predestined us to adoption as sons through Yeshua Messiah to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace which He lavished on us. (Eph 1:5–8)

- What does Paul mean by "their fulfillment"?
  - It is clear that he is speaking of the fulfillment of national, ethnic Israel, the same group that has transgressed and failed to obtain righteousness.
  - Their fulfillment must be their acceptance of Yeshua i.e., the opposite of their transgression & failure.
  - Paul is building the case for his statement in v. 26

For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery – so that you will not be wise in your own estimation – that a partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in; and so all Israel will be saved; just as it is written, "the deliverer will come from Zion, He will remove ungodliness from Jacob." [Rom 11:25–26 (quote from Is 59:20)]

Romans 11:13–14

But I am speaking to you who are Gentiles. Inasmuch then as I am an apostle of Gentiles, I magnify my ministry, if somehow I might move to jealousy my fellow countrymen and save some of them.

- Paul wants to make clear that when he emphasized the "fulfillment" of Israel, he was not diminishing the strategic role of the Gentiles believers in the overall scope of salvation history.
- In fact, Paul wants to explain why his ministry to the Gentiles is valid.
- If his ministry to the Gentiles was in order to diminish God's promises to Israel, or even to replace Israel, then he would be acting contrary to God's own word.
- On the contrary, Paul's ministry to the Gentiles was in complete fulfillment of God's covenant promises, for:
  - it was a significant beginning of bringing the blessing to "all the families/nations of the earth."
  - it would ultimately be used of God to bring blessing upon Israel as well & was therefore in line with God's covenant promises.
- This does not mean that the salvation of the Gentiles is merely a secondary measure with the salvation of Israel being primary.
- Rather, even as God chose the 2nd born to carry His covenant promises, so He chose the Gentiles to be the means by which He would save Israel, His firstborn.

... so that God's purpose according to His choice would stand

Abraham
Jacob - 2nd
Isaac - 2nd
Judah - 4th
David - 9th
Yeshua

- "move to jealousy" and "save some of them."
  - Paul knows a remnant will exist in each generation.
  - But how will it exist now that Israel had rejected Yeshua?
  - through the Gospel (1:16) being lived out among the elect from the nations.
  - "save some of them" = "they would be saved through seeing & hearing the Gospel among the Gentiles"

Romans 11:15

For if their rejection is the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead?

- "their rejection" = Israel as a nation rejecting Yeshua
- "reconciliation of the world" = the salvation of the elect from the nations, i.e., Gentiles
- "their acceptance" = Israel's acceptance of Yeshua
- "life from the dead"
  - Clearly requiring God's miraculous power.
  - Surely requiring the regenerative work of the Spirit.
  - If Israel's rejection of Yeshua appears to be like a death, then their national revival in faith will be akin to a resurrection.

The hand of ADONAI was upon me, and He brought me out by the Spirit of ADONAI and set me down in the middle of the valley; and it was full of bones. He caused me to pass among them round about, and behold, there were very many on the surface of the valley; and lo, they were very dry. He said to me, "Son of man, can these bones live?" And I answered, "O Lord ADONAI, You know." Again He said to me, "Prophesy over these bones and say to them, 'O dry bones, hear the word of ADONAI.' "Thus says the Lord ADONAI to these bones, 'Behold, I will cause breath to enter you that you may come to life. 'I will put sinews on you, make flesh grow back on you, cover you with skin and put breath in you that you may come alive; and you will know that I am ADONAI.'"

Ezekiel 37:4–6

A Study Through Paul's Epistle to the Romans
Romans 11:16–18

notes by Tim Hegg

Context

II. vv. 11–24

Israel's national rejection of Yeshua will not last forever. There is coming a time with the majority will overtake the remnant

Romans 11:15

11 I say then, they did not stumble so as to fall, did they? May it never be! But by their transgression salvation has come to the Gentiles, to make them jealous. 12 Now if their transgression is riches for the world and their failure is riches for the Gentiles, how much more will their fulfillment be! 13 But I am speaking to you who are Gentiles. Inasmuch then as I am an apostle of Gentiles, I magnify my ministry, 14 if somehow I might move to jealousy my fellow countrymen and save some of them. 15 For if their rejection is the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead?

- Paul has introduced the mysterious plan of God by which He will fulfill His promise to Abraham:
  - Israel's rejection of Yeshua became the catalyst for the Gospel to be taken to the Gentiles.

Romans 11:16

If the first piece of dough is holy, the lump is also; and if the root is holy, the branches are too.

- Let's consider Paul's line of thinking here:
  - Does God still consider Israel His chosen nation
    ~ Absolutely! God keeps His promises!?
    ~ Israel's rejection of Yeshua is part of God's plan.
    ~ The remnant of Israel proves God's faithfulness.
- Paul first uses the Torah commandment of separating challah to illustrate his point.
- The Torah commandment is found in Num 15:17–21 and is the primary subject of the Mishnah tractate Challah.

Numbers 15:17–21

Then Adonai spoke to Moses, saying, "Speak to the sons of Israel and say to them, 'When you enter the Land where I bring you, then it shall be, that when you eat of the food of the land, you shall lift up an offering to Adonai. Of the first of your dough you shall lift up a cake as an offering; as the offering of the threshing floor, so you shall lift it up. From the first of your dough you shall give to Adonai an offering throughout your generations.'"

The Law of First Fruits

- It is clear that Paul is talking about the first offering of the dough because he uses the same Greek words in our verse as the Lxx uses to translate *rei'shit 'arisoteichem*, "the first of your dough" in Num 15:20.
- Until the "first of the dough" is taken and set aside as a *terumah*, an "offering" to Adonai, the remainder of the dough could not be used.
- Only when the "first of the dough" is properly "sanctified" (=holy, set apart to God) does the remainder of the dough become usable.
- In Paul's illustration, what does the "first piece of dough" represent? (remember "holy" = "set apart")
  - the Patriarchs: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob
  - Jewish believers, i.e, the remnant
  - Yeshua the Messiah
  - The presence of Jewish believers in Yeshua in every generation is proof that the remainder of the nation ("the lump") is likewise set apart to God.
- In Paul's second illustration, he introduces his famous Olive Tree analogy.
  - It corresponds to the challah illustration in that a part affects the whole.
  - In the same way that the first piece of dough, given to the priests, rendered the whole batch of dough useable, so the root affects every branch in the tree.
- How should we understand Paul's metaphor of the Olive Tree?
- The next two verses give crucial information about Paul's Olive Tree metaphor:

Romans 11:17–18

But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive, were grafted in among them and became partaker with them of the rich root of the olive tree, do not be arrogant toward the branches; but if you are arrogant, remember that it is not you who supports the root, but the root supports you.

- The root is "holy," meaning "set apart" for a sacred use.
- A number of interpretations have been given:
  - root = the Patriarchs: Abraham, Isaac, & Jacob
  - root = the Jewish remnant
  - root = Yeshua the Messiah

- The root is not the "remnant," because the remnant are themselves the natural branches that remain in the Olive Tree by faith in Yeshua.
- The root is not Yeshua, because Paul makes it clear that no one who is "in Yeshua" can be separated (broken off) from Him.
- The root is therefore the Patriarchs, but specifically, the covenant God made with Abraham and established with Isaac and Jacob.
- Thus, the Olive Tree represents the true people of God, the ekklesia Yeshua promised to build (Mt 16:18).
- The "natural branches" are those who are born into the visible people of Israel, i.e., that physical descendants of Jacob.
- The "wild branches" are those chosen from the nations, Gentiles or non-Jews, who are grafted into the Olive Tree through their being joined to Adonai through faith in the Messiah Yeshua.

But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive, were grafted in among them and became partaker with them of the rich root of the olive tree,

- When would branches be broken or pruned off of an olive tree?
- When they were not producing fruit.
- This is true for any branch, whether natural or grafted in (i.e., wild branch).
- The wild branch which is grafted in is nourished by the same root as the natural branches.
- The root represents the faithfulness of God to His covenant promises, the nourishment for the branches.

- Thus, both the natural and the wild branches have their life source in their covenant relationship to God, participating in the faith of Abraham, i.e., faith in Yeshua.
- When are "natural branches" broken off?
  - When they have rejected Yeshua = when they are therefore unable to bring forth the true fruit of righteousness.
  - This means that there are two levels to God's covenant promises: temporal and eternal.



Romans 11:18

do not be arrogant toward the branches; but if you are arrogant, remember that it is not you who supports the root, but the root supports you.

- How would the wild branches (believing Gentiles) become arrogant toward the branches?
  - by thinking that God has abandoned Israel and put them in their place.
  - by thinking that their blessings are the result of their own righteousness.
- God is the One Who sustains the life of His children.
- It is God's own faithfulness upon which we depend.
- If for one moment we think that God could go back on His promise to Israel, we have forgotten that it is His promise to Israel that sustains the whole structure of eternal salvation.

Read Zechariah 2:8–11

A Study Through Paul's Epistle to the Romans
Romans 11:19–23

notes by Tim Hegg

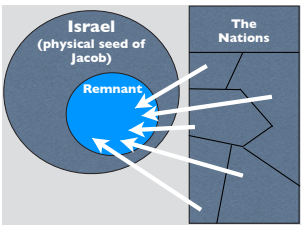
Context: Romans 11:13–18

But I am speaking to you who are Gentiles. Inasmuch then as I am an apostle of Gentiles, I magnify my ministry, if somehow I might move to jealousy my fellow countrymen and save some of them. For if their rejection is the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead? If the first piece of dough is holy, the lump is also; and if the root is holy, the branches are too. But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive, were grafted in among them and became partaker with them of the rich root of the olive tree, do not be arrogant toward the branches; but if you are arrogant, remember that it is not you who supports the root, but the root supports you.

Romans 11:19-20

You will say then, "Branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in." Quite right, they were broken off for their unbelief, but you stand by your faith. Do not be conceited, but fear;

- Paul gives two reasons for why the natural branches were broken off – one positive; one negative.
  - to bring about the ingrafting of the Gentile believers
  - because of their refusal to believe in Yeshua
- Paul therefore teaches us that the Olive Tree represents the visible *ekklesia*, the remnant of Israel into which those chosen from the nations are grafted.
  - Natural branches "get in" by birth, but remain in by genuine faith in Yeshua.
  - Wild branches "get in" by confessing Yeshua and remain in by genuine faith in Yeshua.



The Remnant

• the *ekklesia* – those who confess Yeshua to be the true Messiah & Savior

• Like Israel coming out of Egypt, the remnant, the *ekklesia*, is a mixed multitude.

The Ekklesia: A Mixed Multitude

Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?' And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me you who practice lawlessness.' (Matt 7:22-23)

And he said to them, 'An enemy has done this!' The slaves said to him, 'Do you want us, then, to go and gather them up?' But he said, 'No; for while you are gathering up the tares, you may uproot the wheat with them. Allow both to grow together until the harvest; and in the time of the harvest I will say to the reapers, 'First gather up the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them up; but gather the wheat into my barn.' (Matt 13:28–30)

They went out from us, but they were not really of us; for if they had been of us, they would have remained with us; but they went out, so that it would be shown that they all are not of us. (1Jn 2:19)

Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith; examine yourselves! Or do you not recognize this about yourselves, that Yeshua Messiah is in you — unless indeed you fail the test? (2Cor 13:5)

Romans 11:19-20

You will say then, "Branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in." Quite right, they were broken off for their unbelief, but you stand by your faith. Do not be conceited, but fear;

- Paul's admonition speaks to the reality of saving faith:
  - "do not be conceited"
  - conceit = self-reliance = contrary to true faith
  - faith is confessing my total inability and that I therefore am entirely dependent upon God's mercy.
  - "but fear" = "fear God"
  - faith is a gift of God but it must be strengthened, enlarged, and maintained by the child of God.
  - what guarantees our perseverance in faith is that Yeshua is interceding, i.e., praying, for us.

Philippians 2:12–13

So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.

- "fear & trembling" = full recognition that without God's ongoing faithfulness to us, we would perish.
- Both our desire to please Him, and or ability to do so, are the result of His work through Yeshua our Messiah.

Romans 11:21

for if God did not spare the natural branches, He will not spare you, either.

- The natural branches (national Israel) were not spared because of their unbelief.
- If Gentiles, who have confessed Yeshua with their mouth, do not prove that they have saving faith through their changed lives, their faithlessness marks them as unbelievers and will also not be spared.
- This is a *kal vechomer* argument:
  - If God did not spare the natural branches when they persistent in unbelief, then surely
  - He will not spare the wild branches if they prove themselves to be unbelievers.

Romans 11:22

Behold then the kindness and severity of God; to those who fell, severity, but to you, God's kindness, if you continue in His kindness; otherwise you also will be cut off.

- Paul gives further explanation of God's actions:
  - His severity is seen in that He is willing to prune away even the natural branches for their unbelief.
  - His kindness is seen in that He willing gives His grace to those who are not from His chosen nation.

- We would expect Paul to write: "…if you continue in faithfulness," but rather he says "…in His kindness."
  - If a person has genuinely received God's grace, he or she will be moved to show grace to others.
  - To be arrogant toward the natural branches is therefore opposite of how someone who has received God's grace would act.
  - Since Paul uses the term "cut off," a phrase common in the Tanach, we see that he is speaking of being "cut off" in covenant terms.

Romans 11:23

And they also, if they do not continue in their unbelief, will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again.

- Just as the Gentile believers were once "separate from Messiah, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of the promise, having no hope and without God in the world…," but have now been "brought near," so unbelieving Israel can also be brought to faith and grafted back into the covenant.
- Why does Paul add this phrase? Isn't obvious that God is able to do whatever He desires?
  - Yes, of course this is obvious!
  - But if Gentile believers are drawn to think that Israel could never be turned to receive Yeshua as Messiah, they must be reminded that God is both able and has promised to do just that.
  - Even more, Gentile believers should realize that they play a strategic role in being God's servants in bringing Israel to faith in our Messiah, Yeshua.
  - According to Paul, one of the deep longings of Yeshua's ekklesia out to be the salvation of the Jewish people.

Adonai is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in lovingkindness. He will not always strive with us, nor will He keep His anger forever. He has not dealt with us according to our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is His lovingkindness toward those who fear Him. As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us. Just as a father has compassion on his children, so Adonai has compassion on those who fear Him.

Psalm 103:8–13

A Study Through Paul's Epistle to the Romans
Romans 11:24–27

notes by Tim Hegg

Context: Romans 11:19–23

You will say then, "Branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in." Quite right, they were broken off for their unbelief, but you stand by your faith. Do not be conceited, but fear; for if God did not spare the natural branches, He will not spare you, either. Behold then the kindness and severity of God; to those who fell, severity, but to you, God's kindness, if you continue in His kindness; otherwise you also will be cut off. And they also, if they do not continue in their unbelief, will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again.

- Paul's primary teaching points in the previous section:
  - Israel's national rejection of Yeshua was used by God to take the Gospel to the nations.
  - This was in order to fulfill God's promise to Abraham that in his seed "all the nations/families of the earth would be blessed."
  - Both the natural (Jewish) and the wild (Gentile) branches remain in the "tree" by faith.
  - Thus all receive the eternal promises of the covenant only by possessing a genuine faith in Yeshua.
  - When Gentiles act in arrogance toward the Jews they may well be showing themselves to be confessors but not possessors of true, saving faith.
  - If they prove themselves to be without faith, they too will be broken off even as the unbelieving natural branches were broken off from the tree.
  - The olive tree, therefore, represents the visible community that professes Yeshua, but this community may include those who have an outward confession but no inward reality of saving faith.
  - There is therefore no room for arrogance. Rather, Gentile believers should offer thanks for God's mercy in grafting them into the remnant of Israel.
  - Moreover, just because some natural branches have been broken off because of unbelief, they can just as easily be re-grafted into the tree if they come to faith in Yeshua.

Romans 11:24

For if you were cut off from what is by nature a wild olive tree, and were grafted contrary to nature into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these who are the natural branches be grafted into their own olive tree?

- Paul continues to use a *qal vechomer* argument:
  - If God is able and willing to graft branches from a wild olive tree into a cultivated one, He surely is able to graft in branches which were native to the tree.
- But Paul & his readers must have known that grafting wild olive branches into an established, cultivated olive tree, was not something commonly done.
  - Usually cultivated branches were grafted into wild olive rootstock, since the wild olive was stronger and more disease resistant.
  - Thus, the metaphor Paul uses is "contrary to nature," which emphasizes that ingrafting Gentiles, or re-grafting broken branches, requires God's power.
- Paul emphasizes a second important truth: The covenant people of God are made up of Jew and Gentile.
  - This means that Gentiles who come to faith in Messiah and are grafted into the covenant people of God (Israel), do not "become Jews."
  - Only when Jew & Gentile embrace the reality that together they make up the family of God, is He seen to be faithful to His covenant promises.
- This makes clear another important truth:
  - God does not have two families: one Jewish and one Gentile.
  - He has one family, one flock, and one Shepherd.
  - In God's family, the Jew needs the Gentile just as much as the Gentile needs the Jew.
- Therefore, when Yeshua promised to build His ekklesia (Matt 16:18), He was not planning to start something new, which had never before existed.
  - He promised to bring into the remnant of Israel those who were chosen from the nations.
  - In doing so, He is fulfilling the promise to Abraham and completing the New Covenant.

Romans 11:25-26a

For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery – so that you will not be wise in your own estimation – that a partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in; and so all Israel will be saved;

- Paul teaches us an important lesson: ignorance of God's truth may well lead to spiritual arrogance.
- We overcome such ignorance by knowing what the Bible actually says and what it means.
- Paul refers to this teaching as a "mystery."
  - Paul uses "mystery" to describe how a prophecy of the Tanach would be fulfilled in human history.
  - How will Israel, at the end of days, be restored to faith in God and His Messiah?
- Paul unfolds the mystery of God's salvation plan by describing three successive stages of its fulfillment:
  - The hardening of national Israel for a time.
  - The ingathering of the elect from the nations.
  - The salvation of national Israel.
- What is the "fullness of the Gentiles"?
  - It is connected to the Abrahamic promise, "…all the families/nations of the earth will be blessed."
  - The "fullness of the Gentiles" means when every nation or family of the earth is represented in the family of God by faith in Yeshua.

This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all the nations, and then the end will come. (Matt 24:14)

- Two possible meanings for "and so" (*kai houtōs*)
  - [time] "and then" = after the fullness of the Gentiles has come in all Israel will be saved.
  - [method] "and in this way" = the ingathering of the Gentiles will be the means by which God will bring national Israel to salvation.
- What does "all Israel will be saved" mean?
  - the Church: all who are saved, both Jews and Gentiles
  - all the elect Jews throughout earth's history
  - every Israelite that has ever lived
  - the nation as it exists at the time of Yeshua's return

"All Israel" is another way of saying:

- the Church: all who are saved, both Jews and Gentiles
  - ~ the name "Israel" cannot mean something different than what it means in the previous context.
  - ~ "Israel" in this verse is the same "Israel" upon which a partial hardening has fallen.
- all the elect Jews throughout earth's history
  - ~ there would be no need for Paul to explain this since he has already made it clear that the remnant of Israel is saved.
- every Israelite that has ever lived
  - ~ this would contradict what Paul has taught in 9:6, "they are not all Israel who are descended from Israel."
- the nation as it exists at the time of Yeshua's return
  - ~ even as national Israel has rejected Yeshua as Messiah, so national Israel will receive Him in the last days.
  - ~ This does not necessarily mean every Jewish individual at that time will be saved, but that the nation as a whole will be known for its acceptance of Yeshua.

Examples of the Phrase "all Israel"

Then Samuel said, "Gather all Israel to Mizpah and I will pray to Adonai for you." (1Sam 7:5)
Then Samuel died; and all Israel gathered together and mourned for him, and buried him at his house in Ramah. (1Sam 25:1)
Then Rehoboam went to Shechem, for all Israel had come to Shechem to make him king. (1Ki 12:1)
When the kingdom of Rehoboam was established and strong, he and all Israel with him forsook the Torah of Adonai. (1I Chron 12:1)

Zechariah 12:10

I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication, so that they will look on Me whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over Him like the bitter weeping over a firstborn.

Romans 11:26–27

The Deliverer will come from Zion, He will remove ungodliness from Jacob; This is My covenant with them, when I take away their sins.
(Is 50:20-21a; 27:9 Lxx)

A Study Through Paul's Epistle to the Romans
Romans 11:26–29

notes by Tim Hegg

Context: Romans 11:25–27

For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery — so that you will not be wise in your own estimation — that a partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in; and so all Israel will be saved; just as it is written, "the Deliverer will come from Zion, He will remove ungodliness from Jacob. This is My covenant with them, when I take away their sins."

- In v. 26, Paul has given us one of his primary conclusions for this section of the epistle, namely, that there is coming a time when "all Israel will be saved."
- This means that there is coming a time when the nation of Israel, rather than being characterized by their rejection of Yeshua, will be known as receiving Him.
- To prove this point, Paul quotes supportive verses from the Tanach.
  - He quotes from Isaiah 59:20–21, and appears to combine this with a phrase from Isaiah 27:9.
  - He takes his quotes from the Lxx but may be giving a general sense rather than a verbatim quote.

Hebrew	Lxx	Paul
"A Redeemer will come to Zion, and to those who turn from transgression in Jacob," declares Adonai.	"And the Deliverer will come for Zion's sake, and will turn away ungodliness from Jacob…" declares the Lord.	The Deliverer will come from Zion, He will remove ungodliness from Jacob.

- Redeemer & Deliverer are essentially the same.
- "to Zion" / "for Zion's sake" / "out from Zion"
  - The Hebrew "to Zion" (using the preposition *lamed*)could just as well be understood as "for the sake of Zion," as the Lxx has it.
- Why does Paul have "will come from Zion"?
  - Yeshua already came "to Zion," to the people of Israel.
  - "from" or "out from" may be used as an identifying mark of the Redeemer: He is "from Zion" meaning Israel is His homeland.

- For Paul, Yeshua is the true Messiah who, in His incarnation, came to Zion but was rejected.
- He comes "out of Zion" to ascend to the Father so that through His intercession, the divine plan of salvation will be accomplished.
- His return to Jerusalem will be the capstone event with the result that "all Israel will be saved."
- In the final analysis, that the "Deliverer comes from Zion" clearly means that He has "come to Zion."
- He comes forth from the gates of Zion to show the whole world that He is victorious and has accomplished what He said He would do.

• Does Israel repent first and then Yeshua comes, or is Yeshua's coming the catalyst for Israel's repentance?
- Isaiah seems to have the Redeemer coming to those who have already repented of their sin.
- The Lxx and Paul have the Deliverer removing ungodliness from Jacob.
- "He's right, and he's right? They can't both be right!"
- Can a bullet pass through a piece of wood without a hole being there first? Does the bullet make the hole or is the hole there first?
- Yeshua will come to a repentant Israel because His coming will bring them to repentance.
- This is what Zechariah prophesied.

> I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication, so that they will look on Me whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over Him like the bitter weeping over a firstborn. (Zech 12:10)

> In that day a fountain will be opened for the house of David and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for impurity. It will come about in that day," declares Adonai Tzeva'ot, "that I will cut off the names of the idols from the land, and they will no longer be remembered; and I will also remove the prophets and the unclean spirit from the land. (Zech 13:1–2)

Hebrew	Lxx	Paul
"As for Me, this is My covenant with them," says Adonai. Therefore through this Jacob's iniquity will be forgiven….	"And this will be My covenant with them," says the Lord. Therefore the lawlessness of Jacob will be taken away.	This is My covenant with them…when I take way their sins.

