

Bible Snapshots



Romans – The Transforming Gospel

Author – Paul, 56-57 AD

Facts

- Paul had not been to Rome, but wanted to visit on his way to Spain and this letter was to prepare them for that visit. It was delivered to the saints in Rome by