- To which covenant is being referenced in Paul's quote?
  - It must be the New Covenant promised by Jeremiah
  - the New Covenant is national in its scope;
  - the New Covenant promises forgiveness of sins;
  - the New Covenant promises that Israel will be loyal to God and walk in His ways.

Jeremiah 31:31–34

Behold, days are coming," declares ADONAI, "when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, although I was a husband to them," declares ADONAI. But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days," declares ADONAI, "I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. They will not teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, 'Know ADONAI,' for they will all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them," declares ADONAI, "for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more."

Romans 11:28–29

From the standpoint of the gospel they are enemies for your sake, but from the standpoint of God's choice they are beloved for the sake of the fathers; for the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.

standpoint of the Gospel	enemies	in respect to you (believers)
standpoint of divine election	beloved	in respect to the fathers

- "from the standpoint of the gospel" = the success of the gospel up to the present time.
  - From the vantage point of the followers of Yeshua, whether Jewish and Gentile, the nation of Israel appears to be an enemy to the Gospel.
  - Consider Paul's use of the term "enemy" in regard to unbelievers.

For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. (Rom 5:10)

- "from the standpoint of divine election" = God's eternal purpose which He will inevitably bring to pass.
  - If we accept the divine revelation of the Scriptures, we see that God has a purpose for national Israel which has not yet been fulfilled.
  - This purpose is revealed in the covenant promises made to Israel and fulfilled in and by Israel's Messiah.
  - "beloved for the sake of the fathers" = "in respect to the fathers," i.e., the covenant made with the fathers.
- "gifts" are those blessings of God promised in the covenants made with Israel, for example, Rom 9:4-5.

who are Israelites, to whom belongs the adoption as sons, and the glory and the covenants and the giving of the Law and the temple service and the promises, whose are the fathers, and from whom is the Messiah according to the flesh, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen. (Rom 9:4–5)

- "calling" primarily is God's sovereign call to salvation; His drawing the elect to Himself by faith in Yeshua.
- Since both the "gifts" and the "calling" flow from the covenants made with Israel, they are "irrevocable," that is, they depend entirely upon God's faithfulness and cannot be annulled even by Israel's disobedience.

It is a trustworthy statement: For if we died with Him, we will also live with Him; If we endure, we will also reign with Him; If we deny Him, He also will deny us; If we are faithless, He remains faithful, for He cannot deny Himself. (2Tim 2:11–13)

A Study Through Paul's Epistle to the Romans
Romans 11:30–36

notes by Tim Hegg

Context: Romans 11:28–29

From the standpoint of the gospel they are enemies for your sake, but from the standpoint of God's choice they are beloved for the sake of the fathers; for the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.

- The rejection of Yeshua by the majority of Israel puts them at odds to the Gospel.
- Yet God remains faithful to the covenant made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and thus Israel's final salvation is secure.
- This proves that the gifts promised in the covenant, and God's intention to save the nation of Israel, both remain intact and so Israel's blessing is secure in Him.

Romans 11:30–31

For just as you once were disobedient to God, but now have been shown mercy because of their dis-obedience, so these also now have been disobedient, that because of the mercy shown to you they also may now be shown mercy.

- Paul once again reiterates the mysterious plan of God by which He will cause "all Israel" to be saved (v. 26)
  - Israel's rejection of Yeshua (their disobedience) was a catalyst for taking the Gospel to the nations (showing God's mercy to the Gentiles).
  - Having been shown mercy even though they were disobedient, the elect of the nations receive the "gifts" of the covenant, making Israel jealous.
  - Israel's jealousy turns them to seek salvation in Yeshua, and thus they receive God's mercy.

Romans 11:32

For God has shut up all in disobedience so that He may show mercy to all.

- This is Paul's concise conclusion to the larger section of chapters 9–11.
  - No one deserves salvation because all have disobeyed, and therefore God saves sinners entirely by His mercy and grace.
  - Gentile believers should not think that God has abandoned unbelieving Israel. Just as they have been shown mercy, so Israel will be shown mercy.

"This is the fundamental thing–mysterious though God's ways are and dark and indeed forbidding though they may sometimes now seem to us to be, the end of them is mercy, mercy pure, and uncompromised."
(C.E.B. Cranfield, *Romans*, 2:587)

Romans 11:33

Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways!

- Having concluded this section of the epistle (chs 9–11), Paul breaks into a hymn of praise.
  - What prompted Paul's hymn of praise? It was his contemplation of the doctrine of God's sovereign election.
  - There is no argument that God's sovereign election is "unfair" or that it "robs man of his free will."
- Paul begins by marveling at the omniscience of God–that He knows all things and knows them infinitely.

Great is our Lord and abundant in strength; His understanding is infinite.
(Ps 147:5)

It is He who made the earth by His power, Who established the world by His wisdom; And by His understanding He has stretched out the heavens.
(Jer 10:12)

- But his primary focus is on the infinite wisdom and knowledge of God in His plan for saving sinners, and (in this section of Romans) for saving Israel.

- This is also an exhortation to Gentile believers: thinking that Israel has been forsaken is to limit God's wisdom.
- "unsearchable" could also be translated "beyond knowing," incapable for a human to comprehend.
- The word "judgments" is parallel to "ways" in the next clause. Thus it means "God's chosen way of doing things," "how He chooses to show His mercy."
- The Greek word translated "unfathomable" can mean "untrackable," like trying to track an animal that leaves no footprint.
- If a person thinks that he or she can explain the ways of God, they are not talking about the God of the Bible.

Romans 11:34–35

For who has known the mind of Adonai, or who became His counselor? Or who has first given to Him that it might be paid back to him again?

- Paul now quotes from the Tanach: Isaiah 40:13 and Job 41:11a [Hebrew 41:3a]
- He relies upon the Lxx for the quote from Isaiah 40:13, but seems to be giving his own Greek translation of Job 41:11[3] from the Hebrew itself.

Who has directed the Spirit of Adonai, or as His counselor has informed Him? (Is 40:13)

Lxx: Who has known the mind of the Lord, and who has been His counselor, to instruct Him?

Who has given to Me that I should repay him? Whatever is under the whole heaven is Mine.(Job 41:11a)

Lxx: Or who will resist me and remain, since everything under heaven is Mine?

- The quote from Isaiah establishes God's attribute of omniscience, that God is all knowing:
  - God's knowledge: absolute, infinite, comprehensive
  - Our knowledge: derived, finite, partial
- The quote from Job emphasizes that fact that all we have, all we are, all we hope to have and be, comes from God's hand.
- Paul expects that his readers will know the whole verse from Job 41:11 – "… Whatever is under the whole heaven is Mine."

Romans 11:36

For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen.

- "from Him" – as the Creator, nothing would exist if He had not created, for He created everything into nothing.
- "through Him" – God sustains, maintains, and orders all things in the universe.
- "to Him" – In the end, everything will bring glory to Him for by His sovereign rule He brings all things to their appointed end.
- Our God, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, deserves all glory because He alone is God.
- This is a fitting close to chapters 9–11, for it is in the salvation of the elect, both of Israel and the nations, that God receives the greatest glory.

Praise Adonai! Praise Adonai from the heavens;
Praise Him in the heights!
Praise Him, all His angels…
Praise Him from the earth…
both young men and virgins; old men and children.
Let them praise the name of Adonai,
for His name alone is exalted;
His glory is above earth and heaven. (Psalm 148)

A Study Through Paul's Epistle to the Romans
Romans 12:1–2

notes by Tim Hegg

Romans Chapters 1–11, A Review

1 The Gospel & the Obedience of the Faith
2 All are guilty before God: Jew & Gentile
3 God's way of righteousness is the only way
4 Abraham & David are examples of God's way of righteousness in Yeshua
5 First & Last Adam: Justification and Imputation of righteousness
6 All who are Justified are Sanctified
7 The Cooperative work of Sanctification
8 Sanctification: the flesh & the Spirit
9 God's Promise to bless Israel has not Failed
10 National Israel has rejected Yeshua and He is the only way for sinners to be Righteous
11 The Olive Tree is God's plan for how all Israel will be Saved.
12 The Olive Tree: Living out the Obedience of Righteousness in the Body of the Messiah

Romans 12:1

Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship.

- "Therefore" links us back to the first 11 chapters, but especially to chapters 9–11.
  - God's utter sovereignty in the affairs of mankind, Jew & non-Jew alike, has been emphasized.
  - Yet God's mercy is the overwhelming theme of these chapters.
- Paul opens with a strong exhortation to the believers in Rome, based upon his authority as an Apostle of Yeshua.
- The mercies of God form the basis for heeding Paul's exhortation. What are the "mercies of God"?
  - God's saving grace in Yeshua: I'm forgiven, declared righteous, indwelt by the Ruach.
  - God's sustaining power: everything necessary to persevere in my life of faithfulness to Him.

- Paul's exhortation: that we present our bodies as a living sacrifice:
  - "to present" – willing & glad submission to God, recognizing that we are no longer our own.
  - "body" in a Hebraic sense = one's whole being
  - "living sacrifice" – ongoing, continual, involving all of life in the world in which we live; a life of self-sacrifice following the example of Yeshua.
  - "holy sacrifice" – given for God's glory, not our own.
  - "sacrifice acceptable to God" – in accordance with His revealed will, i.e., the Bible.
- "Service" is the Greek word *lateria* which regularly translates the Hebrew *'avôdah* in the Lxx, and which most often relates to "worship" or "service" in the Tabernacle and subsequent Temple.
- Thus the NASB properly adds the word "worship."
- "Spiritual" is the Greek word logikos which can mean "logical" or "what ought to be" but often was used in Hellenistic Judaism to mean "spiritual."
- "Spiritual" does not mean non-physical but rather relating to the human spirit or God's Spirit.
- Thus, "spiritual service of worship" means:
  - a life of one who is a slave to righteousness (6:18)
  - a life given over to serving Yeshua by loving others
  - a life of worship, both individually and corporately
  - a life lived in the power of the Ruach

Romans 12:2

And do not be conformed to this world, but be trans-formed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

- We learn from this verse that our "spiritual service of worship" requires our active participation with the Ruach in the process of our sanctification.
  - The process of sanctification is a cooperative work between God and the believer.
  - He supplies the means but we must act in obedience.

- "conformed to this world" = "conformed to the present age."
  - Don't be anesthetized by the current worldview.
  - current worldview is post-modern = "absolute relativism"
  - we often are affected by society without realizing it.
  - "Take every thought captive to the obedience of Yeshua" (2Cor 10:5)
  - peer pressure: willing to compromise what I know is right in order to be accepted by others
  - love of money or power
- "but be transformed by the renewing of your mind"
- "mind" here is equivalent to "heart" in a Hebrew perspective.
  - mind/heart = where moral or ethical decisions are made
  - "renewing" = nearly synonymous with "conforming"
  - Make your decisions based upon what you know God desires.
  - This requires knowing the Scriptures.
  - This requires regular meditation upon the Scriptures.

Your word I have treasured in my heart, that I may not sin against You. (Ps 119:11)

This book of the Torah shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success. (Joshua 1:8)

- The heart upon which the Torah has been written is passionate about knowing what pleases God.
- Knowing and accepting the will of God is the basis for making godly choices.
- to "prove" the will of God means to show in one's life what the will of God is for His people.
- Three characteristics of God's will:
  - "good" = ethically and morally sound
  - "acceptable" = conforming to God as the standard as demonstrated in the words and life of Yeshua.
  - "perfect" = reaching the goal, which is conformity to Yeshua.

The mercies of God
What a theme for my song,
Oh I never could number them o'er.
They're more than the stars
in the heavenly dome
Or the sands of the wave beaten shore.

For mercies so great,
What return can I make?
For mercies so constant and sure–
I'll love Him, I'll serve Him
with all that I have,
As long as my life shall endure.

Thomas Obediah Chisholm

A Study Through Paul's Epistle to the Romans
Romans 12:3–8

notes by Tim Hegg

Romans 12

The Olive Tree: Living out the Obedience of Righteousness in the Body of the Messiah

Romans 12:1–2

Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

Romans 12:3

For through the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to think so as to have sound judgment, as God has allotted to each a measure of faith.

- "grace given to me" means being appointed by Yeshua as an Apostle even though he considered himself the least likely to fulfill such an honored position.
- So he reminds his readers that as Yeshua's emissary, his words carry his Master's authority.
- "everyone among you" – everyone in the community regardless of their station in life or community role.
- Everyone in the local assembly has an important role to perform; everyone is needed.
- "not to think more highly of himself…"
  - to keep guard on one's own self-opinion
  - Pride is very deceptive; it can be disguised as humility; as service to God; as service to others.
  - We must honestly assess our motives and our gifting for serving one another within the body of Messiah.

- "sound judgment" = judgment of my abilities that aligns with what is true and real.
  - true: in line with God's revealed standards
  - real: an ability I truly have, not hope I have
- "as God has allotted" – reminds us that faith is a gift of God and not something we manufacture ourselves.
- "to each a measure of faith"
  - that believers are given different quantities of faith.
  - that each believer is given the same gift of faith by which each one is brought into the body of Messiah.
- I can properly evaluate my service to others by:
  - remembering that being in the body of Messiah is by God's grace, not my ability or good works.
  - exercising the faith God has given me and seeking to know from Him how I should serve others.
  - getting advise and counsel from others.

Romans 12:4–5

For just as we have many members in one body and all the members do not have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Messiah, and individually members one of another.

- Here Paul is clearly speaking about the local community of believers as the "body of Messiah."
- The "body" metaphor was common in Paul's day to define a group of people united by a commonality, such as an ethnicity or occupation.
- Paul's use of the "body" metaphor is similar but with this important distinction:
  - the commonality of the members is not ethnicity, social status, or occupation.
  - the commonality is faith in Yeshua.

Romans 12:6

Since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, each of us is to exercise them accordingly: if prophecy, according to the proportion of his faith;

- God has graced everyone in the body of Messiah with the spiritual ability to serve others.
- "gifts" = *charismata* which is based on the Greek word *charis* which means "grace."
- The ability we have to serve others is a gift to us from God, not something we can utilize properly in our own strength.
- Everyone does not have the same gift.
- Each gift is necessary for the body to function as God intends.
- Everyone is to exercise their gift of service in accordance with God's grace in giving it.
- Since all spiritual gifts are by God's grace and not something earned, using one's gifts to serve others must be done out of humility and to glorify God.

Romans 12:6–8

... if prophecy, according to the proportion of his faith; if service, in his serving; or he who teaches, in his teaching; or he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.

Romans 12	1Corinthians 12
Prophecy	Prophecy
Service	
Teaching	
Exhorting	
Giving	
Leading	
Showing mercy	

Prophecy	specific direction for the community
Service	helping meet the needs of others
Teaching	instruction based upon the Scriptures
Exhorting	encouraging & warning others
Giving	helping others through materials gifts
Leading	initiating important & necessary tasks
Showing mercy	helping the weak: spiritual & physical

- The primary exhortation is that we are to exercise our own spiritual gifts in serving others so that together we can accomplish the work ordained to us as Yeshua builds His ekklesia.
- What hinders us from using the gifts God has given?
  - failing to understand how the body of Messiah works
  - allowing myself to become self-absorbed
  - allowing sin to remain in my life; quenching the Spirit
  - being spiritually anemic

As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming; but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, even Messiah, from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.

Ephesians 4:14–16

A Study Through Paul's Epistle to the Romans
Romans 12:9–13

notes by Tim Hegg

Context: Romans 12:6–8

Since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, each of us is to exercise them accordingly: if prophecy, according to the proportion of his faith; if service, in his serving; or he who teaches, in his teaching; or he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.

Spiritual Gifts: Some Biblical Criteria

- the ability God gives to each believer to serve the body of Messiah in a particular way
  - given to function within the body of Messiah

> …so we, who are many, are one body in Messiah, and individually members one of another. (Rom 12:7)

> But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. (1Cor 12:7)

  - not primarily given for personal edification, though the proper use of one's gifts will surely aid the process of one's own sanctification
  - properly exercised, they will bring personal humility and gratefulness, not pride or arrogance.
- Thus, immediately following the list of spiritual gifts in vv. 6–8, Paul emphasizes the manner in which the gifts will be properly utilized.

Romans 12:9

Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil; cling to what is good.

- the spiritual gifts a person possesses must be exercised out of love, first for God and then for those being served.
- "Love" (*agape*) focuses attention upon the other person, not upon oneself. If the needs of the other person are met, then the one showing loving is satisfied.

- "without hypocrisy" – means "genuine," "not fake," "done for the right reasons."
- not showing "fake" love in order to achieve one's own goals or desires.
- Abhor/Cling – parallel terms as opposites
- Abhor: *apostegeō*, used only here
  - intensive; "to hate violently, to loathe"
  - "to be repulsed by" – opposite of "cling"
- Cling – Deut 13:4, "You shall follow Adonai your God and fear Him; and you shall keep His commandments, listen to His voice, serve Him, and cling to Him."

Romans 12:10

Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor;

- Devoted – *philostorgos*, used only here
  - love; friendship; close relationship
  - "in brotherly love" – like one's own family
- Give preference – the Greek word can mean:
  - "to take the lead," "go before," "lead the way,"
  - "anticipate someone's needs," "show mercy before asked"
  - "put others ahead of yourself"
- The last option fits the context best.

Romans 12:11–12

not lagging behind in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope, persevering in tribulation, devoted to prayer,

- "not lagging behind in diligence" – the life of faith requires hard work. Doing the "minimum" is the wrong perspective.
- "fervent in spirit, serving the Lord"
  - The two phrases most likely go together.
  - Does the word "spirit" relate to one's human spirit or to the Spirit of God?
  - "fervent" (*zeō*) relates to "fire" or "boiling."
  - "Fire" and "Holy Spirit" are often seen together.
  - RSV – "Be aglow with the Spirit"

- Thus, "serving the Lord fervently by the power and leading of the Spirit."

• "rejoicing in hope"
- Literally, "rejoicing in the hope" – This refers to the return of our Messiah, Yeshua. Cf. Rom 5:2, 4–5; 8:20, 24–25.
- Working in His kingdom with an eye upon the goal.

• "persevering in tribulation"
- Paul often pairs "joy" and "tribulation" (Rom 5:2–4; 8:24ff; 1Cor 13:7; 1Thess 1:3)
- living by what one knows by faith is true rather than upon what one feels is true.
- Trusting God's word in spite of my circumstances.

• "devoted to prayer"
- "devoted" (*proskartereō*) means "to stick by or be close at hand," "to persist in something."
- The idea is to have a life that is dominated by prayer.
- "Pray without ceasing" (1Thess 5:17)

Romans 12:13

contributing to the needs of the saints, practicing hospitality.

• "contributing to the needs of the saints"
- "contributing" (*xreiais*) – some manuscripts have *mneiais*, "remember the share of the saints."
- The Roman Catholic doctrine of veneration of the "Saints" by giving contributions to the Church is based upon this variant reading.
- But Paul never uses the word "saints" to mean prominent leaders or teachers.
- For Paul, the "holy ones" (saints) are all who are "in Messiah."
- "contributing to the needs of the saints" means being willing to help meet the needs of believers outside of one's own community.

• "practicing hospitality"
- "practicing" could be translated "pursuing."
- Thus, looking for opportunities to invite others into one's home.

Summary

- All who are "in the Messiah" are given the ability, by the Spirit, to serve and edify others in the body.
- These "spiritual gifts" can only function in the context of a growing, set-apart life of faith.
  - genuine love, i.e., without hypocrisy
  - hating evil and clinging to that which is holy
  - humility; putting others first
  - relying upon the leading of the Spirit
  - persevering in hope, prayer, and service to others

By this all men will know that you are My disciples,
if you have love for one another.

John 13:35

A Study Through Paul's Epistle to the Romans
Romans 12:14–21

notes by Tim Hegg

Context: Romans 12:6–13

Since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, each of us is to exercise them accordingly: if prophecy, according to the proportion of his faith; if service, in his serving; or he who teaches, in his teaching; or he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness. Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil; cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor; not lagging behind in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope, persevering in tribulation, devoted to prayer, contributing to the needs of the saints, practicing hospitality. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse.

Romans 12:14–21

*Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep. Be of the same mind toward one another; do not be haughty in mind, but associate with the lowly. Do not be wise in your own estimation. Never pay back evil for evil to anyone. Respect what is right in the sight of all men. If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men. Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, "*VENGEANCE IS MINE, I WILL REPAY,*" says the Lord. "*BUT IF YOUR ENEMY IS HUNGARY, FEED HIM, AND IF HE IS THIRSTY, GIVE HIM A DRINK; FOR IN SO DOING YOU WILL HEAP BURNING COALS ON HIS HEAD.*" Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.*

Be a Source of Blessing

Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. (12:14)

- The social context is clearly that of the synagogue community and parallels the words of Yeshua in Lk 6:28, "bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you."
  - Thus, the admonition is how we treat each other within the wider community.
  - Persecution continued to grow against the followers of Yeshua in the years preceding the destruction.

- Though there is no solid evidence that the "minim benediction" was extant in the pre-destruction era, its inclusion in the post-destruction liturgy may have been prompted by the continued presence of Yeshua-followers within the larger synagogue community.

> [Bab. Talmud] "For the informers may there be no hope and may all wickedness perish instantly. All Your enemies, may they quickly be cut of and the insolent may You quickly uproot, crush, rout, and subdue speedily in our days. Blessed are You, Adonai, Who breaks His enemies and humbles the wicked."
>
> [Cairo Genizah] "May there be no hope for apostates and may You quickly uproot the insolent reign in our day, and may the Christians [*notzrim*] and heretics instantly perish. May they be erased from the book of life, and may they not be written with the righteous. Blessed are You, Adonai, Who humbles the insolent."

- The meaning of Paul's exhortation is clear:
  - As followers of Yeshua, we are not to seek the demise of those who may persecute us.
  - If we suffer for the name of Yeshua, we are to respond with blessing, not cursing.

Share Real Life with Other Believers

Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep. (12:15)

- We are not to express love to each other based upon how it will benefit us.
  - We identify with and help each other in all circumstances because we are one family in Messiah.
  - We share sorrow in order to bring comfort.
  - We share rejoicing in order to enhance the joy.

Strive for Unity

Be of the same mind toward one another; do not be haughty in mind, but associate with the lowly. Do not be wise in your own estimation. (12:16)

- This pertains primarily to the local community where we have life-to-life relationships in the context of our common faith in Yeshua.
  - "same mind" = pursue agreement on the essentials.
  - be willing to compromise on the non-essentials.
- The ability to pursue unity comes by growing in spiritual maturity:
  - true humility: recognizing that we are sinners saved by God's grace.

- true service: seeking to serve others the way Yeshua did, i.e., associating with the lowly.

- The ability to pursue unity comes in admitting that "in me, that is in my flesh, dwells no good thing." (7:18)
  - "wise in one's own estimation" = arrogance
  - We must strive to consider one another as more important than oneself.

Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; (Phil 2:3)

Seek Peace in the Context of Truth

Never pay back evil for evil to anyone. Respect what is right in the sight of all men. If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men. (12:16–17)

- Here Paul gives us the essential characteristics of someone who has developed a forgiving spirit.
  - Seeking revenge is the opposite of forgiveness.
  - When we have forgiven someone who has sinned against us, we are able to leave the outcome to God.

See that no one repays another with evil for evil, but always seek after that which is good for one another and for all people. (1Thess 5:15)

To sum up, all of you be harmonious, sympathetic, brotherly, kindhearted, and humble in spirit; not returning evil for evil or insult for insult, but giving a blessing instead; for you were called for the very purpose that you might inherit a blessing. (1Pet 3:8–9)

- Taken from Prov 3:3–4, "Do not let kindness and truth leave you; Bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart. So you will find favor and good repute in the sight of God and man."
- This does mean that we adopt as "good" whatever our society accepts!
- In accordance with Prov. 3:3–4, the meaning is: "Give full respect to what you know is right, and live it out in the sight of all people."
- In other words, don't compromise the truth for peace. True peace comes from humbly living the truth.
- This is why Paul writes: "If possible, so far as it depends on you…."
- Peace will not always be possible, but we should strive to be known as people of shalom.
- "with all men" – this means believers and non-believers; those who agree with you and those who disagree.

Practice the Spiritual Skill of Forgiving

Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God… (12:19)

- To "take revenge" is to usurp the authority that belongs to appointed judges, an authority given to them by God.
- Though "of God" is not in the Greek, the following quote from Deut 32:35 makes it clear that he is talking about God's wrath.
- The primary roadblock to forgiving someone who has sinned against us is the desire to "get even," i.e., to enact revenge for the wrong done.
- If we have forgiven as God commands (Eph 4:32), then we have entrusted the situation into God's hands and let Him act as Judge.

Paul Quotes Torah as Proof

for it is written, "VENGEANCE IS MINE, I WILL REPAY," says the Lord. "BUT IF YOUR ENEMY IS HUNGARY, FEED HIM, AND IF HE IS THIRSTY, GIVE HIM A DRINK; FOR IN SO DOING YOU WILL HEAP BURNING COALS ON HIS HEAD." (12:19–20)

- He quotes the opening line of Deut 32:35, and then Prov 25:21–22a.
- Once again, this proves that Paul considered the Torah active and authoritative for the *ekklesia* of Messiah.
- What does this phrase mean?
  - that if you respond in kindness, you'll get even more revenge.
  - that "burning coals" indicates some kind of divine purification, i.e., the person will repent.
  - the better understanding is to see this line as referring to the judgment in the final day, in parallel with the previous "leave room for the wrath of God."
  - Showing kindness to one's persecutor will add condemning evidence in the day of judgment.
- The whole concept of "overcoming" ultimately has the final eschatological judgment in view.
  - Note John's use of the term "overcomer" in Revelation.
  - To "overcome" means to persevere to the end; to enjoy the final victory won by Messiah.
  - Thus, to overcome evil with good has current reward as well as promise for the final day.

Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Messiah also has forgiven you. Eph 4:30–33

A Study Through Paul's Epistle to the Romans
Romans 13:1–7

notes by Tim Hegg

The Question of Authorities

- The primary question is what Paul means by "governing authorities."
  - Traditionally this passage has been understood to be talking about state, empire, or national government, and in Paul's specific case, the Roman Empire.
  - But the phrase "governing authorities" could just as correctly be translated as "ruling authorities." The Greek does not specify "secular" government.
- The problem with the traditional interpretation in which "governing authorities" mean "senators, governors, emperor" is that one hardly thinks Paul would demand submission to a pagan government which required citizens to worship pagan gods.
- Further, one wonders how the traditional interpretation could be applied to other "religiously based governments" such as the current Islamic countries.
- What is the application of these inspired words of Scripture for us in our point in history?
- It is clear that the primary message of Paul in this text is that the believer in Yeshua should have a life characterized by submission to authorities.
- The life of the believer is not to be characterized by rebellion since all legitimate authorities have their position given to them by God.

Governing Authorities = Synagogue Authorities

- Another possible interpretation of this passage is that Paul is referring to Synagogue authorities.
- Paul may have the Gentile believers particularly in mind since submission to the established synagogue leaders of The Way would be essential for learning to live in obedience to the Torah as taught by Yeshua (Matt 5:17-20).
- Reasons why this interpretation fits the context better.
  - The traditional interpretation makes an abrupt break from Paul's exhortations in Ch. 12 which are directed toward the synagogue community:
    - ~ "one another"
    - ~ "saints"
    - ~ "those who rejoice & weep" together
    - ~ even "those who persecute you"

- To view the authorities as Synagogue leaders continues Paul's exhortation to the community.
- Understanding Paul to be speaking about Synagogue Authorities allows us to take seriously his exhortation to submit to these authorities.
- How could Paul be commanding his readers to submit to Roman authorities, including "giving honor" to them? This would border on telling the believers to engage in Emperor veneration which he demanded of all Roman citizens.
- And even if some of the Synagogue authorities were not disciples of Yeshua, they still would have held the Torah up as the primary foundation of establishing justice in settling disputes.

• But what about "paying taxes" (v. 7) and the phrase "bear the sword" (v. 4). Don't these point to Roman government authorities?
- No. The Temple Tax (two-drachma tax) as well as any other taxes or fees imposed upon the Jewish community by Rome were gathered by Jewish tax collectors with the Archon of the Synagogue acting as the liaison to the Roman officials.
- to "bear the sword" was an idiomatic phrase meaning "having the authority to punish wrong doers." (*ius gladii* = "right to carry a weapon")
- Note the metaphoric use of "armor" in v. 12 – "…let us lay aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light."
- Thus, to "bear the sword" could well mean having the authority to excommunicate someone from the Synagogue.
- To be expelled from the Synagogue would mean no longer having the legal protection afforded to the Jewish community, resulting in prison or even death.

Romans 13:1

Every person is to be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God.

• Leaders who have legitimate authority from God will never require something contrary to God's word.
• If they do, they have forfeited their right of authority.

Romans 13:2

Every person is to be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God.

• Leaders of faith communities have a limited authority.

- Parents have primary authority in the family unit.
- There should be plural leaders in a faith community. No single leader should be given final authority.
- Yeshua alone is the ultimate authority which He administers through His word (Scriptures) by the Spirit.

• Since Yeshua is the chief Shepherd, and has ordained servant shepherds, to resist their authority is likewise to stand against God.
• Submission to proper authorities is an act of faith, for in submitting one trusts God for the outcome.
• Submitting does not mean agreeing in all things. It means striving for unity and not creating division.

Romans 13:3

For rulers are not a cause of fear for good behavior, but for evil. Do you want to have no fear of authority? Do what is good and you will have praise from the same;

• Leaders who lead with the word of God as their standard will help to guard the community from evil and from spiritual injury.
• Submitting to authority is therefore a safeguard.
• Resisting authority makes one vulnerable to the enemy.

Romans 13:4

for it is a minister of God to you for good. But if you do what is evil, be afraid; for it does not bear the sword for nothing; for it is a minister of God, an avenger who brings wrath on the one who practices evil.

• "minister of God" (Greek *leitourgos*) - Same Greek used for those who gathered the half-shekel Temple tax.
• Gentiles and some diaspora Jews (along with the Qumran sect) questioned whether they should pay the Temple tax.
• Paul teaches them to submit to this tax since to do so showed their support for the Temple, where God placed His Name and Heart forever.
• What enduring principles are we to learn from this?
  - Even though the Temple priests were corrupt, maintaining the Temple was God's will.
  - The believers were to pay the tax and leave the outcome to God.
  - At times, the greater good takes precedent over lesser issues with which we disagree.
  - We should value community and realize that God has formed His *ekklesia* within community.
  - We cannot grow in our faith as God intends if we are content to be a "congregation of one."

- Submission to leaders and to one another is an essential element to becoming like Yeshua.

Romans 13:5–6

Therefore it is necessary to be in subjection, not only because of wrath, but also for conscience' sake. For because of this you also pay taxes, for rulers are servants of God, devoting themselves to this very thing.

- We ought to submit to spiritual leaders, not only to avoid trouble but also out of obedience to God.
- If we are in submission to Him in all things, then submitting to His appointed leaders will follow.
- The principle here is that submission to God must be our primary motivation for submitting to human leaders.

Romans 13:7

Render to all what is due them: tax to whom tax is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor.

- Tax = Temple tax.
  - solidarity with the whole community, whether Jew or non-Jew.
  - unity of the local community should be a high priority.
- Custom = *telos* – "goal," "taxes," "customs." But can also mean "full compliance."
  - Act with integrity toward those who are in charge.
  - Comply with local *halachah* unless there is good biblical reasons not to comply.
  - Be willing to dialog about different viewpoints.
- Fear = healthy respect.
  - Where there are disputes, strive to submit to the decision of the leaders.
  - Let unity be a high priority.
- Honor = recognize the work leaders do for the community.
  - "The elders who rule well are to be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching." (1Tim 5:17)
  - Be willing to submit to community leaders as they submit to the Scriptures.

Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you. (Hebrews 13:17)

A Study Through Paul's Epistle to the Romans
Romans 13:8–14

notes by Tim Hegg

Romans 13:8

Owe nothing to anyone except to love one another; for he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the Torah.

- Paul does a play on the word "owe" (ὀφείλω, *opheilō*) used in v. 7 ("Render to all what is due [owed] them"). Here he exhorts "Owe (*opheilō*) nothing to anyone…."
  - To "owe" someone a payment means that it is something you should have already paid; it is past due.
  - Consider Matt 5:23–24.

  Therefore if you are presenting your offering at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your offering there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and present your offering. (Matt 5:23–24)

- This relates to an obligation which has not been met.
- This does not relate to someone who disagrees with you, or who thinks poorly of you without just cause.
- This most likely relates to a debt a person is unwilling to repay or has failed to pay as promised.
- As long as payment is made in accordance with the previous arrangement, one is not "in arrears."
- And this is Paul's point: when it comes to loving one's neighbor, there is always more that we "owe."
- What is Paul's logic here?
  - If you love God = loyal to Him in obeying His commandments, then you will "love your neighbor as yourself."
  - Thus, loving one's neighbor means one is obeying God Who commands us to love our neighbor.
  - How one treats his neighbor is a litmus test of how one loves God.

Romans 13:9

*For this, "*YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT ADULTERY, YOU SHALL NOT MURDER, YOU SHALL NOT STEAL, YOU SHALL NOT COVET,*" and if there is any other commandment, it is summed up in this saying, "*YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF*."*

- Once again, Paul appeals to the Torah to prove his point.
  - Note that he is choosing 4 of the final 5 commandments of the Ten Words, but does not list them in the order found in the Torah.

- There is one text of the Lxx (B text) that lists "adultery" before "murder," and the Nash Papyrus also has this order. Note also Lk 18:20.

- Clearly Paul is listing 4 commandments as illustrative of all the commandments.
  - His point is this: one can love one's neighbor as God intends only if one is submitted to God's ways.
  - Thus, if one is truly submitted to God, then one will also love one's neighbor as oneself.

Romans 13:10

Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfillment of the Torah.

- What does it mean to "love your neighbor"?
  - In the context of Lev 19:18, one's "neighbor" is someone within one's own community.
  - loving one's neighbor does not mean accommodating their sin. E.g., no one loves a drug addict by helping them get more drugs.
  - loving one's neighbor means showing compassion for them in their need by carefully leading them to see God's righteous ways for living.

Romans 13:11

Do this, knowing the time, that it is already the hour for you to awaken from sleep; for now salvation is nearer to us than when we believed.

- Yeshua's first coming, crowned by His resurrection and ascension, marked the beginning of the Messianic era.
  - "knowing the time" = be aware of one's duties
  - "already the hour" = the Messianic age has dawned
  - "awaken from sleep" = be engaged in the work the Master has given us to do.
  - "salvation is nearer" = every day we are to live with the reality that Yeshua's return is immanent.

For you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night. While they are saying, "Peace and safety!" then destruction will come upon them suddenly like labor pains upon a woman with child, and they will not escape. But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that the day would overtake you like a thief; for you are all sons of light and sons of day. We are not of night nor of darkness; so then let us not sleep as others do, but let us be alert and sober. (1Thess 5:2–6)

Romans 13:12

The night is almost gone, and the day is near. Therefore let us lay aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light.

- Keeping the immanent return of Yeshua in our hearts helps us focus on our mission as His disciples.
  - "deeds of darkness" = those things which can entangle us and make us ineffective soldiers (v. 13)
  - "armor of light" = seeking to "put on the Lord Yeshua HaMashiach" (v. 14), that is, be His servant in thought, word, and actions.

Romans 13:13

Let us behave properly as in the day, not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual promiscuity and sensuality, not in strife and jealousy.

- Our lives are to be characterized by "light," not "darkness."
  - light is a metaphor for truth, righteousness and life.
  - darkness is a metaphor for ignorance, unrighteousness, and death.
- Darkness: immorality and the hostility it breeds.
- Gentile believers would undoubtedly have had connections to the pagan society in general.

Romans 13:14

But put on the Lord Yeshua Messiah, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts.

- "taking up the full armor of God" (Eph 6) = "put on the Lord Yeshua Messiah" (Rom 13:12; cf. Gal 3:27)
  - "loins girded with truth" – "I am the way , the truth and the life" (Jn 14:6)
  - "breastplate of righteousness" – "And this is His name which He will be called, 'The Lord our righteousness." (Jer 23:6)
  - "feet shod with the gospel of peace" = "For He Himself is our peace, Who made both groups into one" (Eph 2:14; cp. Rom 5:1)
  - "shield of faith" = "fixing our eyes on Yeshua, the author and perfecter of faith" (Heb 12:2)
  - "helmet of salvation" = "And having been made perfect, He became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation." (Heb 5:9)
  - "sword of the Spirit which is the word of God" = "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." (John 1:1)

- How do we "put on the Lord Yeshua Messiah"?
  - "Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Messiah Yeshua" (Phil 2:5) = learn to approach life in the same way that Yeshua did.
    - ~ This requires studying the Scriptures to know the mind of Yeshua.
    - ~ We need to treasure God's word, which means regularly meditating upon it.
  - Seek the leading of the Ruach: "For all who are being led by the Ruach of God, these are sons of God." (Rom 8:14)
    - ~ Communion with God through prayer is essential.
    - ~ Make prayer a constant part of your life.
  - Don't allow the things of the world to captivate your thoughts and desires: "Be intent about the things above, not earthly things." (Col 3:2)
    - ~ Discipline your ears, eyes, and thoughts.
    - ~ Take every thought captive to Yeshua.
    - ~ If you want to be a vessel fit for the Master's use, be careful what you put into the vessel.
  - Recognize the value of community: "And if one can overpower him who is alone, two can resist him. A cord of three strands is not quickly torn apart." (Qoh 4:12). The enemy puts out the fire by separating the coals.
    - ~ Building each other up in the faith is God's plan.
    - ~ Eph 4:11–16

> And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Messiah;
> until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Messiah. As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming; but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, even Messiah, from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love. (Eph 4:11–16)

A Study Through Paul's Epistle to the Romans
Romans 14:1–4

notes by Tim Hegg

Romans 14:1

Now accept the one who is weak in faith, but not for the purpose of passing judgment on his opinions.

- What does Paul mean by the phrase "weak in faith"?
  1. those who believed they could earn right standing with God by "keeping" Torah.
  2. those who had confessed Yeshua to be the true Messiah but who held a very strict view of the "meat offered to idols" prohibited by the Jerusalem council, i.e., anything handled by Gentiles
  3. those who abstained from meat because they were on a kind of "fast of sorrow" for their Jewish brothers and sisters who had not yet confessed Yeshua as their Messiah.
  4. a pre-Gnostic group who believed that self-denial was a means of raising the soul for greater spiritual awareness.
  5. those who still were observing the "ceremonial" parts of the Torah and judging those strong in faith who had come to realize that the ceremonial aspects of the Torah have been abolished.
- Evaluation:
  1. weak in faith = believing in a "works-righteousness"
     - To gain right standing with God by doing "good works" was not the prevailing belief in 1st Cent. Judaisms, based upon extant historical data.
     - The prevailing belief was that Jews had a status of righteousness by God's having chosen Israel.
     - Paul would not have considered such belief to be true faith that was weak.
  2. weak in faith = believers in Yeshua retaining an overly strict view of "meat offered to idols"
     - does not fit with the wider context in which Paul also mentions "days"
     - no mention of "idols" in the context
     - does not help to define the "strong in faith" – Elsewhere (1Cor 10) Paul teaches to abstain from such meat for the sake of one's fellow believer.
  3. weak in faith = those undergoing a "fast of sorrow"
     - There are some data suggesting that following the destruction of the Temple, Jewish people mourned the destruction by fasting from meat and wine (t.*Sota* 15:11-15).
     - But there is no data to indicate that a "fast of sorrow" was common before the destruction, and even if this were the case, it

hardly seems possible that Paul would have considered such people as "weak in faith."

4. weak in faith = pre-Gnostic self-depravation
   - There are no historical data to indicate that any sect within pre-destruction Judaism believed that fasting from acceptable foods offered a person a heightened, spiritual experience.
5. weak in faith = believers who still think they must obey the ceremonial aspects of the Torah
   - typical interpretations of the Christian Church
   - Paul never taught that certain parts of the Torah were abolished.
   - It's impossible to separate the Torah into categories of "ceremonial," "civil," and "moral."

- Another approach:
  - In the early synagogues of The Way, there were undoubtedly Jewish people who were still being drawn to faith in Yeshua.
  - They believed in the coming Messiah Who would offering Himself up for their sin.
  - They just had not come to the point where they had confessed Yeshua to be that Messiah.
  - They had faith but were in the process of affirming that Yeshua was the object of that faith.
  - Therefore, they were not yet sure that Yeshua's teaching should be received as having greater authority than the leading Pharisees and additional laws regarding clean & unclean foods.
  - This view fits nicely with the only other time Paul used this exact phrase, i.e., in Rom 4:19.
  - "Without becoming weak in faith he [Abraham] contemplated his own body, now as good as dead since he was about a hundred years old, and the deadness of Sarah's womb."
  - To be "weak in faith" is therefore to have true faith, but to be in the process of growing strong in faith in order to live out one's faith in difficult situations.
  - Abraham did not "become weak in faith," meaning He acted in accordance with his faith, even though the circumstances seemed overwhelming.
- How does this help us understand Paul's admonition?
  - Those who were still being drawn to faith in Yeshua were to be accepted as part of the community but not judged for their current halachah.
  - In time, when they fully embraced Yeshua as the promised Messiah, they would be willing to accept His teaching as having final authority.
- Is this scenario possible today?

  The answer is "No," for essentially two reason:

  1. Religiously "observant" Jews today are not waiting for a messiah

to atone for sin.

2. The Apostolic Scriptures are complete and give full testimony to the fact that Yeshua is the Messiah promised by Israel's prophets.

- "opinions" = διαλογισμός (*dialogismos*)
  - The word is used 14 times in the Apostolic Scriptures
  - Taking all of the texts where the word is found, its basic meaning has to do with "one's thoughts," "to think carefully," "to reason."
  - The word describes "disputed matters," things upon which the Scriptures neither forbid nor require.
  - This is important because:
    - ~ as we continue to study this chapter, it is clear therefore that Paul is not talking about commandments of the Torah, which would never be construed by Paul as "opinions."
    - ~ "Opinions" describe those things for which both sides could equally be considered righteous.

Romans 14:2

One person has faith that he may eat all things, but he who is weak eats vegetables only.

- "faith to eat all things"
  - By "all things," Paul cannot mean that the Torah food laws have been abolished for the person with faith.
  - The Torah food laws are not a matter of "opinion"!
  - "All things" must therefore mean "all foods allowed by the Torah" without consideration for the many additional laws formulated by man.
- "he who is weak" = "he who is weak in faith"
  - The one who has not yet fully accepted Yeshua as the promised Messiah in whom he believes, continues to follow additional food laws.
  - These probably related to:
    - ~ meat handled or prepared by Gentiles
    - ~ meat purchased from the common market
- "regard with contempt"
  - to treat the person as though they have been rejected by the community
  - to create division in the community based upon man-made laws or halachah
- "to judge the one who eats" as having sinned

Romans 14:3

The one who eats is not to regard with contempt the one who does not eat, and the one who does not eat is not to judge the one who eats, for God has accepted him.

- "God has accepted him" = "God has accepted them"

- Even the one "weak in faith" is to be accepted.
- He has true faith in the promised Messiah, and trusts Him for his salvation.
- He is simply in the process of being convinced that Yeshua is that Messiah promised by the prophets.

Romans 14:4

Who are you to judge the servant of another? To his own master he stands or falls; and he will stand, for the Lord is able to make him stand.

- Paul applies a general rule: a servant is judged by his master, not by anyone else.
  - Both are servants of the Lord = both have true, saving faith.
  - "he will stand, for the Lord is able to make him stand" means the Lord will bring him to a full confidence that Yeshua is the Messiah in Whom he trusts.

Lessons from our Text

- We should always be careful to make a clear distinction between Absolutes and Preferences.
- Absolutes are those things clearly revealed in the Scriptures describing God's will for His people.
- Preferences are things not specifically given to us in the Scriptures but which may be traditions, cultural mores, or personal preferences.
- We should always encourage and lead each other to know and obey the Absolutes.
- Absolutes are not negotiable. We therefore should encourage each other in obedience to God's word.
- We must not seek to bind the conscience of others in regard to preferences.
- We must not receive nor reject anyone merely on the basis of preferences.

Therefore if there is any encouragement in Messiah,
if there is any consolation of love,
if there is any fellowship of the Spirit,
if any affection and compassion,
make my joy complete by being of the same mind,
maintaining the same love, united in spirit,
intent on one purpose.
Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit,
but with humility of mind regard one another
as more important than yourselves.
Phil 2:1–4

A Study Through Paul's Epistle to the Romans
Romans 14:5–9

notes by Tim Hegg

Review: Romans 14:1–4

- Paul is dealing with "opinions" or individual "preferences" which were causing divisions.
- In the opening verses (vv. 1–4), he describes two groups within the community:
  - those "weak in faith"
  - those not "weak in faith"
- "weak in faith" appears to describe those who held that submission to additional, man-made halachah was required for followers of Yeshua.
  - rather than risk breaking the prevailing kosher laws, they chose to abstain from eating any meat.
- Those not "weak in faith" viewed the man-made laws as unnecessary.
  - Submitting to the biblical laws of kosher, they were at liberty to eat meat that may not have conformed to the standards prescribed by the man-made laws.

Primary Lessons from Romans 14:1–4

- We should always be careful to make a clear distinction between Absolutes and Preferences.
- Absolutes are those things clearly revealed in the Scriptures describing God's will for His people.
- Preferences are things not specifically given to us in the Scriptures but which may be traditions, cultural mores, or personal preferences.
- We should always encourage and lead each other to know and obey the Absolutes.
- Absolutes are not negotiable. We therefore should encourage each other in obedience to God's word.
- We must not seek to bind the conscience of others in regard to preferences.
- We must not receive nor reject anyone merely on the basis of preferences.

Romans 14:5

One person regards one day above another, another regards every day alike. Each person must be fully convinced in his own mind.

- Verses 1– 4 deal with food laws and the freedom to accept or reject additional man-made food laws.
- Now Paul moves to the issue of days.
- Historically, three primary interpretations have been put forward for our passage:

1. that Paul is referring to "ceremonial days of the Jewish year, including the Sabbath"
2. that Paul is referring to "lucky" and "unlucky" days within the Jewish culture
3. that Paul is referring to days designated for fasting

- #2 can be immediately dismissed. Paul would not have given warrant to such superstitious practices.

"Day" = Sabbath & Festival Days

- This interpretation, that there was an early "switch" from Sabbath to Sunday, is the common interpretation of Christian commentators and teachers.

"In our view, then, the most probable explanation of the nature of the disagreement between the weak and the strong, to which this section refers, is that, whereas the strong had recognized that, now that He who is the goal and substance and innermost meaning of the OT law has come, the ceremonial part of it no longer requires to be literally obeyed, the weak felt strongly that a continuing concern with the literal obedience of the ceremonial law was an integral element of their response of faith to Jesus Christ, though their attitude was fundamentally different from that of the Judaizers of Galatians in that they did not think to put God under an obligation by their attempted obedience but only to express their faith."
(Cranfield, Romans, 2.696-97)

Paul Does Not have Torah Sabbaths in View

- There is no clear data to support the fact that a shift from Shabbat to Sunday had occurred among any of the Messianic communities before 70 CE.
- Ignatius, To the Magnesians, 9.1-2

If, then, those who had lived according to ancient practices came to the newness of hope, no longer keeping the sabbath but living in accordance with the Lord's day, on which our life also arose through him and his death (which some deny), the mystery through which we came to believe, and because of which we patiently endure, in order that we may be found to be disciples of Jesus Christ, our only teacher, how can we possibly live without him, whom even the prophets, who were his disciples in the Spirit, were expecting as their teacher?

- But this epistle is dated to the early 2nd Century, not from the Apostolic era.

- *Didache* 14.1

"On the Lord's own day gather together and break bread and give thanks, having first confessed your sins so that your sacrifice may be pure."

- But the *Didache* is dated to 95 CE or later, and thus does not give evidence of a pre-70 CE switch to Sunday.

- *Epistle of Barnabas*, 15.8-9

"Finally, he says to them: 'I cannot stand your new moons and sabbaths.'

You see what he means: it is not the present sabbaths that are acceptable to me, but the one that I have made; on that sabbath, after I have set everything at rest, I will create the beginning of an eighth day, which is the beginning of another world. This is why we spend the eighth day in celebration, the day on which Jesus both arose from the dead and, after appearing again, ascended into heaven."

- Written after 70 CE since the destruction of the Temple is mentioned in the epistle itself (16:3–4).
- Most date it to the late 1st or early 2nd Century.

Evidence from the Apostolic Scriptures

- In the Apostolic Scriptures, there are only two mentions of the "first day of the week" in regard to Messianic communities:
- Acts 20:7

"On the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul began talking to them, intending to leave the next day, and he prolonged his message until midnight."

- This was most probably after the sun had set on the Sabbath, thus the beginning of the first day of the week.
  - Roman slaves did not have the Sabbath as a non-working day. Those who were believers would gather with other believers after sunset on the 7th day.
  - "to break bread" means to eat together; cf. the "agape" meal mentioned in Jude 12.
  - Paul intended to leave the next day, which would most likely have been on Sunday.
- 1Cor 16:2

"On the first day of every week each one of you is to put aside and save, as he may prosper, so that no collections be made when I come."

- This was not a "corporate gathering."
- The "first day of week," i.e, when the Sabbath had finished, was simply an appropriate time to gather money for the poor in Jerusalem
- He wanted the collection to be ready when he arrived.

"Days" = Days for Fasting - Romans 14:6

He who observes the day, observes it for the Lord, and he who eats, does so for the Lord, for he gives thanks to God; and he who eats not, for the Lord he does not eat, and gives thanks to God.

- The language of the text best fits this interpretation:
  - "observe the day" = set it apart for fasting
  - "observe the day" = abstaining from food
  – "does not observe the day" = eating
  - There was an increased emphasis upon fasting in the Intertestamental period, as evidenced by the apocryphal literature produced during that time:
  - Tobit 12.8; Judith 4.9; Test. of Joseph 3.4)

- Fasting apparently was common in the time of Yeshua:

"Whenever you fast, do not put on a gloomy face as the hypocrites do, for they neglect their appearance so that they will be noticed by men when they are fasting. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full." (Matt 6:16)

Then the disciples of John came to Him, asking, "Why do we and the Pharisees fast, but Your disciples do not fast?" (Matt 9:14)

"And there was a prophetess, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was advanced in years and had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, and then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple, serving night and day with fastings and prayers." (Lk 2:36–37)

"The Pharisee stood and was praying this to himself: 'God, I thank You that I am not like other people: swindlers, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. 'I fast twice a week; I pay tithes of all that I get.'" (Lk 18:12)

- The later *Didache* admonishes Christians to fast on Wednesdays and Fridays so as not to coincide with the "hypocrites" who fast on Mondays and Thursdays.

"But do not let your fasts coincide with those of the hypocrites. They fast on Monday and Thursday, so you must fast on Wednesday and Friday." (Didache 8.1)

Conclusion Regarding "Days"

- There is absolutely no conclusive evidence that the observance of the Shabbat was being debated in the pre-destruction era.
- If there was a debate, it was what constituted true Sabbath observance, not whether the Sabbath should be observed.
- The explanation that best fits Paul's teaching in this passage is that he is referring to scheduled fast days.

The Ultimate Lesson Paul is Teaching

For not one of us lives for himself, and not one dies for himself; for if we live, we live for the Lord, or if we die, we die for the Lord; therefore whether we live or die, we are the Lord's.

- Once again, Paul is referring to "opinions" (14:1), distinguishing between Preferences and Absolutes.
- If, as His disciples, we live for Him and not for ourselves, then we are surely willing to give up our opinions or preferences for the sake of His glory.
- If we live and die for Him, then we are proven to have died to self.
- Rather than divide over personal preferences, we uphold Yeshua's will as those whom He purchased.
- We belong to Him!
- The ultimate and final purpose of Yeshua's death and resurrection on behalf of His people is that they might own Him as their Lord, Master, and King.
- The goal of our Messiah's saving work is that sinners would be made holy.

A Study Through Paul's Epistle to the Romans
Romans 14:10–13

notes by Tim Hegg

Review: Romans 14:1–9

- Paul is dealing with what he calls "opinions" in regard to matters of halachah (v. 1).
- His main point in this opening section is that members of a local community of faith should not divide from each other over opinions or preferences.
- One must therefore distinguish between Absolutes and Preferences.
- The reason we are not to divide over Preferences or Opinions is because these differences do not constitute a transgression against God.
- Thus, to judge each other based upon different Preferences or Opinions is to stand in God's place Who alone is the Judge.

Romans 14:10

But you, why do you judge your brother? Or you again, why do you regard your brother with contempt? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God.

- Note how Paul defines judging by adding the phrase "regard your brother with contempt.
- He is not talking about whether a person's behavior aligns with the Torah, but about selfishly despising or belittling someone because they do not agree with one's own preferences or opinions.
- Note also that Paul uses the word "brother" twice in our verse.
  - Both the one "weak in faith" and the one "strong in faith" are viewed as covenant members.
  - One commonality among all covenant members ought to be a desire to honor God by obeying His Torah.
- The Torah commands us to love our neighbor, not regard him with contempt.
- Therefore, since in regard to Preference or Opinions, each one is convinced in his or her own mind, the final assessment must be left up to God.

The Judgment Seat of God

- The phrase "judgment seat of God/Messiah" is also found in 2Cor 5:10.

For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Messiah, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad. (2Cor 5:10)

- Other texts use the term "judgment seat," which indicates that this was a common way of referring to the "place of judgment" in the late 2nd Temple period.
  - Pilate at Yeshua's trial

  "While he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent him a message, saying, 'Have nothing to do with that righteous Man; for last night I suffered greatly in a dream because of Him.'" (Matt 27:19, cf. John 19:13)
  - Angry mob seeks to condemn Paul:

  But while Gallio was proconsul of Achaia, the Jews with one accord rose up against Paul and brought him before the judgment seat… (Acts 18:12, cf. vv. 16–17)

The Judgment Seat = Place of Judgment

- In each of these verses, the word translated "judgment seat" is the Greek word βῆμα, bēma.
- This Greek word came into 2nd Temple Hebrew as a loanword (בֵּימָה) and reflects the situation in which judgments were often decided at the city gates.
- The fact that the place from which the Torah is read in the synagogue came to be known as the "Bēma" was to teach that judgments must align with the Torah.

When is the Time of this Judgment?

- Some theologians have made a distinction between the "great white throne" judgment in Rev 20:11 and the "judgment seat of God/Messiah."

  Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them. (Rev 20:11)

- v. 12 – "and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds."
- v. 15 – "And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire."
- Some have taken the view that the "great white throne judgment" is for the unbelievers while the "judgment seat of God/Messiah" is directed toward believers.
- Other texts, however, seem to teach only one final judgment rather than two:

  "because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead." (Acts 17:31)

"And He ordered us to preach to the people, and solemnly to testify that this is the One who has been appointed by God as Judge of the living and the dead." (Acts 10:42)

"The Son of Man will send forth His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all stumbling blocks, and those who commit lawlessness,and will throw them into the furnace of fire; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear." (Matt 13:41–43)

"But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne. All the nations will be gathered before Him; and He will separate them from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats; and He will put the sheep on His right, and the goats on the left. Then the King will say to those on His right, 'Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.…Then He will also say to those on His left, 'Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels…" (Matt 25:31–34, 41)

- All of these texts point to the fact that there is one final judgment, not two.
- But this brings up another question: how can those who are "in Messiah" be judged for their deeds?
- Yeshua's death on their behalf means that Messiah has already borne the judgment for those He has saved.

Good Works are the Fruit of Justification

- Grace and works are mutually exclusive principles in justification, but grace does not exclude good works.
- In fact, the proof of genuine faith and the status of right-standing before God is a changed life that becomes more and more conformed to Yeshua.

"Good works are the fruit of grace, and he whose life has been unfruitful will give answer for his lack of stewardship. The New Testament does not offer cheap grace." (P. Jewett, "Eschatology" in *ZPEB*, 2.353)

Romans 14:11–12

For it is written, "AS I LIVE, SAYS THE LORD, EVERY KNEE SHALL BOW TO ME, AND EVERY TONGUE SHALL GIVE PRAISE TO GOD." So then each one of us will give an account of himself to God.

- Paul quotes Is 45:23, and in Phil 2:10 he quotes the same text, applying it directly to Yeshua.
- Instead of condemning my brother or sister in Yeshua on the basis of my opinions or preferences, I should seek to encourage them to walk in Yeshua's footsteps.

Romans 14:13

Therefore let us not judge one another anymore, but rather determine this — not to put an obstacle or a stumbling block in a brother's way.

- What is a "an obstacle or a stumbling block"?
  - giving a poor example to those who are "weak in faith."
  - living lawlessly and thus by one's own waywardness drawing others into lawless living.
  - making man-made laws the primary focus and thus diminishing God's commandments (Mk 7:8–9)

Do not be deceived, God is not mocked;
for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap.
For the one who sows to his own flesh
will from the flesh reap corruption,
but the one who sows to the Spirit
will from the Spirit reap eternal life.
Let us not lose heart in doing good,
for in due time we will reap
if we do not grow weary.

Galatians 6:7–9

A Study Through Paul's Epistle to the Romans
Romans 14:14–19

notes by Tim Hegg

Main Points to Keep in Mind

- Paul is dealing with what he calls "opinions" in regard to matters of halachah (v. 1).
- His main point in this opening section is that members of a local community of faith should not judge one another based upon man's traditions or preferences.
- Rather, we should all strive to live out our faith in line with God's instructions (Torah), helping each other to walk in the footsteps of Yeshua.

Romans 14:14

I know and am convinced in the Lord Yeshua that nothing is unclean in itself; but to him who thinks anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean.

- Taken out of context, this verse has been notoriously misinterpreted to mean that Paul taught the food laws given in the Torah were no longer valid.
- Both Christian as well as Messianic teachers interpret this verse to mean that the Torah distinctions between "clean" and "unclean" meat have been abolished.

"He [Paul] is indicating his own agreement with the basic position of the strong, namely, that the fact that Christ's work has now been accomplished has radically transformed the situation with regard to the ceremonial part of the OT law: now it is no longer obligatory to obey it literally—one obeys it by believing in Him to whom it bears witness." (C.E.B. Cranfield, *Romans*, 2.713)

"Since the laws of ritual purity apply to Jews only, the statement that nothing is unclean in itself should suffice to free any Gentile whose conscience still bothers him in regard to such matters. As for Jews, even in rabbinic Judaism most of the purity laws gradually fell into disuse." (David Stern, *Jewish New Testament Commentary*, pp. 435–36)

Did Paul Teach the Abolition of Torah Laws?

- If so, he lied in Rom 3:31 –
  "Do we then nullify the Torah through faith? May it never be! On the contrary, we establish the Torah." (Rom 3:31)

- And his words in Rom 8:3–4 make no sense if he teaches that the Torah has been abolished:

> For what the Torah could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God did: sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh, so that the requirement of the Torah might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. (Rom 8:3–4)

- "to walk" = one's halachah, i.e., one's manner of living
- Paul teaches that the goal of our salvation is not merely to escape hell, but rather to become like Yeshua in thought, word, and actions.
- And further, if Paul was teaching that the Torah commandments regarding food were no longer valid, then he openly contradicted Yeshua, the very One he was to represent!

> "Do not think that I came to abolish the Torah or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill. For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the Torah until all is accomplished." (Matt 5:17f)

Understanding Romans 14:14

- First, Paul is convinced that his teaching is correct because it agrees with Yeshua's teaching and manner of living.
- Second, we know from v. 20 that Paul refers to food when he says "nothing is unclean of itself."

> Do not tear down the work of God for the sake of food. All things indeed are clean, but they are evil for the man who eats and gives offense. (Rom 14:20)

- Third, the added "… in itself" means that meat designated by God as clean cannot be made unclean by man-made laws or traditions.
- Thus, Paul's meaning is: "nothing *God has declared to be clean* is unclean in itself."
- Paul does not want those strong in faith to coerce those weak in faith through pressure of rejection.
- Rather, he wants each person to be fully convinced in his own conscience as an exercise of genuine faith.
- Thus, if one cannot eat a particular food because they lack assurance that God permits it, then it is better for them to abstain – to consider it unclean for himself.
- What he is not allowed to do is to make his own opinion or preference the rule for others.

Romans 14:15

For if because of food your brother is hurt, you are no longer walking according to love. Do not destroy with your food him for whom Messiah died.

- The one weak in faith may be hurt or even destroyed if he is rejected over a matter of opinion.
- Loving one's neighbor is an essential mitzvah of the Torah, and should surely take precedence over one's own opinions or preferences.
- Those strong in faith should therefore not reject the one who is weak in faith and who abstains from food even though God has declared it clean.
- Such rejection could result in the one weak in faith being hurt and even destroyed.
- What does Paul mean by the word "destroy"?
  - Many have interpreted this to mean "eternally lost," because they would be turned away from believing in Yeshua.
  - But the meaning is surely relating to the ruin that comes from being without community support.
- That Paul is talking about personal damage that comes from being without community and not eternal destruction is clear since Yeshua's death secures the eternal salvation of all the elect (8:29–30).
- This highlights the importance of being part of a Yeshua-centered community.

Romans 14:16–17

Therefore do not let what is for you a good thing be spoken of as evil; for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

- Being free from the tangle of man-made laws could be misused.
- Regarding the weak in faith with contempt would turn what was good into something evil.
- Paul keeps the "big picture" in mind.
- The goal of our salvation is ultimately to experience the riches of the Kingdom of God.
  - Food is not the ultimate blessing of God's kingdom.
  - Fellowship with the Almighty is the ultimate blessing.

Romans 14:18–19

For he who in this way serves Messiah is acceptable to God and approved by men. So then we pursue the things which make for peace and the building up of one another.

- "in this way serves Messiah" – in which way?
  - through walking/living by the leading of the Ruach.
  - living in accordance with the Ruach brings harmony with God and with other community members.
- We must make it our planned procedure to pursue those words and actions which result in shalom and edification.
  - peace: the opposite of division
  - edification: in love, aiding the other person to grow in their faith and service to Yeshua.

Let no unwholesome word proceed
from your mouth, but only such a word
as is good for edification according
to the need of the moment, so that it will
give grace to those who hear.

Ephesians 4:29

A Study Through Paul's Epistle to the Romans
Romans 14:20–23

notes by Tim Hegg

Main Points to Keep in Mind

- Paul's main topic throughout this chapter is that as followers of Yeshua, we are to be willing to set aside our own preferences or opinions in order to enhance and strengthen others in the community who may be weak in faith.
- Even in regard to absolutes (direct and clear statements of Scripture), we are to encourage each other toward obedience and not reject or condemn one another.
- We are to help build up the body of Messiah, not tear it down for the sake of our own preferences or opinions.
- Each member of the community must strive to grow in faith and not to waver in unbelief.
- Abraham (cf. 4:20–21) is a model of growing in faith.

> …yet, with respect to the promise of God, he [Abraham] did not waver in unbelief but grew strong in faith, giving glory to God, and being fully assured that what God had promised, He was able also to perform. (Rom 4:20–21)

- Strong faith is characterized by
  - not wavering – "Yes" one day, and "not sure" the next
  - constant growing in faith
  - fully confident or assured that what is believed is what God has revealed

Romans 14:20

Do not tear down the work of God for the sake of food. All things indeed are clean, but they are evil for the man who eats and gives offense.

- Paul is addressing those strong in faith.
- He admonishes his readers to prioritize the good of the community over one's own preferences or rights.
- What is "the work of God"? It is the very work Yeshua promised to do: "I will build My ekklesia and the gates of Hades will not overpower it." (Matt 16:18)
- Though the strong in faith could eat meat in good conscience, they should be willing to forfeit this right for the sake of others.

- We should be willing to forego our own preferences when doing so will help others grow in their faith and will foster unity within the community.
- Paul reiterates his previous teaching (v. 14), that what God has defined as "clean" cannot be made unclean by adding additional, man-made food laws.
- Paul therefore affirms again that the Torah establishes the absolutes and not the added "rabbinic" laws.
- However, his point is that even what is "clean" can become evil or bad (κακός, *kakos*) if wrongly used!
- If the one strong in faith tries to coerce the person weak in faith to eat against their conscience, he has caused the one weak in faith to stumble.
- To do so is to work against what God is doing.

Romans 14:21

It is good not to eat meat or to drink wine, or to do anything by which your brother stumbles.

- Thus, Paul's direct exhortation is that a person should forfeit his or her own privileges if exercising them would cause a brother to stumble.
  - Notice Paul adds wine, showing that the issue was conflicting halachah, since wine was suspect as having been used by Gentiles for libation offerings to idols.
  - "brother stumbles" – the whole matter is cast within the context of a believing community.

Romans 14:22

The faith which you have, have as your own conviction before God. Blessed is he who does not condemn himself in what he approves.

- "faith which you have" – the term "faith" in this phrase should be understood as an established "body of truth."
  - Jude 1:3, "…the faith which was once for all handed down to the saints."
  - "your own conviction" – know what you believe! Don't just follow the crowd.
- "stumbles" and "condemn himself." What would these terms describe?
  - Had the one "weak in faith" taken an oath (perhaps as a proselyte) to follow extra-biblical kosher laws?
  - To eat contrary to a vow would cause a person to feel guilty of breaking his or her vow.

- If such a person became convinced that the vow was improper, it could be annulled.

- This is the only time in all of Paul's epistles that he gives a "Beatitude" – "Blessed is he who…."
- His point is this: we live in shalom when there is no conflict between what we do and what we know is right.
- Contentment results from a clear conscience.

Romans 14:23

But he who doubts is condemned if he eats, because his eating is not from faith; and whatever is not from faith is sin.

- To act contrary to one's conscience causes that person to be guilty (condemned) in their own estimation.
- This would be particularly true if the person's actions constitute breaking an oath or vow.
- "not from faith" = not in line with what one affirms to be true.
- "whatever is not from faith is sin" – the meaning may well be "whatever remains separated from faith is sin" or "whatever leads one away from faith is sin."
- For the one "weak in faith" to be coerced to act against one's conscience or to break one's vow will be a hinderance rather than an aid to faith.
- The same is true for the one strong in faith: to coerce the one weak in faith to act against his conscience is to turn what is good into evil (v. 20) and to "tear down" what God is doing.
- This would clearly not be something that causes the one weak in faith to grow stronger.

Principles Learned from Chapter 14

- Those who are more mature in their faith should receive those weak in faith, not condemning them or excluding them from the community.
- The issue referenced in this chapter is related to opinions (v. 1) or preferences, not to biblical absolutes.
- Everyone in the body of Messiah should be willing to forfeit personal rights or privileges in order to foster unity within their respective communities.
- Likewise, each one should be careful not to cause a believing brother or sister to act against their conscience in matters which are not biblical absolutes.

- We are to pursue those things which make for shalom and the building up of one another.
- We must affirm that the Bible is the final authority in determining what are absolutes of faith.
- We must be diligent not to make traditions or man-made laws into absolutes.
- To apply these principles requires
  - humility
  - willingness to serve others
  - commitment to submit to God and His word

Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit,
but with humility of mind regard one another
as more important than yourselves;
do not merely look out for your own personal interests,
but also for the interests of others.

Philippians 2:3–4

A Study Through Paul's Epistle to the Romans
Romans 15:1–6

notes by Tim Hegg

Romans 15:1

Now we who are strong ought to bear the weaknesses of those without strength and not just please ourselves.

- Paul gives a concise recap of his teaching in the previous chapter:
  - Those who are "weak in faith" will not eat meat because apparently there were halachic issues that did not meet their standards.
  - We suggested that these halachic issues were extra-biblical requirements (man-made) that the weak considered mandatory.
- Paul's main message is that those "strong in faith," who no longer carry the burden of Pharisaic additions to the Torah (cf. Matt 23:4; Acts 15:10), should be willing to bear the burden of the weak in faith.
  - "Bear one another's burdens, and thereby fulfill the Torah of Messiah." (Gal 6:2)
  - "Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves…." (Phil 2:3)
- Here Paul emphasizes a primary aspect of being like our Messiah.
  - He uses the verb "to please" oneself (ἀρέσκω, *areskō*) which has the sense of "accommodate my desires" or "to have it my way".
  - In the next verse, Paul gives us important guidelines about pleasing others rather than ourselves.

Romans 15:2

Each of us is to please his neighbor for his good, to his edification.

- Note the two important guidelines given to us about how we are to "please" or "accommodate" others in their weak faith.
  - "for his good" – This means helping the person attain to what God considers good, not enabling the person to remain weak in faith.
  - "to his edification" – "edification" means "to build up," and in a spiritual sense, to help someone strengthen their faith in order to become more and more like Yeshua, the object of true, saving faith.

Romans 15:3

For even Messiah did not please Himself; but as it is written, "the reproaches of those who reproached you fell on me."

- Paul quotes Ps 69:9[10] to show that the prophets of the Tanach prophesied that the Messiah would come, not to accommodate His own desires, but to bear the reproach of sinners.
- Ps 69 is quoted or alluded to 17 times in the Apostolic Scriptures, and often as having a messianic connection.
- The questions are:
  - who is speaking in this quote?
  - to whom are the words addressed?
- The answers are clear if one reads the Psalm.

I am weary with my crying; my throat is parched; My eyes fail while I wait for my God. Those who hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of my head; Those who would destroy me are powerful, being wrongfully my enemies; What I did not steal, I then have to restore. (Ps 69:3–4)

Because for Your sake I have borne reproach; dishonor has covered my face. I have become estranged from my brothers and an alien to my mother's sons. For zeal for Your house has consumed me, and the reproaches of those who reproach You have fallen on me. (Ps 69:7–9)

- The answers are:
  - The one who is speaking is the righteous man.
  - The words are addressed to God.
- Clearly, Paul applies this verse to Yeshua
  - Yeshua is addressing His Father.
  - Yeshua is saying: "the penalty for those who have reproached the Father has fallen upon Me."
- Paul's point is clear: if we intend to be like Messiah, then we must be willing to bear the burden of those who, weak in faith, have yet to untangle themselves from the burden of man-made laws.

Romans 15:4

For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, so that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.

- Written in earlier times = the Tanach
  - Paul's point is that the Scriptures are always relevant to one's life since they are the eternal, inspired word of God.
  - Even though written millennia ago, God has given them to us for our instruction.
- "through perseverance"
  - What is "perseverance" (ὑπομόνη, *hupomonē*)?
  - The etymology of the Greek word might preserve a sense of what the word came to mean in specific contexts: *hupo* = "under"; *moneō* = "to remain"
  - Perseverance is "remaining under the pressure," "not quitting when the way ahead becomes difficult."
- "encouragement of the Scriptures"
  - Where do you look for encouragement?
  - The Bible is the primary source of encouragement to those who have faith—who believe that what God says is true.
  - The Scriptures (γραφῶν, *graphōn*) to which Paul refers are the Tanach.
  - It is unfortunate that many consider the Tanach to be something replaced by the Apostolic Scriptures.
- "we might have hope"
  - Paul uses "hope," not to point to something that might be, but to that which is inevitable.
  - We have true hope when, by faith, we hold the promises of God to be certain.

Romans 15:5–6

Now may the God Who gives perseverance and encouragement grant you to be of the same mind with one another according to Messiah Yeshua, so that with one accord you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Yeshua Messiah.

- "God Who gives perseverance and encouragement"
  - Perseverance results from a cooperation between the redeemed person and the Ruach Elohim.
  - But apart from God's mercy, grace, and power, no one would persevere.

The Perseverance of the Elect is Sure

For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Messiah Yeshua. (Phil 1:6)

For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Messiah Yeshua our Lord. (Rom 8:38-39)

Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes has eternal life. (Jn 6:47)

For you have died and your life is hidden with Messiah in God. When Messiah, Who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory. (Col 3:3–4)

Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy, to the only God our Savior, through Yeshua Messiah our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen. (Jude 24, 25)

Romans 15:5–6

Now may the God Who gives perseverance and encouragement grant you to be of the same mind with one another according to Messiah Yeshua, so that with one accord you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Yeshua Messiah.

- "same mind" = having the mind of Messiah (Phil 2:5ff)
  - this is not pluralism!
  - It is conformity to the person of Yeshua
- "one accord…one voice glorify God"
  - the primary goal of unity within the body of Messiah is to give glory to God.

As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming; but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, even Messiah, from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.

Ephesians 4:14–16

A Study Through Paul's Epistle to the Romans
Romans 15:7–12

notes by Tim Hegg

Summary: Rom 15:1–6

- Paul's primary point in 15:1–6, which is a "wrap-up" of his teaching in chapter 14, is this:
  - one who has experienced God's grace and mercy in Yeshua HaMashiach should be willing to set aside one's own personal preferences (*halachah*) in order to maintain unity in their own community of faith.
  - This means being of "one accord" and "one voice" so that God receives the glory He deserves.

Connection with 15:7–12

- The connection with the next paragraph is clear:
  - We are to accept each other in the same way that God has accepted each of us.
  - In doing so, the faithfulness of God to the covenant He made with Abraham is realized.

Romans 15:7

Therefore, accept one another, just as Messiah also accepted us to the glory of God.

- That Paul begins our verse with "Therefore" (διό, dio) indicates that he is drawing a conclusion to the entire section, which began with 14:1.
  - He begins by exhorting us to accept (προσλαμβάνω, *proslambanō*) the one weak in the faith, and here he uses the same word, "accept one another."
  - Thus, the exhortation to "accept" one another forms "bookends" bracketing the entire section.
- Accepting one another with our differences requires us to express genuine love, not sentimentalism.
  - Genuine love seeks the best for the one loved, which may or may not be what the person wants.
  - Genuine love is willing to set aside one's own preferences for the good of the other person.
  - That which motivates genuine love for another person is the deep and settled desire to glorify God.

Romans 15:8–9a

For I say that Messiah has become a servant to the circumcision on behalf of the truth of God to confirm the promises given to the fathers, and for the Gentiles to glorify God for His mercy;

- "I say" (cf. Rom 4:9; 9:17; 10:11; 12:3; 15:8; 2Cor 6:2; 1Tim 5:18) indicates that Paul is making a strong declaration. It means "I declare" or "I affirm."
- Paul clearly has the Abrahamic covenant in mind: "promises given to the fathers" = the covenant made with Abraham and established with Isaac and Jacob.
- Note the structure of these verses:

Messiah has become a servant
For what purpose? on behalf of the truth of God
To whom? of the circumcision (= Jews)
To what end? to confirm the covenant promises

[Messiah has become a servant]
For what purpose? on behalf of the mercy [*of God*]
To whom? to the Gentiles
To what end? to glorify God

חֶסֶד וְאֱמֶת
lovingkindness & truth

Israel = servant of ADONAI
Yeshua = the quintessential servant of ADONAI
Israel's mission = be a light to the nations
Israel's light = Torah → Yeshua
Yeshua's command to His Jewish disciples:
make disciples of the all nations → Jews & Gentiles
Disciple = living as his or her Teacher lives
How? = teaching them to observe all I commanded you

- Thus, the ingrafting of the Gentiles into the covenant people confirms the promises given to the fathers.
- Those who are teaching against the equality of Jew and Gentile in the body of Messiah are denying that God is faithful to His covenant promises.
- "in you all the nations/families of earth will be blessed."

Romans 15:9b-12

…as it is written, "THEREFORE I WILL GIVE PRAISE TO YOU AMONG THE GENTILES, AND I WILL SING TO YOUR NAME." Again he says, "REJOICE, O GENTILES, WITH HIS PEOPLE." and again, "PRAISE ADONAI ALL YOU GENTILES, AND LET ALL THE PEOPLES PRAISE HIM." Again Isaiah says, "THERE SHALL COME THE ROOT OF JESSE, AND HE WHO ARISES TO RULE OVER THE GENTILES, IN HIM SHALL THE GENTILES HOPE."

- This first quote is from Ps 18:49 (cf. 2Sam 22:50)
- "Therefore I will give praise to You among the Gentiles, ADONAI, and I will sing to Your name."
- Some may argue that Paul takes this quote out of context:
  - David is thanking God for the victories He has given him over the nations who sought to defeat him.
  - Paul apparently applies this to David's greater Son, Yeshua (notice that he leaves out "Adonai").
  - In the final sense, praise among the nations means the elect of the nations have come to worship Israel's God.
- The second quote is from Deut 32:43.
  - "Rejoice, O nations, with His people; for He will avenge the blood of His servants, and will render vengeance on His adversaries, and will atone for His land and His people."
- The word "with" in the line "with His people" is actually not found in the Hebrew, though it is represented in the Lxx.
  - If the Hebrew were taken literally it would say: "Rejoice, nations/ Gentiles, His people…"
  – The point is, the Hebrew indicates that the elect from the nations are a fully constituted part of His people.
- The third quote is from Ps 117:1
  - While there are some minor differences in the Lxx which Paul quotes, the Lxx essentially renders the Hebrew faithfully.
  - The point is clear: the "nations" = Gentiles are praising and worshiping Adonai, the One true God.

- The fourth quote is from Isaiah 11:10
  - MT: "Then in that day the nations will resort to the root of Jesse, Who will stand as a signal for the peoples; and His resting place will be glorious."
  - Lxx: "And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, and He that shall arise to rule over the Gentiles; in Him shall the Gentiles trust, and His rest shall be glorious."
- Paul obviously quotes from the Lxx, which emphasizes that the Gentiles will "hope" or "trust" (ἐλπίζω, elpizō) in the "root of Jesse," the Messianic figure Who arises from the root of Jesse.
- Once again, the primary reason Paul links these verses from the Tanach together is because they all speak of the Gentiles (goyim) worshiping the God of Israel and His Messiah, and doing so within the context of the nation of Israel.

Let's Summarize

- Paul's primary point is that those who have received the mercy of God in Yeshua should show similar mercy to each other.
  - This speaks directly to those who have differing halachic perspectives. We must be willing to forego our own preferences in order to help establish a unity based upon God's commandments.
  - This speaks directly to Jewish & Gentile unity within the body of Messiah. We are one together in Yeshua.

So then you are no longer strangers and aliens,
but you are fellow citizens with the saints,
and are of God's household, having been built on
the foundation of the apostles and prophets,
Messiah Yeshua Himself being the corner stone,
in whom the whole building, being fitted together,
is growing into a holy temple in the Lord,
in whom you also are being built together
into a dwelling of God in the Spirit.

Ephesians 2:19–22

A Study Through Paul's Epistle to the Romans
Romans 15:13–16

notes by Tim Hegg

The Previous Context

- Paul has admonished the messianic believers in Rome to humbly serve one another.
  - those who may be weak in faith are not to be despised but rather aided to grow stronger.
  - Yeshua Messiah is the model we are to follow, for in His incarnation He willingly gave up His own pleasure in order to meet our need.
  - We are to accept one another just as the Father has accepted us in His Son, Yeshua.
- Paul's primary point in this exhortation is that God should receive the glory for His faithfulness to the covenant promises.
  - Jew & Gentile believers together in the body of Messiah are living proof that God keeps His promise to Abraham: "in you all the nations of the earth will be blessed."
  - Rather than dividing over man-made traditions, we should find our unity in Yeshua, obeying everything that He commanded His disciples (Matt 28:19–20)

Romans 15:13

Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you will abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

- With this verse, Paul begins his salutation.
  - His words are more personal, disclosing his appreciation and his hopes for the followers of Yeshua in Rome.
  - We might call this a "prayer-wish" in which the readers get a glimpse of Paul's prayers for them.
- "God of hope" = the God Who is both the object and source of our hope.
  - object: Faith takes hold of Who God is, what He has already done, and what He thus will do.
    - ~ the God Who is Creator
    - ~ the God Who has proven Himself faithful
    - ~ the God Who sent His Son, the risen Messiah
    - ~ the God Who has ordained final victory
  - source: Faith draws strength and courage for the present by relying upon God's word.
    - ~ knowing God's principles for life in His Son
    - ~ making daily decisions guided by these principles

- "joy and peace in believing"
  - joy – the ability to be content with all of the goodness of God.
  - peace – shalom, resting in the fact that God is able to accomplish all things according to His will.
  - in believing – in the Bible, true joy and peace are always linked to the exercise of faith in God.
- "abound in hope" = able to have hope in all situations
  - "hope" is a major theme in Romans, used 16x (4:18; 5:2, 4-5; 8:20, 24-25; 12:12; 15:4, 12–13, 24)
  - "hope" is a characteristic of our faith which marks it as distinct from all pagan religions.
  - even in the most difficult events of life, the Ruach HaKodesh enables us to persevere with hope.

Romans 15:14

And concerning you, my brethren, I myself also am convinced that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge and able also to admonish one another.

- Paul has finished his formal teaching and has in mind what he mentioned in 1:18–16, that he was on his way to Jerusalem to bring aid for the believers there.
- "filled with all goodness" expresses Paul's confidence that the Roman believers would also send aid to the Jerusalem messianic community.
- "filled with all knowledge" = having the necessary knowledge to continue forward as disciples of Yeshua in the duty of sanctifying the God's Name.
- "able also to admonish" – even though Paul had been prevented from visiting Rome (1:9ff), he was confident that the believers there were sufficiently established in the faith so that they could teach one another.

Romans 15:15

But I have written very boldly to you on some points so as to remind you again, because of the grace that was given me from God,

- "very boldly" – Paul wants them to know that his sometimes stern words come from a true shepherd's heart who desires the best for the sheep.
- "to remind you again" – it is never wrong to remind each other about the essentials of our faith.
- "the grace that was given" = Paul's apostleship. He considered his work to be a matter of God's grace.

Romans 15:16

to be a minister of Messiah Yeshua to the Gentiles, ministering as a priest the gospel of God, so that my offering of the Gentiles may become acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit.

- "minister of Yeshua" – "minister" (λειτουργόν, *leitourgon*) was used of synagogue officials as well.
  "ministering as a priest" – ἱερουργέω (*hierourgeō*) was used in the Lxx of the Levites as well as the Cohenim.
  - Thus, Yeshua is the Cohen Gadol, and Paul considered Himself to be like His Levite servant.
- NET Bible: "…so that the Gentiles may become an acceptable offering, sanctified by the Holy Spirit."
- Paul views the Gentiles he serves as being a thank offering given to God
  - an offering must be "acceptable," i.e., "pure, without blemish or spot."
  - only those who are "in Yeshua" are acceptable.

> And coming to Him as to a living stone which has been rejected by men, but is choice and precious in the sight of God, you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Yeshua HaMashiach. (1Pet 2:4–5)

Romans 15:16

to be a minister of Messiah Yeshua to the Gentiles, ministering as a priest the gospel of God, so that my offering of the Gentiles may become acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit.

- The pure sacrifice as a pleasing aroma to God is the work of the Ruach HaKodesh.
- How does the Ruach sanctify those He indwells?
  - by making the word of God active in their minds
  - by strengthening them against sinful choices
  - by increasing their desire to please God
  - by encouraging them in the fight against sin

To me, the very least of all saints, this grace was given,
to preach to the Gentiles the unfathomable riches of Messiah,
and to bring to light what is the administration of the mystery
which for ages has been hidden in God who created all things;
so that the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known through
the ekklesia to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly places.
This was in accordance with the eternal purpose which He carried out
in Messiah Yeshua our Lord, in whom we have boldness and confident
access through faith in Him.

Ephesians 3:8–12

A Study Through Paul's Epistle to the Romans
Romans 15:17–21

notes by Tim Hegg

The Wider Context

- In this chapter, Paul has emphasized:
  - that all who are in the body of Messiah ought to strive to strengthen each other in the faith;
  - that Jewish and Gentile believers should accept each other as equal members in Messiah, and should serve one another even as Messiah Himself came to serve;
  - that the ingathering of the Gentiles into the body of Messiah is evidence of God's faithfulness to His covenant promises.

The Immediate Context

- In the verses just previous to our text (14–16), Paul speaks specifically of
  - his concern for the community in Rome, that they would partner with him in the mission to the Gentiles, and
  - that they would receive his admonitions as he has given them, that is, from a deep desire to see the gospel bear fruit among the Gentiles.

Romans 15:17

Therefore in Messiah Yeshua I have found reason for boasting in things pertaining to God.

- In v. 14 Paul expresses his confidence that believing community in Rome is doing well at serving each other, both Jew and Gentile.
- Thus, because of the evident spiritual vitality of the community there, Paul is able to "boast" in regard to God's faithfulness.
- But his "boasting" is in Messiah Yeshua, i.e., what He has accomplished, not what Paul has done.
- What does Paul mean by the word "boasting"?
  - The Greek word, καυχάομαι, *kauxaomai*, can mean "to glory," "to praise," that is, "to speak highly of an achievement."
  - Paul is "boasting" in what God has done in the work of Messiah, not in what he has accomplished himself.

- Paul took the same perspective as John the baptizer: "He [Yeshua] must increase, but I must decrease." (Jn 3:30)
- Paul intended that Yeshua should receive all the glory.



- This should be foremost in our minds as well.
- Whatever success we may have as a community in Yeshua, we owe to His faithfulness and He deserves all of the praise and glory.
- It is always right to boast in His greatness!

Romans 15:18

For I will not presume to speak of anything except what Messiah has accomplished through me, resulting in the obedience of the Gentiles by word and deed,

- The translation of the NASB is a bit misleading since it wrongly appears that "by word and deed" describes the "obedience" of the Gentiles.
- Note the NIV – "I will not venture to speak of anything except what Messiah has accomplished through me in leading the Gentiles to obey God by what I have said and done."
- Note how Paul speaks of the salvation of the Gentiles: "resulting in the obedience of the Gentiles."
- Genuine faith results in obedience to God.

Romans 15:19

in the power of signs and wonders, in the power of the Ruach; so that from Jerusalem and round about as far as Illyricum I have fully preached the gospel of Messiah.

- Signs and wonders – the inclusion of the Gentiles into the believing community was made clear by the evident presence of the Ruach.
- "Surely no one can refuse the water for these to be baptized who have received the Ruach HaKodesh just as we did, can he?" (Acts 10:47)

- Miraculous signs were necessary to overcome the long-term prejudice against the inclusion of Gentiles into the Jewish community.
- Once it was clear that the Gentiles were fellow heirs, the Apostles called the followers of Yeshua to accept the truth and act on it. They did not seek to authenticate what had already been established by performing further signs and wonders.
- Jerusalem is named because this was the starting point from which the harvest of the nations began – Acts 2.
- Illyricum is the Roman province north of Macedonia, and there is no record in Acts that Paul traveled that far north.
- It is very possible that he did travel that far north and Luke simply did not record it.



- This could mean "I have preached the Gospel in its fullness," i.e., not leaving out anything necessary.
- Or it could mean "I have sufficiently blazed the trail of the Gospel into the region of the Gentiles."
- This is the only time in Paul's writings where we find the exact expression "gospel of Messiah."
- The meaning seems clear: "the Gospel which is entirely centered upon Messiah."

Romans 15:20

And thus I aspired to preach the gospel, not where Messiah was already named, so that I would not build on another man's foundation;

- Paul's commission as Yeshua's Apostle was to be a pioneer in taking the Gospel where it had not yet gone.
- He was sent to lay a foundation upon which others would build, not to build upon the foundations already in place by those who came before him.

Romans 15:21

but as it is written, "they who had no news of him shall see, and they who have not heard shall understand."

- Paul quotes Is 52:15 from the Lxx.
- While the Lxx has a slightly different translation than what we read in the Hebrew, it still is messianic in its meaning (as is the Targum).
- The message of the Messiah would go to the nations, and Paul understood His commission to be part of the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy.

Summary

- Paul is showing that the ingathering of the Gentiles into the family of God proves one of his central teachings: "the Gospel is the power of God resulting in salvation, to the Jew first and also to the Greek" (1:16).
- Further, it is not the messenger of the Gospel who should receive the glory and honor, but the One Who is the very focus of the Gospel, that is, Yeshua our Messiah.
- Therefore, our boasting should be in the greatness of God and the work of His Messiah, Yeshua.
- This ought to give us boldness in living out the Gospel and telling the Good News to others.

For when one says, "I am of Paul," and another, "I am of Apollos," are you not mere men? What then is Apollos? And what is Paul? Servants through whom you believed, even as the Lord gave opportunity to each one. I planted, Apollos watered, but God was causing the growth. So then neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but God who causes the growth.

1Corinthians 3:4–7

notes by Tim Hegg

Romans 15:22–29

For this reason I have often been prevented from coming to you; but now, with no further place for me in these regions, and since I have had for many years a longing to come to you whenever I go to Spain — for I hope to see you in passing, and to be helped on my way there by you, when I have first enjoyed your company for a while —

v. 22 – *For this reason I have often been prevented from coming to you;*

- For what reason? (v. 20)
  - Paul's burden to preach the Gospel where it had not formerly been preached.
  - Paul's mission to lay the foundation upon which others would build.
- He had been prevented from traveling to Rome because of the requirements of his current work in other regions.





- Paul offers a good example of the need for discerning the Spirit's leading.
  - We must know how to set our priorities.
  - Apparently Paul was urged by the Spirit to remain in the regions in which he ministered and thus to put off his journey to Spain for a later time.
  - Those things which kept him from traveling to Spain were thus viewed as from the hand of God.

Romans 15:23–24

but now, with no further place for me in these regions, and since I have had for many years a longing to come to you whenever I go to Spain — for I hope to see you in passing, and to be helped on my way there by you, when I have first enjoyed your company for a while —

- Paul speaks here as though he has accomplished his mission in the eastern and central Roman provinces.
- He therefore felt it was time to travel to Spain.
- Paul's first reason for stopping at Rome was for mutual fellowship with the Messianic assembly there.
- He also hoped that the Messianic assembly in Rome might help him in his mission in the Iberian peninsula.
- There were a number of Synagogues in Rome.
- Scholars estimate the Jewish population in the mid-first Century to be as high as 50,000.
- Paul's general procedure was to visit the established synagogues of a city and become acquainted with the "God-fearers" (non-converts) as a bridge to the non-Jewish communities.
- Did Paul ever make it to Spain?
  - There is no clear biblical evidence to answer this question and scholars are divided.
  - Some early Church Fathers indicated that he did visit "the lands of the west," which may well refer to the Iberian peninsula.

Romans 15:25–26

but now, I am going to Jerusalem serving the saints. For Macedonia and Achaia have been pleased to make a contribution for the poor among the saints in Jerusalem.

- Paul uses "saints" (ἅγιος, *hagios*) to mean "those who have been declared righteous by God," i.e., those who have confessed Yeshua to be their Savior.

- The use of the word "saints" should not be confused with the much later of the word by Roman Catholics, to designate certain leaders as having special holiness.
- The Messianic assemblies had gathered money to give to the poor in the Jewish communities of Jerusalem.
- This was what Paul promised to do when he met with the leaders in Jerusalem.

> …James and Cephas and John, who were reputed to be pillars, gave to me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, so that we might go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised. They only asked us to remember the poor — the very thing I also was eager to do. (Gal 2:9–10)

Two Collections Referenced

> Now at this time some prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch. One of them named Agabus stood up and began to indicate by the Spirit that there would certainly be a great famine all over the world. And this took place in the reign of Claudius. And in the proportion that any of the disciples had means, each of them determined to send a contribution for the relief of the brethren living in Judea. And this they did, sending it in charge of Barnabas and Saul to the elders. (Acts 11:27–30)

> "Now after several years I came to bring alms to my nation and to present offerings…. (Acts 24:17)

> Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I directed the churches of Galatia, so do you also. On the first day of every week each one of you is to put aside and save, as he may prosper, so that no collections be made when I come. When I arrive, whomever you may approve, I will send them with letters to carry your gift to Jerusalem; and if it is fitting for me to go also, they will go with me. (1Cor. 16:1–4)

> Now, brethren, we wish to make known to you the grace of God which has been given in the assemblies of Macedonia, that in a great ordeal of affliction their abundance of joy and their deep poverty overflowed in the wealth of their liberality. For I testify that according to their ability, and beyond their ability, they gave of their own accord, begging us with much urging for the favor of participation in the support of the saints…. (2Cor. 8:1–4)

Romans 15:27

Yes, they were pleased to do so, and they are indebted to them. For if the Gentiles have shared in their spiritual things, they are indebted to minister to them also in material things.

- The Messianic assemblies in Macedonia and Achaia were not coerced to give. They did so out of their own desire to help the believers in Jerusalem.
- The "debt of love" urged them to give.
- "Owe nothing to anyone except to love one another; for he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the Torah." (Rom 13:8)
- The world is indebted to the Jewish people for the preservation of the Tanach.
- In the 1st Century, the only place to hear and study the Scriptures was with the synagogue.
- If the Gentile believers received the treasure of the Scriptures from the Jewish community, surely they should be willing to offer them material help.

Romans 15:28

Therefore, when I have finished this, and have put my seal on this fruit of theirs, I will go on by way of you to Spain.

- To "put my seal" means "to complete the mission with full integrity."
- This is particularly important when money is involved.
- "I will go on by way of you to Spain"
  - Paul expresses his plans, but this is no doubt with the provision "if God wills."

Romans 15:29

I know that when I come to you, I will come in the fullness of the blessing of the Messiah.

- "the fulness of Messiah's blessing"
  - This might indicate that Paul already felt the Spirit of God had urged him to travel to Spain.
  - As such, God's leading would be attended by His blessings.
  - God's work, done God's way, never lacks God's support.

A Study Through Paul's Epistle to the Romans
Romans 15:30–33

notes by Tim Hegg

Romans 15:30

Now I urge you, brethren, by our Lord Yeshua Messiah and by the love of the Spirit, to strive together with me in your prayers to God for me,

- This is more than a casual request. The Greek word translated "urge" (παρακαλέω, *parakaleō*) can carry the sense of "exhort" or even "implore."
- He considers prayer to be essential for the success of his work, both his own prayers and the prayers of others on his behalf.
- Paul's strong exhortation by which he requests prayer on his behalf is based upon two essentials.
  - the authority of the Lord Yeshua Messiah
  - the sanctifying work of the Ruach
- The authority of the Lord Yeshua Messiah
  - 31 times Paul uses the complete designation "our Lord Yeshua Messiah" in the Epistle of Romans.
  - It may be that when he does, he is emphasizing the fact that "all authority" belongs to Yeshua.
  - This connects to Matt 28:18-20 and the mission to make disciples of all the nations.
- The authority of the Lord Yeshua Messiah
  - Lord = kurios = translates יהוה in the Lxx
  - Yeshua = Savior = the only way to be saved from the wrath of the Father against sinners.
  - Messiah = Prophet, Priest, King = actively bringing all things to their divinely ordained purpose.
- The sanctifying work of the Ruach
  - "the love of the Spirit" = "the love which the Spirit produces within the believer"
  - This is first a growing, maturing love for God.
  - Such a love for God brings about an increased ability to love people in a God-like manner.

…to strive together with me in your prayers to God for me.

- The word "strive together" (συναγωνίζομαι, *sunagōnizomai*) constructed on the verb ἀγωνίζομαι (*agōnizomai*) from which we derived our English word "agonize."
- It can mean "to wrestle," illustrated in our Messiah's garden prayer prior to the cross (Matt 26:36ff).
- What does it mean to "strive" or even "agonize" in prayer?

Striving in Prayer

- Note how the basic root of the word used in our text ("strive together with me in prayer") is used elsewhere in the Apostolic Scriptures:

> Everyone who competes in the games exercises self-control in all things. They then do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable." (1Cor 9:25)
>
> We proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man complete in Messiah. For this purpose also I labor, striving according to His power, which mightily works within me. (Col 1:28–29)
>
> Epaphras, who is one of your number, a bondslave of Yeshua Messiah, sends you his greetings, always laboring earnestly for you in his prayers, that you may stand perfect and fully assured in all the will of God. (Col. 4:12)

Striving in Prayer means to:

- persevere in prayer; not becoming discouraged when our prayers are not answered as we think they should be.
- make prayer a priority, even as an athlete puts training and preparation as a priority of time, effort, and desire.
- live life with this truth in mind: apart from God's enablement, we can accomplish nothing of eternal value. "I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing." (Jn 15:5)
- pray with confidence that God will answer your prayers according to His will. This means allowing the struggles of life to build one's faith, not diminish it.

The Mystery of Prayer

- God has ordained that He would accomplish His divine plan of redemption through the agency of human beings.
- In this He has revealed Himself to us as a God Who, in His very being, is relational.
- He has further ordained that believers would gain their ability to accomplish His will by requesting His strength, wisdom, and direction through prayer.
- When we strive in prayer, we are utilizing the very means God has ordained for our success in serving Him.
- Through prayer, our own will and understanding becomes more and more aligned with God's will, through the inner working of the Ruach.
- This is what it means to "pray in the Spirit" (Eph 6:18; Jude 1:20).

Romans 15:31

that I may be rescued from those who are disobedient in Judea, and that my service for Jerusalem may prove acceptable to the saints;

- When Paul exhorts the believers in Rome to "strive together with him in prayer," he gives them specific matters for which to pray:
  - that in Jerusalem he would not be overcome by those who sought to silence his Apostolic message;
  - that the needs of the believers in Jerusalem would be sufficiently met by the gift he was bringing.
- Paul's exhortation here is a good reminder that we should come to HaShem in our prayers with specific matters of
  - Praise & worship
  - requests and petitions

Romans 15:32

so that I may come to you in joy by the will of God and find refreshing rest in your company.

- Paul lived his life under the banner of this statement: "by the will of God."
- May we do so as well!
- Paul recognized the utter necessity of community. He anticipated a much needed "refreshing" as being provided by the fellowship of other believers.

- Considering community as good by not necessary betrays an attitude of self-sufficiency.

Romans 15:33

Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen.

- "peace," שָׁלוֹם, = "complete," "lacking nothing"
- "God of peace" could mean:
  - God is the source of wholeness
  - God is Himself without any defect
- Probably "God who is the source of peace" is Paul's meaning here. He is the One who is able to do abundantly more than we ask or think (Eph 3:20).

But you, beloved, building yourselves up on
your most holy faith,
praying in the Ruach HaKodesh,
keep yourselves in the love of God,
waiting anxiously for the mercy of our
Lord Yeshua Messiah to eternal life.

Jude 1:20–21

notes by Tim Hegg

Romans 16:1–2

I commend to you our sister Phoebe, who is a servant of the ekklesia which is at Cenchrea; that you receive her in the Lord in a manner worthy of the saints, and that you help her in whatever matter she may have need of you; for she herself has also been a helper of many, and of myself as well.

- It was common in the 1st Century world of the Apostles for people to carry letters of recommendation in order to be received by a community to which they were traveling.
- "commend" (συνίστημι, *sunistēmi*) means more than simply "may I introduce." It means that Paul is expecting the community at Rome to receive Phoebe fully as his personal emissary.
- Who was this Phoebe?
  - most likely a Gentile. ("Phoebe" was the name of a pagan goddess in the Roman pantheon, the daughter of Uranus and Gaia, associated with the moon and the Delphic oracle.)
  - She was a believer in Yeshua, for Paul refers to her as "our sister."
  - Most scholars believe that Paul had commissioned Phoebe to carry his epistle to the Messianic community in Rome.
  - "servant of the ekklesia which is at Cenchrea" – the word "servant" is actually the word diakonos, "deacon."
    - ~ *diakonos* can be used in a general sense of anyone who serves others.
    - ~ But that she is a "deacon" of a specific assembly would favor the idea that she held a designated office within that assembly.

Diakonos in the Apostolic Scriptures

Paul and Timothy, bond-servants of Messiah Yeshua, to all the saints in Messiah Yeshua who are in Philippi, including the overseers and deacons: (Phil 1:1)

Deacons likewise must be men of dignity, not double-tongued, or addicted to much wine or fond of sordid gain, but holding to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. These men must also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons if they are beyond reproach. (1Tim 3:8–10)

Women must likewise be dignified, not malicious gossips, but temperate, faithful in all things. Deacons must be husbands of only one wife, and good managers of their children and their own households. For those who have served well as deacons obtain for themselves a high standing and great confidence in the faith that is in Messiah Yeshua. (1Tim 3:11–13)

- Who was this Phoebe?
  - In the later centuries we find a feminine form of the title "deacon," i.e., "deaconess," but no such form is found in 1st Century Greek literature.
  - Thus, in the Apostolic era, both men and women held the office of deacon in the messianic assemblies.
  - She was from Cenchrea, located near Corinth and Athens, across the Aegean Sea from Ephesus.
  - Whether she was going to Rome specifically to deliver Paul's epistle, or if she had other business in Rome as well, is not known.





Romans 16:2

that you receive her in the Lord in a manner worthy of the saints, and that you help her in whatever matter she may have need of you; for she herself has also been a helper of many, and of myself as well.

- Paul's requests regarding Phoebe:
  - that the Messianic community in Rome receive her, that is, accept her for the mission for which Paul had sent her.
  - that the Messianic community help her (literally, "attend to her every request") to accomplish the work she was sent to do.
- Paul's final commendation of Phoebe:
  - She has been a helper (προστάτις, *prostatis*) to many, including Paul himself.
  - This Greek word translated "helper" means "benefactor" or "patron."
  - This would indicate that Phoebe had significant social and perhaps even governmental connections.
  - It may well have been that she was also planning to arrange things to help Paul in his plans to travel to Spain, stopping along the way at Rome.

Lessons from Romans 16:1–2

- Contrary to what many in the modern feminist movement have claimed, Paul did not have a "low view" of women.
- Whether seen in the life of Yeshua or of Paul, it is clear that women fulfilled strategic roles in the work of the kingdom.
- Women as well as men may fill the office of "deacon" in the Messianic community.
  - Often, the examples we see in Scripture appear to be husband and wife teams.
  - Paul affirms this role of women in the Messianic assembly when he gave the qualifications for deacons in 1Tim 3:8ff.
- History has shown that very often God has used women in strategic ways to awaken His people to the ways of obedience and truth.
- Men and women, working together with integrity, humility, perseverance, and the power of the Ruach is God's plan for advancing the kingdom.

As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming; but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, even Messiah, from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.

Ephesians 4:14–16

Notes • Questions

A Study Through Paul's Epistle to the Romans
Romans 16:3–7

notes by Tim Hegg

Romans 16:3–5a

Greet Prisca and Aquila, my fellow workers in Messiah Yeshua, who for my life risked their own necks, to whom not only do I give thanks, but also all the ekklesiai of the Gentiles; also greet the ekklesia that is in their house.

Prisca & Aquila

- Prisca is also called Priscilla.
  - Priscilla (Πρίσκιλλα, *Priskilla*) is the diminutive form of Prisca, like English "Bobby" for "Bob."
  - It would have been used by family or close friends.
- Of the times Priscilla & Aquila are mentioned in the Apostolic Scriptures:
  - Twice Aquila is named first (Acts 18:2; 1Cor 16:19)
  - Four times Priscilla is named first (Acts 18:18, 26; Rom 16:3; 2Tim 4:19)
  - This may suggest that Priscilla was from a wealthy family with high social standing, or that she had a more active participation in the ekklesia than her husband.
- Aquila is called a "Jew" in Acts 18:2, and it is therefore most likely that Priscilla was also Jewish or a convert.
- They were husband and wife.
- Aquila, like Paul, was a "leather worker" (tent maker) and it is therefore understandable why Paul would have lived with Aquila & Priscilla while in Corinth (Acts 18:3).
- Paul calls them "fellow workers in Messiah."
  - They traveled with Paul to Ephesus (Acts 18:18).
  - It was at Ephesus where they had dialog with Apollos and "explained to him the way of God more accurately." (Acts 18:26)
  - Rome was the original home of Aquila & Priscilla, but they were forced to leave under the edict of Claudius (ca. 49 CE) who expelled the Jews.
  - Apparently they returned to Rome sometime after the reign of Claudius (41–54 CE).

> After these things he left Athens and went to Corinth. And he found a Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, having recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to leave Rome. He came to them, and because he was of the same trade, he stayed with them and they were working, for by trade they were tent-makers. (Acts 18:1–3)

- "fellow workers" here describes Priscilla & Aquila as having a significant role in Paul's mission to the Gentiles.
- This tells us Paul was not a "one man show." He recognized that leadership within the ekklesia of Yeshua must be a cooperative effort among a plurality of leaders.

...who for my life risked their own necks

- This probably happened in Ephesus:

About that time there occurred no small disturbance concerning the Way. For a man named Demetrius, a silversmith, who made silver shrines of Artemis, was bringing no little business to the craftsmen; these he gathered together with the workmen of similar trades, and said, "Men, you know that our prosperity depends upon this business. "You see and hear that not only in Ephesus, but in almost all of Asia, this Paul has persuaded and turned away a considerable number of people, saying that gods made with hands are no gods at all. Not only is there danger that this trade of ours fall into disrepute, but also that the temple of the great goddess Artemis be regarded as worthless and that she whom all of Asia and the world worship will even be dethroned from her magnificence." When they heard this and were filled with rage, they began crying out, saying, "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!" The city was filled with the confusion, and they rushed with one accord into the theater, dragging along Gaius and Aristarchus, Paul's traveling companions from Macedonia. And when Paul wanted to go into the assembly, the disciples would not let him. Also some of the Asiarchs who were friends of his sent to him and repeatedly urged him not to venture into the theater. (Acts 19:23ff)

to whom not only do I give thanks, but also all the ekklesiai of the Gentiles; also greet the ekklesia that is in their house.

- "*ekklesiai* of the Gentiles" – two possibilities:
  - relating to geography, i.e., the messianic assemblies which existed in regions outside of the Land, in regions primarily populated by Gentiles.
  - relating to the majority of members in a given assembly, i.e., assemblies dominated by non-Jews.
  - Regardless, the phrase makes clear that the gospel had been very successful in the diaspora.
- "*ekklesia* that is in their house"
  - Home assemblies were the obvious starting place for believers in the diaspora.

- When followers of Yeshua were dismissed from traditional synagogues, they also would meet in homes (cf. Acts 20:20)
- This reminds us that the word *ekklesia* does not refer to a building but to a congregated group of people.

Romans 16:5b–6

Greet Epaenetus, my beloved, who is the first convert to Messiah from Asia. Greet Mary, who has worked hard for you.

- Epaenetus is mentioned only here in the Scriptures.
  - "my beloved" most likely means "my dear friend"
  - It is possible that "beloved" indicates that Epaenetus was discipled by Paul.
- "first convert" is actually "first fruits" in the Greek (ἀπαρχή, *aparxē*).
- This means he was among the first to believe in Yeshua during Paul's journeys into Asia Minor.
- "First fruits" anticipates the full harvest. This reminds us of Paul's teaching in Chapter 11, that the ingrafting of the elect from the nations will be the means God will use to prepare Israel to confess Yeshua.
- Mary – sometimes spelled Maria, and other times Mariam.
  - Both were common Greek & Roman names.
- "worked hard for you"
  - in offering hospitality (?)
  - in prayer (?)

Romans 16:7

Greet Andronicus and Junias, my kinsmen and my fellow prisoners, who are outstanding among the apostles, who also were in Messiah before me.

- Andronicus is a name occurring among the members of the imperial household and may therefore have been a relative of high ranking Roman officials.
- Junias (Ἰουνιᾶς, *Iounias*) could be either a male or female name, depending upon the accent of the word.
- If male, then Andronicus and Junias were fellow laborers like Paul and Barnabas.
- If female, then it is most likely that Andronicus and Junias were husband and wife.
- "kinsmen" (συνγγενής, *sunngenēs*) means that Paul recognized them as being Jewish (cf. 9:3, "…my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh.")

- "fellow prisoners" – this might indicate that they had worked together with Paul in establishing messianic assemblies in the diaspora.
- "outstanding among the apostles" – Whether Junias refers to a man or a woman, the designation "outstanding among the apostles" is appropriate.
- "apostle" means "one sent with authority to carry out a mission."
- Many besides the Twelve were "sent ones" (apostles), cf. Luke 10:1.
- "in Messiah before me" – Jewish people were being drawn to faith in every generation, and these made up the remnant (cf. Rom 11:5).
- For Paul, "in Messiah" means "having eternal salvation."

Summary

- God uses common people, in common walks of life, whom He has redeemed and endowed with the Ruach, to accomplish His work for eternity.
- He uses men and women, equipping each with the necessary ability to serve Him as He directs and leads.
- The *ekklesia* He is building is a living, dynamic reality in which each person is essential and valuable.

And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets,
and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers,
for the equipping of the saints for the work of service,
to the building up of the body of Messiah;
until we all attain to the unity of the faith,
and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man,
to the measure of the stature which belongs
to the fullness of Messiah.

Ephesians 4:11–13

A Study Through Paul's Epistle to the Romans
Romans 16:8–16

notes by Tim Hegg

Romans 16:8–10

Greet Ampliatus, my beloved in the Lord. Greet Urbanus, our fellow worker in Messiah, and Stachys my beloved. Greet Apelles, the approved in Messiah. Greet those who are of the household of Aristobulus.

- Ampliatus
  - name of a slave in the imperial household
  - may have been the one who introduced the Gospel to the niece of Emperor Domitian
  - "beloved" = friend or even close friend
- Urbanus: common slave name
  - "fellow worker" – Perhaps Paul had given him specific duties to perform within the believing community at Rome
  - Stachys: common slave name
- Apelles:
  - was a well-known Greek name. A famous painter of the 4th Century BCE had this name.
  - "approved in Messiah" may indicate that he had persevered under persecution (perhaps imprisonment) for his faith.
- "…of the household of Aristobulus"
  - might have been the grandson of Herod the Great and brother of Agrippa I
  - If so, we see another indication that the Gospel had penetrated even into the Imperial family.

Romans 16:11

Greet Herodion, my kinsman. Greet those of the household of Narcissus, who are in the Lord.

- Herodion
  - most likely a member of the Herod household, perhaps a freedman who remained in the service of the royal family.
  - "kinsman" most likely indicates he was Jewish
- Narcissus
  - a man by this name was a freedman who was famous for rising to great fame under Claudius, thus arousing great jealousy among the Romans.
  - After the death of Claudius, he committed suicide

- Those of his household who were believers would therefore have faced persecution.
- "in the Lord" = believers in Yeshua

Romans 16:12

Greet Tryphaena and Tryphosa, workers in the Lord. Greet Persis the beloved, who has worked hard in the Lord.

- Tryphaena, Tryphosa, and Persis are names of women.
  - "workers in the Lord" = fulfilling specific tasks within the community
  - "worked hard" = Persis is singled out as having done extraordinary work for the good of the community.

Romans 6:13–14

Greet Rufus, a choice man in the Lord, also his mother and mine. Greet Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas and the brethren with them.

- Rufus
  - a common name (cf. Mark 15:21)
  - "a choice man in the Lord" most likely means "chosen in the Lord" or one of the "elect."
  - "his mother and mine" = either a family relative or someone who especially cared for Paul, perhaps when he was ill.
- Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas
  - common slave or freedmen names
  - Hermes is not the author of the "Shepherd of Hermes," since this apocryphal work was written in the 2nd Century.
  - "brethren with them" might indicate a community lead by these five men.

Romans 16:15–16

Greet Philologus and Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints who are with them.

- Philologus and Julia:
  - either husband & wife or brother & sister.
  - Philologus is a common slave name
- Nereus and his sister: children of Philologus and Julia?
- Olympas – a well-known Greek name
- "all the saints…" – perhaps a community met in the homes of the people named.

What Does This List Tell Us?

- Jews and non-Jews in the early Messianic communities
  - Of the 26 names mention in Ch. 16, it is most likely that at least five of them were Jewish believers.
  - If this ratio is representative of the wider messianic community in Rome, this means the community was
    ~ 80% non-Jewish
    ~ 20% Jewish
  - Already in the mid-50's CE, the messianic communities in the diaspora were primarily made up of non-Jews.
- Social & Economic status
  - The majority of names listed in Ch 16 were common slave names.
  - While some had doubtlessly achieved "freedman" status, many had not.
  - Thus, the majority were at the bottom of the economic scale and had no great prestige in social standing.

> For consider your calling, brethren, that there were not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble; but God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong, and the base things of the world and the despised God has chosen, the things that are not, so that He may nullify the things that are, so that no man may boast before God. (1Cor 1:26–29)

- Doers—not Spectators
  -We see many people engaged as ministers to each other (cf. Eph 4:12).
    ~ men & women
    ~ Jew & non-Jew
    ~ wealth and low-income
    ~ slaves and free

- Small, house gatherings
  - We have noted a number of groups that apparently met in the home of a named individual.
  - This tells us that the groups were relatively small and close-knit.
  - This does not indicate a requirement, but rather a possibility. A community does not need to be large in order to be effective and successful.

Romans 16:16

Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the *ekklesiai* of Messiah greet you.

- Similar language is found a number of times in Paul's epistles and once from Peter.

All the brethren greet you. Greet one another with a holy kiss. (1Cor 16:20)
Greet one another with a holy kiss. (2Cor 13:12)
Greet all the brethren with a holy kiss. (1Thess 5:26)
Greet one another with a kiss of love. Peace be to you all who are in Messiah. (1Pet 5:14)

- What is a "holy kiss"?
  - "Holy" is the same word (*hagios*) translated "saints" when in the plural.
  - A "holy" kiss must therefore be a greeting reserved for others who are believers in Yeshua, that is, for those who are "saints."
- In the Ancient Near East, relatives and close friends would greet each other with a hug and touching cheeks together, or touching lips to the other's cheek.
- It's use in the early Messianic communities was done to strengthen the close bond that existed among those who had confessed Yeshua to be the Messiah and not based upon people-group identification or social status.
- "All the *ekklesiai* of Messiah greet you"
  - Already in the mid-50's CE, multiple groups who identified as the "assemblies of Messiah" were extant.
  - Paul emphasizes the unity of the messianic assemblies in this final greeting.
  - This is the only time this exact phrase is found, and became the basis for the denomination "Church of Christ."

So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Messiah Yeshua Himself being the corner stone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit.

Ephesians 2:19–22

A Study Through Paul's Epistle to the Romans
Romans 16:17–18

notes by Tim Hegg

Romans 16:17

Now I urge you, brethren, keep your eye on those who cause dissensions and hindrances contrary to the teaching which you learned, and turn away from them.

- These are final exhortations by the Apostle, thus:
  - they tend to be short and to the point
  - they seem to be matters of high importance
- "I urge you" (παρακαλέω, *parakaleō*) –
  - the Greek word usually indicates an urgent request
  - Paul has used this strong word before in Romans

Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. (Rom 12:1)

Now I urge you, brethren, by our Lord Yeshua Messiah and by the love of the Spirit, to strive together with me in your prayers to God for me, (Rom 12:8)

- Therefore, in his closing words, the Apostle gives us something to which we must pay attention.
- His exhortation in these closing verses goes contrary to what is considered "politically correct" in our times.
- The phrase "keep your eye on" translates one word in the Greek, σκοπεῖν (*skopein*).
  - the word means "to mark out," "to keep track of"
  - "to mark out" in order to follow or in order to avoid
  - It can be used both in a negative or positive sense.

Then watch out that the light in you is not darkness. (Luke 11:35) = "guard against"

Brethren, join in following my example, and observe those who walk according to the pattern you have in us. (Phil 3:17) = "follow what you see"

- In our text, Paul is using the word in the sense of "guard against."
  - watch out for those who cause division and strife so that you can guard yourself from their poison.
  - Note God's perspective on divisive people:

- There are six things which Adonai hates, even, seven which are an abomination to Him:
  (1) Haughty eyes,
  (2) a lying tongue,
  (3) hands that shed innocent blood,
  (4) a heart that devises wicked plans,
  (5) feet that run rapidly to evil,
  (6) a false witness who utters lies,
  (7) and one who spreads strife among brothers.
  (Prov 6:16–19)

- Dissensions (διχοστασία, *dichostasia*), literally, "to stand against"
  - someone who regularly refuses to accept the truth
  - someone who considers their personal opinion more important than the facts
  - someone who regularly takes an contrary position
  - often someone characterized as opposing authority
- Hinderances (σκάνδαλον, *skandalon*), the word from which our English word "scandal" is derived.
  - often translated "stumbling block" in the Bible
  - those who cause others to stumble and fall away from the straight and narrow path of righteousness

They served their idols, which became a snare to them. (Ps 106:36)

Those who love Your torah have great peace, and nothing causes them to stumble. (Ps 119:165)

The Son of Man will send forth His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all stumbling blocks, and those who commit lawlessness… (Matt 13:41)

But He turned and said to Peter, "Get behind Me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to Me; for you are not setting your mind on God's interests, but man's." (Matt 16:23)

Woe to the world because of its stumbling blocks! For it is inevitable that stumbling blocks come; but woe to that man through whom the stumbling block comes! (Matt. 18:7)

- Paul is speaking of dissensions and hindrances in the realm of doctrine and practice (halachah)
- "teaching which you learned"
  - from Paul and others who carried the Apostolic teaching.
  - A body of truth based upon the Scriptures as taught and applied by Yeshua and His Apostles.

- "turn away" (ἐκκλίνω, *ekklinō*)
  - used only here and in 1Pet 3:11, quoting Ps 34:14.
  - "He must turn away from evil and do good; He must seek peace and pursue it." (Ps 34:14)
- What does "turn away from them" look like?
  - They should not fill the role of "close friends."
  - They should not form a circle of people with whom we have regular social interaction.
  - We should attempt, in love and gentleness, to exhort such people to repent.

Romans 16:18

For such men are slaves, not of our Lord Messiah but of their own appetites; and by their smooth and flattering speech they deceive the hearts of the unsuspecting.

- Remember Paul's teaching in chapter 6

But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed, and having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness. (Rom 6:16–18)

  - "slaves of righteousness" = servants of our Lord Messiah
  - Walking in the footsteps of the Messiah
    ~ following His teaching and seeking to be like Him
    ~ humble; loving; unwilling to compromise the truth

- Instead of serving Yeshua, they serve themselves.
- "their own appetites" = "to satisfy themselves"
  - their motives are self-centered
  - they seek to gain a following of people
  - they want to be seen and revered as teachers

Let not many of you become teachers, my brethren, knowing that as such we will incur a stricter judgment. (James 3:1)

- smooth & flattering speech
  - words that do not convict
  - teachings that make people feel empowered rather than utterly dependent upon God
  - revealing new "secrets" and "mysteries"
  - persuasive speech without substance of facts

- "hearts" = mind. Thus, discerning truth from error
- "unsuspecting" (ἄκακος, *hakakos*) = "innocent," "those who are ignorant of pending danger," "naive."
- "When the scoffer is punished, the naive (*hakakos*) becomes wise; but when the wise is instructed, he receives knowledge." (Prov 21:11)

Basic Steps of Discernment

1. Is the teacher appealing to the Scripture as the final authority?
   - Does the Bible affirm what the teacher is saying?
   - Is the Scripture used by the teacher being interpreted in its grammatical, historical context?
2. Is the teacher offering primary or secondary sources?
   - E.g., primary source: the biblical text
   - E.g., secondary source: a bible commentary
3. Does the teacher present himself or herself as an expert in the area being taught?
   - What are the teacher's qualifications?
   - Is he or she recognized by others as qualified?
4. "Facts are stubborn things" (John Adams)
   - Don't accept conclusions unless they rest upon clearly established facts.
   - If it sounds too incredible to be true, it must rest upon a significant number of established facts.
5. Seek counsel from trusted teachers
   - Through insolence comes nothing but strife, but wisdom is with those who receive counsel. (Prov 13:10)
   - Where there is no guidance the people fall, but in abundance of counselors there is victory. (Prov 11:14)

Who is there to harm you if you prove zealous for what is good? But even if you should suffer for the sake of righteousness, you are blessed. AND DO NOT FEAR THEIR INTIMIDATION, AND DO NOT BE TROUBLED, *but sanctify Messiah as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence.*

1Peter 3:13–15

A Study Through Paul's Epistle to the Romans
Romans 16:19–20

notes by Tim Hegg

Romans 16:19

For the report of your obedience has reached to all; therefore I am rejoicing over you, but I want you to be wise in what is good and innocent in what is evil.

- The opening word of our verse, "For…", reminds us that our verse is linked to the previous verses:
  - Verses 17–18 describe those who were causing dissensions and stumbling blocks, leading people astray with their "smooth talk and flattery."
  - In contrast, Paul praises the Roman assembly for their obedience.
- What does Paul mean by "your obedience"?
  - He began the epistle by stating that his apostleship had its goal of bringing the Gentiles to the "obedience of the faith."

> …who was declared the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead, according to the Spirit of holiness, Yeshua Messiah our Lord, through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles for His name's sake, (Rom 1:4–5)

  - He ends the epistle utilizing the same phrase:

> …by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal God, has been made known to all the nations, leading to obedience of faith; (Rom 16:26)

- What does "obedience of the faith" mean?
  - It means "obedience which is the inevitable fruit of true, saving faith."
  - It means walking in the footsteps of Yeshua, living in accordance with God's instructions (Torah) by faith and the power of the Ruach.
  - It means obedience in thought, word, and deed.

- Paul noted at the beginning of Romans that the "faith" of the Roman assembly was widely known:

> First, I thank my God through Yeshua Messiah for you all, because your faith is being proclaimed throughout the whole world. (Rom 1:8)

- Paul rejoices over the vibrant testimony for Yeshua being carried by the Messianic assembly in Rome:
  - The greatest reward for a godly teacher or leader is to see Messiah glorified in the lives of those being taught and led.

... I want you to be wise in what is good and innocent in what is evil.

- This reminds one of the word of Yeshua in Matt 10:16

Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves; so be shrewd as serpents and innocent as doves. (Matt 10:16)

- "shrewd" = φρόνιμος, *phronimos* - "wise, insight"
- "innocent" = ἀκέραιος, *akeraios* - "innocent, harmless," opposite of "deceitful or using trickery"

- "wise in what is good and innocent in what is evil"
  - "wise" = σοφός, *sophos* - "wise, acting with wisdom"
  - "innocent" = ἀκέραιος, *akeraios* - "innocent, harmless," opposite of "deceitful or using trickery"
- "wise in what is good"
  - good deeds (*mitzvot*) combined with wisdom
    - ~ helping others to depend upon God, not teaching them to be co-dependent upon you.
    - ~ able to combine gentle love with "tough" love
- "innocent in what is evil"
  - having righteous motives for doing the mitzvot
    - ~ to glorify God, not oneself
    - ~ to genuinely help others, not doing good as a "down payment."
  - proper motive or intention is essential for the "obedience of faith" because true obedience begins with the heart.

Hear the word of Adonai, You rulers of Sodom; Give ear to the instruction of our God, you people of Gomorrah. What are your multiplied sacrifices to Me?" says Adonai. I have had enough of burnt offerings of rams and the fat of fed cattle; and I take no pleasure in the blood of bulls, lambs or goats. When you come to appear before Me, who requires of you this trampling of My courts? Bring your worthless offerings no longer, incense is an abomination to Me. New moon and sabbath, the calling of assemblies — I cannot endure iniquity and the solemn assembly. I hate your new moon festivals and your appointed feasts, they have become a burden to Me; I am weary of bearing them. So when you spread out your hands in prayer, I will hide My eyes from you; yes, even though you multiply prayers, I will not listen. Your hands are covered with blood. (Isaiah 1:13–15)

Romans 16:20

The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Yeshua be with you.

- "God of peace" means "the God Who is the source of genuine peace."
- Paul appears to allude to Gen 3:15, " And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, and you shall bruise him on the heel."
- What is meant by "soon" (τάχος, *taxos*)?
  - "a short time in the future, without delay"
  - "quickly, swiftly, something done rapidly"

τάχος (*taxos*) in the Apostolic Scriptures

I tell you that He will bring about justice for them quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth? (Luke 18:8)

And behold, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared and a light shone in the cell; and he struck Peter's side and woke him up, saying, "Get up quickly." And his chains fell off his hands. (Acts 12:7)

and I saw Him saying to me, 'Make haste, and get out of Jerusalem quickly, because they will not accept your testimony about Me.' (Acts 22:18)

Festus then answered that Paul was being kept in custody at Caesarea and that he himself was about to leave shortly. (Acts 25:4)

I am writing these things to you, hoping to come to you before long; (1Tim 3:14)

Festus then answered that Paul was being kept in custody at Caesarea and that he himself was about to leave shortly. (Acts 25:4)

The Revelation of Yeshua Messiah, which God gave Him to show to His bond-servants, the things which must soon take place; and He sent and communicated it by His angel to His bond-servant John, (Rev 1:1)

And he said to me, "These words are faithful and true"; and the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, sent His angel to show to His bond-servants the things which must soon take place. (Rev. 22:6)

The God of peace will soon [swiftly] crush Satan under your feet.

- Paul encourages the relatively young Messianic assembly in Rome with the assurance of God's ultimate victory in Yeshua.
- While the journey may seem long, in the end the enemy will be defeated swiftly and finally.

The grace of our Lord Yeshua be with you.

- While Paul uses slightly different phrases in the salutations of his epistles, he always includes the word "grace."
- For Paul, the work of God in Messiah could be summed up in the word "grace."

For by grace you have been saved through faith;
and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God;
not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.
For we are His workmanship, created in Messiah Yeshua
for good works, which God prepared beforehand
so that we would walk in them.

Ephesians 2:8–10

A Study Through Paul's Epistle to the Romans
Romans 16:21–27

notes by Tim Hegg

Romans 16:21–22

Timothy my fellow worker greets you, and so do Lucius and Jason and Sosipater, my kinsmen. I, Tertius, who write this letter, greet you in the Lord.

- Timothy (τιμόθεος, *timotheos*) means "one who honors God" or "honored by God."
- His mother, Eunikae, was Jewish, as well as his maternal grandmother, Lois. His father was Greek (Acts 16:1; 2Tim 1:5).
- "…that from childhood you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Messiah Yeshua." (2Tim 3:15)
- In this we find, once again, Paul's teaching about God's way of salvation;
  - divine revelation – the "holy writings" = Scripture
  - reception of the truth – illumination by the Ruach
  - exercise of faith in Yeshua the Messiah
- "Fellow worker"
  - Timothy was discipled by Paul
  - Paul refers to him as his "son," meaning he instructed him as a father would his own son.
  - A significant part of discipleship is working together in the "hands-on" work of the kingdom.
- Lucius
  - This could be Luke, author of the Gospel of Luke and of Acts.
  - Λυκᾶς Lukas, may be the same as Λούκιος *Loukios*, who was Paul's traveling companion.
- Jason (Ἰάσων, *Iasōn*)
  - a shortened, Greek form of "Yeshua" or "Joshua"
  - Paul stayed with him on his first visit to Thessalonica (Acts 17:5f)
- Sosipater (Σωσίπατρος, *Sōsipatros*)
  - may well be the Sopater of Berea, son of Pyrrhus mentioned in Acts 20:4.
  - He also was one of the workers together with Paul.
- "my kinsman" most likely means that these three were Jewish.
- If so, and if Lucius is one and the same with the Gospel author Luke, then this would mean Luke was of Jewish lineage, a view held by some scholars.

- Tertius (Τέρτιος, *Tertios*)
  - secretary; scribe; amanuensis
  - common in the 1st Century
  - Paul probably dictated and Tertius wrote.
  - It is most likely that Paul read the final copy to assure its accuracy.
    ~ Does the fact that Paul used a secretary affect whether Romans is fully inspired?
    ~ No. The words are inspired, not the person.

All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the person of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work. (2Tim 3:16–17)

But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God. (2Pet 1:20–21)

~ "moved by the Holy Spirit" – the Greek is better translated "carried along" or "borne along."
~ The Holy Spirit superintended the writing of Scripture to assure its accuracy and integrity.
~ Therefore, the Ruach HaKodesh is surely able to superintend the hand of a secretary to assure accuracy of what is written.

- "in the Lord" – some take this with the verb "write"
  - "I, Tertius, who wrote this letter in the Lord, greet you."
- But it is better to take "in the Lord" with the verb "greet." Thus Tertius numbers himself with the believing communities already mentioned.

Romans 16:23

Gaius, host to me and to the whole ekklesia, greets you. Erastus, the city treasurer greets you, and Quartus, the brother.

- Gaius, perhaps the same one mentioned in 1Cor 1:14.
- Erastus, who was city employee in Corinth, as mentioned in an engraved stone excavated in Corinth and dated to the 1st century CE.
- Quartus: this is the only time the name is mentioned in the Apostolic Scriptures.

Romans 16:[24]

The grace of our Lord Yeshua Messiah be with you all. Amen.

- This verse is not in the earliest manuscripts.
- Apparently it was copied from v. 20 and placed after v. 23 by some later scribes.

Romans 16:25–27

Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Yeshua Messiah, according to the revelation of the mystery which has been kept secret for long ages past, but now is manifested, and by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal God, has been made known to all the nations, leading to obedience of faith; to the only wise God, through Yeshua Messiah, be the glory forever. Amen.

Are These Final Verses from Paul?

- The extant manuscripts differ as to where this doxology actually is placed:
  - The earliest manuscripts put it following 16:23.
  - Some manuscripts have it twice: after 14:23 and after 16:23.
  - Some have it after 15:33.
- It may be that chapter 16 was written on a separate papyrus sheet since it was first of all an introduction for Phoebe.
- If the doxology was appended to the separate document, some scribes might have felt it should be added to the larger document (chs. 1–15).
- Whatever the case, the strong weight of manuscript evidence shows that these final verses, the doxology, were part of the original letter.

Four Important Truths:

- In this doxology, Paul leaves us with these four important truths:
  1. God has determined that all those He has drawn to faith in His Son will be eternally saved.
  2. God's sovereign work of saving the elect from both Israel and the nations is in accordance with the words of the prophets and His commandment.
  3. When God saves a person, this results in the obedience of faith.
  4. All glory and praise belong to God for His sovereign work of grace in saving His chosen ones from every nation.

  We will be studying these in the upcoming weeks.

And they sang a new song, saying, "Worthy are You to take the book and to break its seals; for You were slain, and purchased for God with Your blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation. You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth."

Revelation 5:9–10

A Study Through Paul's Epistle to the Romans
Romans 16:25–26a

notes by Tim Hegg

The Mystery of God's Sovereign Grace

Romans 16:25-26a

Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Yeshua Messiah, according to the revelation of the mystery which has been kept secret for long ages past, but now is manifested…

- What is the mystery?
- How has it been revealed?
- How does this apply to us?

What is the Mystery?

- We know from reading the context of our verses that
  - it relates to the nations, that is, to the Gentiles;
  - it relates to the salvation of those chosen from the nations.

> "…according to the revelation of the mystery which has been kept secret for long ages past, but now is manifested, and by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal God, has been made known to all the nations, leading to obedience of faith;" (Rom 16:25–26)

- That God planned to save Gentiles as well as Jews?
- No, that was no mystery. He revealed this to Abraham.
- In fact, God's plan to save His chosen ones from the nations is the capstone of the Abrahamic covenant.

That God had Chosen Gentiles for Salvation was Not a Mystery

> And I will bless those who bless you, And the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed." (Gen. 12:3)

> Adonai said, "Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do, since Abraham will surely become a great and mighty nation, and in him all the nations of the earth will be blessed? (Gen 18:17–18)

> Then the angel of Adonai called to Abraham a second time from heaven, and said, "By Myself I have sworn, declares Adonai, because you have done this thing and have not withheld your son, your only son, indeed I will

greatly bless you, and I will greatly multiply your seed as the stars of the heavens and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your seed shall possess the gate of their enemies. In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice." (Gen 18:15–18)

Sojourn in this land and I will be with you and bless you, for to you and to your descendants I will give all these lands, and I will establish the oath which I swore to your father Abraham. I will multiply your descendants as the stars of heaven, and will give your descendants all these lands; and in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed; (Gen 26:3–4)

Your descendants will also be like the dust of the earth, and you will spread out to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south; and in you and in your seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. (Gen 28:14)

What then is the Mystery?

- The mystery is not that God would save a great number of people from the nations.
- The mystery was how those chosen from the nations would receive God's covenant blessings.

Does God have One Family or Two?

- It appears that in the 1st Century, the prevailing view was that only people with a "legal Jewish status" were actually in the family of God.
- The issue was national identity, not covenant identity.
- Thus, the "one family of God" was made up of:
  - those with Jewish lineage (born as a Jew)
  - those Gentiles who converted to Judaism (given "legal Jewish status")
- But that was never God's plan.

God's Way of Redemption

- Paying the penalty of sin for His chosen ones through the death of an infinite, innocent life, i.e., the Messiah.
- Drawing to Himself by the work of the Ruach those He has chosen, giving them the gift of faith.
- By faith His chosen ones receive the payment for their sin made on their behalf by Yeshua, God's Messiah.
- God endows them with His Ruach by Whom they are enabled to become more and more like Yeshua.
- God's plan of redemption is the same for all people, whether Jew or non-Jew.

- From the beginning God has had one family, not two.
- The ingathering of the elect from the nations was never a mystery.

What is the Mystery?

- The mystery was that God intended to bless the elect from the nations, not in their own, separate "family" but together in the one family of Abraham.
- Thus, the Apostles describe Gentile believers as "chosen" using the same terminology which describes Israel as God's "chosen" people.

> …that by revelation there was made known to me the mystery, as I wrote before in brief. By referring to this, when you read you can understand my insight into the mystery of Messiah, which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit; to be specific, that the Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise in Messiah Yeshua through the gospel, of which I was made a minister, according to the gift of God's grace which was given to me according to the working of His power. (Eph 3:3–7)

God Chose a Nation – Israel

> Behold, to Adonai your God belong heaven and the highest heavens, the earth and all that is in it. Yet on your fathers did Adonai set His affection to love them, and He chose their descendants after them, even you above all peoples, as it is this day. (Deut 10:14–15)
>
> Blessed is the nation whose God is Adonai, the people whom He has chosen for His own inheritance. (Ps 32:12)
>
> You only have I known among all the families of the earth; Therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities. (Amos 3:2)

God Chose Individuals for Eternal Salvation

> But it is not as though the word of God has failed. For they are not all Israel who are descended from Israel; (Rom 9:6)
>
> You only have I known among all the families of the earth; Therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities. (Amos 3:2)

And not only this, but there was Rebekah also, when she had conceived twins by one man, our father Isaac; for though the twins were not yet born and had not done anything good or bad, so that God's purpose according to His choice would stand, not because of works but because of Him who calls, it was said to her, "the older will serve the younger." (Rom 9:10–12)

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Yeshua Messiah, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Messiah, just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. (Eph 1:3–4)

Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord or of me His prisoner, but join with me in suffering for the gospel according to the power of God, Who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Messiah Yeshua from all eternity, (2Tim 1:8–9)

For so the Lord has commanded us, "I HAVE PLACED YOU AS A LIGHT FOR THE GENTILES, THAT YOU MAY BRING SALVATION TO THE END OF THE EARTH." When the Gentiles heard this, they began rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord; and as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed. (Acts 13:47–48)

What Does This Mean For You?

- If you are a believer in Yeshua today, then:
  - He chose you for Himself from all eternity.
  - He set His love upon you from all eternity.
  - He sent His Son, Yeshua, to pay for your sins.
  - He poured out His own Spirit within you, to strengthen you, guide you, and enable you to become more and more like His Son, Yeshua.
  - He has given you eternal life and enabled you to fulfill the purpose for which He created you.

For by grace you have been saved through faith;
and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God;
not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.
For we are His workmanship,
created in Messiah Yeshua for good works,
which God prepared beforehand
so that we would walk in them.

Ephesians 2:8–10

notes by Tim Hegg

Romans 16:25

Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Yeshua Messiah…

- Paul is addressing the entire Messianic community in Rome, but he has the Gentile believers particularly in mind.
  - The Jewish authorities were teaching that only those with "legal Jewish status" were assured of God's covenant faithfulness.
  - Paul is assuring both Jew and Gentile believers they both are covered by God's ability and faithfulness.
  - Both Jew and Gentile believers are members of God's covenant with Israel.
- "God is able (δύναμαι, *dunamai*) to establish (σηρίζω, *stērizō*) you."
  - *dunamai* - the Greek root from which we derive our English word "dynamite."
  - God, in all of His omnipotence, has promised to strengthen all who are His so that they will persevere in their faith.
  - *stērizō* - this word carries the sense of "to strengthen," or "to support."
  - This speaks of a cooperative work between God and the believer.

Perseverance of the Righteous

and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified. (Rom 8:30)

- This means that God has guaranteed our final victory, that nothing can separate us from God's saving love.
- But how is the victory to be won?
- He protects, strengthens, and enables that through the strength He gives we may persevere in our faith.
- It is living, growing faith that wins the battle.

Faith Lays Hold of God's Power

For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world — our faith. (1John 5:4)

but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Yeshua Messiah. (1Cor 15:57)

Romans 16:25

Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Yeshua Messiah…

- Faith in God means we believe and affirm that God is all-powerful, that nothing is impossible for Him.
  - This gives us courage and strength to face whatever comes to us in life.
  - We know God is able.
- Strengthened by confessing that God is both all-powerful and that He is committed to our success:
  - we desire all the more to cling to Him in faith regardless of our circumstances.
  - Instead of dwelling on the impossible, we cling to our King for Whom nothing is impossible.

The Strength to Not Let Go

You shall follow Adonai your God and fear Him; and you shall keep His commandments, listen to His voice, serve Him, and cling to Him. (Deut 13:4)

My soul clings to You; Your right hand upholds me. (Ps 63:8)

- What does Paul mean by "my gospel"?
  - He means that in his presentation of the Gospel, he emphasized the equality of the believing Gentiles in the body of Messiah.
  - We find the expression "my gospel" two other times in Paul's letters.

"My Gospel"

For when Gentiles who do not have the Torah do instinctively the things of the Torah, these, not having the Torah, are a law to themselves, in that they show the work of the Torah written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness and their thoughts alternately accusing or else defending them, on the day when, according to my gospel, God will judge the secrets of men through Messiah Yeshua. (Rom 2:14–16)

- Rom 2:16 speaks of the final judgment:
  - This text emphasized that God will not judge on the basis of "people-group identity" but rather upon the exercise of genuine faith demonstrated by a righteous life.

Remember Yeshua Messiah, risen from the dead, descendant of David, according to my gospel (2Tim 2:8)

- 2Tim 2:8 admonishes us to remember Yeshua
  - We are to proclaim Yeshua to be the Messiah of Jew and Gentile, not the Messiah for only the Jews.

Romans 16:25

Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Yeshua Messiah…

- The phrase means: "the preaching which has Yeshua Messiah as its primary focus."
- This characterized Paul's gospel:
  - that Yeshua, the true and promised Messiah, is the very object of true, saving faith.
  - This is true for all people, in every era.

How is Our Faith Strengthened?

- Pursuing what is good and what pleases God:
  - The Bible: How regularly do we read and mediate upon the living, active word of God?
  - Prayer: Is prayer a regular part of our daily life? Do we seek God for wisdom and strength? Is praise and thanksgiving a regular part of my walk with God?
  - Fellowship: Do we recognize how essential the body of Messiah is for our own growth and spiritual health?
- Forsaking what is evil and displeasing to God:
  - Learning to discern what is pleasing to God and being willing to distinguish between what is righteous and what is evil in God's eyes.
  - Admitting to myself what are the sins that easily trip me up; growing in wisdom to guard against them.
  - Remembering that bad company corrupts good morals. (1Cor 15:33)

But put on the Lord Yeshua Messiah,
and make no provision for the flesh
in regard to its lusts.

Romans 13:14

Adonai's lovingkindnesses indeed never cease, for His compassions never fail. They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness. (Lam 2:2–23)

But now, thus says Adonai, your Creator, O Jacob, and He who formed you, O Israel, "Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name; you are Mine! When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they will not overflow you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be scorched, nor will the flame burn you. For I am Adonai your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior; (Isaiah 43:1–3)

For the mountains may be removed and the hills may shake, but My lovingkindness will not be removed from you, and My covenant of peace will not be shaken," Says Adonai who has compassion on you. (Isaiah 54:10)

Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life. (John 5:24)

But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Messiah died for us. Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him. For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. (Rom 5:8–10)

Who will separate us from the love of Messiah? Will tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Just as it is written, "for your sake we are being put to death all day long; we were considered as sheep to be slaughtered." But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Messiah Yeshua our Lord. (Rom 8:35–39)

Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy, to the only God our Savior, through Yeshua Messiah our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen. (Jude 24-25)

A Study Through Paul's Epistle to the Romans
Romans 16:26

notes by Tim Hegg

The Canon of Inspired Scripture

Romans 16:25-26

Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Yeshua Messiah, according to the revelation of the mystery which has been kept secret for long ages past, but now is manifested, and by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal God, has been made known to all the nations, leading to obedience of faith;

Review of Previous Study

- The TaNaK (Torah, Prophets, Writings) was established as a complete set of writings which Yeshua and His Apostles referred to as "the Scriptures."
- The manuscript evidence has proven that the accuracy with which the TaNaK was copied throughout the centuries is unparalleled in human literature.
- It is clear that Yeshua and His Apostles received the TaNaK as the authoritative, inspired word of God.
- Yeshua said that His words would never pass away (Matt 24:35; Mk 13:31; Lk 21:33), meaning His words were eternal just as the Scriptures of the TaNaK (cf. Is 40:9; Ps 119:89).
- Yeshua promised the Twelve that He would send the Ruach Who would bring to their memory His teachings.
- The Apostolic Scriptures are the result of the Apostles being superintended by the Ruach in recording Yeshua's teachings and applying them to the ekklesia Yeshua promised to build.
- Paul's epistles were already being affirmed as Scripture in the predestruction era by Peter (cf. 2Pet 3:14–16).

Who Decided Which Books Made it In?

- In biblical studies this is called the formation of the canon.
  - "canon" derives from the Greek κανών (*kanōn*) which means "a measuring rod."
  - Thus "canon" came to mean those writings which were universally recognized as containing God's revealed will for faith and *halachah*.
  - canon = biblical; non-canonical = not biblical

First Things First – Our Starting Point

- Before we ask the question of the biblical canon, we need to state our basic starting point, the presupposition from which we begin. We believe
  - God exists
  - God has revealed Himself and His will in truth.
- How has God revealed Himself?
  - In creation (Ps 19:1–6; Rom 1:20)
  - In His Son, Yeshua (John 14:9; Heb 1:3)
  - In the Scriptures (Ex 31:18; Jn 5:39; Heb 1:1)
- While the revelation of God in nature is sufficient to reveal His existence and thus His sovereignty, it is not sufficient to reveal God's way of salvation.
- God's salvation message is contained in the Scriptures.
  - "So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Messiah." (Rom 10:17; cf. 16:26; 2Tim 3:16–17)
- Two starting points that make a world of difference. Either—
  - Scriptures are the divinely inspired, word of God, or
  - Scriptures are the teaching of men about God.
- "Inspired" means that those who wrote the Scriptures were superintended by the Ruach HaKodesh so that what they wrote matched God's own eternal truth.
- If we start by affirming the inspiration of Scripture, then
  - the process of canonization will be viewed as people recognizing what is, and what is not, inspired.
  - the process of canonization was a matter of recognizing what already exists, not a matter of accrediting authority where it formerly did not exist.
- Believing that the Scriptures are the inspired word of God, it follows that
  - they will exhibit the quality of inspiration which marks them out as distinct from other writings.
  - In this way the Scriptures are "self-authenticating."
- If God's word is eternal, and if Yeshua's word will never pass away, it follows that God, by His providence, would preserve the Scriptures throughout all generations.
- Thus, the history of the canonization of Scripture was
  - the process of accepting as Scripture those writings which already bore the mark of inspiration;
  - a process guarded by God's divine providence

Canon of the TaNaK

- Most important fact: Yeshua & His Apostles refer to "the Scriptures" or the "Word of God" as a known, accepted body of Scripture.
- As early as 150 BCE, the 39 books we now call the TaNaK were widely recognized as the canon of Scripture.

Apocrypha & Pseudepigrapha

- The Qumran sect was very fond of books outside of the 39 books of the TaNaK.
  - Apocrypha = a Greek word (ἀπόκρυφος, *apokruphos*) meaning "hidden," i.e., hidden away so as not to be read.
  - Pseudepigrapha = "falsely written," i.e., authorship ascribed to an ancient author, i.e., Testament of Abraham, written in the 1st or 2nd Century CE.
- None (including Enoch) are quoted as having the authority of Scripture by Yeshua or His Apostles.

The Canon of the Apostolic Scriptures

- All 27 books were written between 48 and 100 CE
- Earliest fragment, P^{52}, is dated from late 1st to early 2nd Century CE, giving evidence of John's Gospel already being copied by that time.
- The followers of Yeshua already had a canon of Scripture, the TaNaK, as a standard.
- The process of canonization required wide attestation, not the opinion of a single group tied to a particularly geographical location.
- The disputes themselves add credibility to the final shape of the canon.
- The rise of heresies such as Gnosticism (which taught that the God of Genesis was evil) strengthened the necessity to determine what Apostolic writings were authoritative and which were no.
- The earliest listing (Muratorian Canon) is dated by conservatives to the late 2nd Century CE.
- Other heresies which arose required careful consideration regarding what was Scripture and what was not.
- The Gospels, Acts, and Paul's epistles were first received as authoritative Scripture with the TaNaK.
- The rest were scrutinized as to whether they agreed in doctrine with those books already received.

- It is a mistake to think that believers in Yeshua did not consider the Apostolic writings to be Scripture until the 4th Century when the Church finally agreed on the 27 books as canonical Scripture.
- Most of the books were held as Scripture very early. Only Philemon, Hebrews, James, 2Peter, 3John, Jude, and Revelation were disputed until later.

Summary

- We believe that God, by His Ruach, inspired the Scriptures.
- Therefore, they possess a self-authenticating quality which has been recognized and received by the wide and diverse communities of believers.
- God's word is eternal, and Yeshua Himself claimed His words also be eternal.
- Since God sends for this word to accomplish His will, this means He will preserve His word for those to whom He has sent it.
- Let us, therefore, not think so highly of ourselves as to suggest that we know better than the believers through two millennia who came before us.
- Let us rather affirm that the 39 books of the TaNaK and the 27 of the Apostolic Scriptures which we have are the eternal, unchanging revelation of God.
- We hold in our hands the book that leads to life, the very thoughts of God. Let us treasure these inspired words, write them upon our hearts, teach them to our children, and live in accordance with their precepts by the power of the Ruach.
- So may our lives join in the praise of Paul's final words in his epistle to the Romans: "…to the only wise God, through Yeshua Messiah, be the glory forever. Amen." (Rom 16:27)

Forever, O LORD, Your word is settled in heaven.
Psalm 119:89

The grass withers, the flower fades,
But the word of our God stands forever.
Isaiah 40:8

Heaven and earth will pass away,
but My words will not pass away.
Matt 24:35; Mark 13:31; Luke 21:33

A Study Through Paul's Epistle to the Romans
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The Authority of the Scriptures

Romans 16:25-26

Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Yeshua Messiah, according to the revelation of the mystery which has been kept secret for long ages past, but now is manifested, and by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal God, has been made known to all the nations, leading to obedience of faith;

Can I Trust the Bible?

- Two essential questions we must answer:
  - "Is the Bible Authoritative?"
  - "Can I Trust the Bible?"
- Note the distinction in these two questions:
  - Is the Bible the revelation of God's will for mankind?
  - Am I willing to accept the Bible as God's authority for my own life?

Romans 16:26

...by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal God, has been made known to all the nations, leading to obedience of faith;

- "according to the commandment of the eternal God"
  - the Greek for "commandment" = ἐπιταγή (*epitagē*) can also means "the authority to give commands."

- Scriptures of the Prophets = the TaNaK
  - T = Torah (books of Moses/Pentateuch)
  - N = Nevi'im (Prophets: former & latter)
  - K = Ketuvim (Writings: Psalms, Prov, etc.)
- In the Apostolic Scriptures, the word γραφή (*graphē*), refers to the TaNaK. Note the authority ascribed to this collection of written documents:

But Yeshua answered and said to them, "You are mistaken, not understanding the Scriptures nor the power of God. (Matt 22:29)

But Yeshua answered and said to them, "You are mistaken, not understanding the Scriptures nor the power of God. (Matt 22:29)

And according to Paul's custom, he went to them, and for three Sabbaths reasoned with them from the Scriptures…. (Acts 17:2)

Now these were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so. (Acts 17:11)

For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, so that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. (Rom 15:4)

For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Messiah died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, (1Cor 15:3)

But is the TaNaK we have today the same as what Yeshua & the Apostles had?

- No "autographs" of any of the books of the TaNaK exist today.
- All we have are copies, or copies of copies of copies, etc.
- The oldest copy of the TaNaK (980 CE) is the Aleppo Codex, though it is not complete (missing most of the Torah and Song of Songs 3:12–Ezra 10:44)
  - Currently housed in Israel at the Shrine of the Book
- The oldest complete manuscript of the TaNaK (1008 CE) is the Lennigrad Codex currently housed in the National Library of Russia in Saint Petersburg.
- The Cairo Codex (825 CE) contains the former and latter prophets.

So aren't these late copies unreliable?

- Many modern scholars tried to undermine the accuracy of the TaNaK by claiming that many mistakes must have been made during the thousands of years these manuscripts were being copied.
- Then the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered (1947).
  - dated from 250 BCE to 50 CE
  - some of all the books of the TaNaK except Esther.
  - approximately 200 biblical manuscripts.

Comparing the DSS to the Later Codices

- Now copies of the TaNaK from the very time of Yeshua were available to be compared with the later Codices.
- Scholars were shocked to see how similar the text of the DSS was to the later codices.
- But weren't there a lot of differences?
- Differences between manuscripts are referred to as "variants."
- But what constitutes a "variant?"
  - different spelling
  - full writing vs. abbreviated writing
  - leaving a word out or writing a word twice

Example from Matthew 28:19

Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit (Matt 28:19)

Thus you shall go and make disciples from all the nations, immersing them in the name of the Father, the Messiah, and the Holy Spirit (Matt 28:19)

7 variants out of 24 words
29% variants!

Variants in Copying the Bible

- Different spellings: color vs. colour
- Updating of language norms: illustration

Example from Gen 43:25

And they made ready the present against Joseph came at noon: for they heard that they should eat bread there. (KJV)

So they prepared the present for Joseph's coming at noon; for they had heard that they were to eat a meal there. (NASB)

- Clear scribal mistakes:
  - leaving out a line
  - writing a word twice (and the end of a line and at the beginning of the next line)
  - skipping from one word to the same word in a sentence below

Assessing the Variants

- 80% of the variants in the extant manuscripts of the TaNaK are spelling differences, updating of language, or relate to conjunctions (like our word "and") or prepositions (like our words "to," "from," etc.).
- Of the remaining 20%, 15% can be identified as scribal errors (leaving out a word or a sentence; skipping lines because of a similar word; using synonyms, etc.)
- The 5% which remain are clear differences, but none of these obscure the biblical text in such a way as to undermine any central doctrine of the Bible.

The Conclusion

- No body of literature from ancient times even begins to match the accuracy which is found among the extant biblical manuscripts.
- The percentage of variants (calculated per 1000 words) in the existing manuscripts of Shakespeare's writings (who lived 1564–1616 CE) exceeds variants found in all the existing manuscripts of the TaNaK.
- This means that by God's providential hand, the TaNaK has been preserved in a way unparalleled by any other body of human literature.
- And we will see that the same phenomenon occurs with the manuscripts of the Apostolic Scriptures.

Every scripture is inspired by God and useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the person dedicated to God may be capable and equipped for every good work.

2Timothy 3:16–17 (NET Bible)

notes by Tim Hegg

The Authority of the Scriptures
Part 2

Romans 16:25-26

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Review of Part 1

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- It is clear that Yeshua and His Apostles received the TaNaK as the authoritative, inspired word of God.

But What About the Apostolic Scriptures?

- There are some within the Messianic movement who are teaching that the Apostolic Scriptures (the New Testament) are not inspired Scripture.
- They are teaching that the Apostolic Scriptures are just early commentary on the life and teaching of Yeshua and His disciples and have no divine authority.

This Errant Teaching is Nothing New

- The emerging Christian Church dealt with the same issue, i.e., what constituted the authoritative, inspired word of God—the Scriptures.
- Though the question was framed differently, the same basic issue was at stake.
- Marcion, who lived in the 2nd Century CE and settled in Rome, was teaching that the God of the TaNaK was a different God than the Father of Yeshua the Messiah.

- He taught that the "Jewish God" created the physical world but had no spiritual understanding.
- The true God, he taught, is the Father of Yeshua the Messiah Who alone should be worshipped.
- Marcion gained a large following and the sect he founded spread to many parts of the Roman empire.
- To establish his errant teaching, Marcion proclaimed that the only true Scriptures were Paul's epistles and Luke's Gospel (both of which were carefully edited).
- Marcion considered the rest of the Apostolic Scriptures to be merely the writings of men without any divine authority.
- Marcion was declared a heretic and excommunicated from the established Church.
- Now the current Messianic movement is troubled by the same question: what constitutes the authoritative, inspired word of God = the Scriptures?
- Yeshua & His Apostles affirmed the TaNaK to be God's word. What about the Apostolic Scriptures?

Can We Have Certainty?

- Paul certainly thought so!

> For this reason I also suffer these things, but I am not ashamed; for I know whom I have believed and I am convinced that He is able to guard what I have entrusted to Him until that day. (2Tim 1:12)

- Paul knew the God in whom He had placed his trust.
- Paul was certain about his relationship with God.
- How did Paul have such certainty?
  - Because he had been given the gift of faith.
  - Through eyes of faith he had come to know the truth of God in the Scriptures which, before faith, he had read but not understood.

Our Reasonable Faith

- Saving faith is not a leap in the dark
- By faith we are able to grasp the truth of God revealed in the Scriptures illumined by the Spirit which otherwise would appear to us as foolishness.

> But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised. (1Cor 2:14)

but just as it is written, "THINGS WHICH EYE HAS NOT SEEN AND EAR HAS NOT HEARD, AND WHICH HAVE NOT ENTERED THE HEART OF MAN, ALL THAT GOD HAS PREPARED FOR THOSE WHO LOVE HIM." For to us God revealed them through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God. (1Cor 2:9–10)

Are the Apostolic Writings Scripture?

- Consider the words of Yeshua as recorded by Matthew, Mark, and Luke:

  Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away. (Matt 24:35; Mk 13:31; Lk 21:33)

- Compare these words of Yeshua to what the prophets of Israel proclaim about God's revelation to them:

  The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God stands forever. (Is 40:8)

  Forever, Adonai, Your word is fixed in heaven. (Ps 119:89)

Peter Considered Paul's Epistles to be Scripture

Therefore, beloved, since you look for these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless, and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation; just as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given him, wrote to you, as also in all his letters, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which the untaught and unstable distort, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction. (2Pet 3:14–16)

Consider Yeshua's Instructions to the Twelve

These things I have spoken to you while abiding with you. But the Helper, the Ruach HaKodesh, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you. (John 14:25–26)

Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Ruach HaKodesh, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age. (Matt. 28:19–20)

- Yeshua promised that the Ruach HaKodesh would
  - teach His apostles (the Twelve) "all things"
  - bring to their memories His very words

- Yeshua commanded the Twelve to begin the final harvest of the nations by making disciples.
  - They were to teach the disciples among the nations to do all that He had commanded the Twelve.
  - Their discipleship involved the written word, not oral tradition.
  - Making disciples of all the nations surely would extend beyond the lives of the Twelve.
- Thus, the very words and teaching of Yeshua, as well as the inspired teachings of His Apostles,
  - must be passed from generation to generation with accuracy, i.e., written not oral.
  - bear the very authority of Yeshua Who commanded us to make disciples by teaching them what He had taught the Twelve.
- Moreover, the words and teaching of Yeshua were founded upon the TaNaK, and thus require the TaNaK to be properly understood and applied.

> Do not think that I came to abolish the Torah or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill. (Matt. 5:17)

> And He said to them, "O foolish men and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! Was it not necessary for the Messiah to suffer these things and to enter into His glory?" Then beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures. (Lk 24:25–27)

Yes! The Apostolic Scriptures are God's Word

- They are the written witness of those who were chosen by Yeshua to be His Apostles.
- They are the firsthand witness of His life, His miracles, His death, His resurrection, and His ascension.
- The are the inspired teachings which are necessary for making and maturing Yeshua's disciples.
- They are inspired by the Ruach and together with the TaNaK form the sole basis for faith and halachah.

Every scripture is inspired by God and useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the person dedicated to God may be capable and equipped for every good work.

2Timothy 3:16–17

notes by Tim Hegg

To God Alone be the Glory

Romans 16:27

Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Yeshua Messiah, according to the revelation of the mystery which has been kept secret for long ages past, but now is manifested, and by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal God, has been made known to all the nations, leading to obedience of faith; **to the only wise God, through Yeshua Messiah, be the glory forever. Amen.**

- Two possible ways to understand this opening phrase:
  - "to God, Who among all of the gods, is the only God Who is wise…"
  - "to God, Who is the only God, and Who is wise…"
- We receive a hint from the only other time Paul uses the phrase "only God," in 1Tim 1:17.

> Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen. (1Tim 1:17)

- In this text Paul is clearly using "only God" to affirm a strict monotheism, that only one God exists.
- So this favors the meaning "to God, Who is the only God, and Who is wise…"
- But this brings up a question: "What about the times in the Tanach when pagan gods are mentioned?"

> So Jacob said to his household and to all who were with him, "Put away the foreign gods which are among you, and purify yourselves and change your garments; (Gen. 35:2)

> For I will go through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike down all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments — I am Adonai. (Ex 12:12)

> Who is like You among the gods, Adonai? Who is like You, majestic in holiness, Awesome in praises, working wonders? (Ex 15:11)

You shall not worship their gods, nor serve them, nor do according to their deeds; but you shall utterly overthrow them and break their sacred pillars in pieces. (Ex 23:24)

There is Only One God

- This is a significant theme in Isaiah's prophecy:

I am Adonai, and there is no other; besides Me there is no God. I will gird you, though you have not known Me; that men may know from the rising to the setting of the sun that there is no one besides Me. I am Adonai, and there is no other, (Is 45:5–6)

How Can We Reconcile This?

- The Bible clearly speaks of foreign or pagan gods, yet Adonai proclaims that He is the only God and that other gods simply do not exist.
- Paul gives us the answer in 1Cor 10:19–21.

What do I mean then? That a thing sacrificed to idols is anything, or that an idol is anything? No, but I say that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons and not to God; and I do not want you to become sharers in demons. You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons; you cannot partake of the table of the Lord and the table of demons. (1Cor 10:19–21)

- When the Bible speaks of "other gods," it uses the language of the pagans who claim to worship many gods.
- In reality, they worship demons that are not gods at all.
- Thus, there is only one God, the God of Israel, and all others that are proclaimed to be gods, or that present themselves as gods, are demons or controlled by demons.

The Second Adjective: "Wise"

- After affirming that God is the only God, Paul emphasizes wisdom as one of God's attributes.
- Why does he emphasize God's attribute of wisdom in this context? Note the only other time Paul speaks of God's wisdom in Romans, i.e., 11:33

Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways! (Rom 11:33)

The Wisdom of God

- Paul writes this doxology immediately following his explanation that
  - a partial hardening has come upon Israel
  - God is engrafting Gentiles into the "covenant olive tree" of Israel.
- Likewise, at the end of Romans, Paul reiterates the "mystery" of God's plan of salvation by which all the elect from the nations would become fellow heirs in the covenant with Israel.
- God's plan of salvation reveals His infinite wisdom.
- What is wisdom? Wisdom is the proper application of knowledge in order to achieve a righteous purpose.
- Apart from the work of the Ruach upon the heart, the wisdom of God will appear as foolishness.

> For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not come to know God, God was well-pleased through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe. (1Cor 1:21)

- Fallen mankind naturally thinks he can improve on what God has ordained.
- Let us not think that we need to amend the Gospel in order to make it effective in our times.
- The all-wise God we serve has called us to be a light to those in darkness. Let's follow His plan!

Salvation through Yeshua Alone

- The wisdom of God, displayed in the outworking of His plan of salvation, is centered in the person and work of Yeshua our Messiah.
- Apart from Yeshua's saving work, there is no forgiveness of sins and therefore no salvation.

All Glory to God

- Who receives the glory?
  - The Greek adds a pronoun not represented in the English translation above:
  - "to the only God, Who is wise, through Yeshua Messiah, to whom be the glory forever. Amen."
- Does it mean "all glory to God" or "all glory to Yeshua Messiah?" If asked, how would Paul respond?
- He would respond with "Yes!", affirmed by "Amen."
  - all glory is given to the only God Who has revealed Himself as Father, Messiah, and Ruach.
  - "forever" means throughout all eternity. This is the destiny of all who are in Messiah.

Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do,
do all to the glory of God.
1Corinthians 10:31

Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name
of the Lord Yeshua, giving thanks through Him to God the Father.
Colossians 3:17

for you were formerly darkness, but now you are Light in the Lord;
walk as children of Light (for the fruit of the Light consists in all good-
ness and righteousness and truth),
striving to learn what is pleasing to the Lord.
Ephesians 5:8–10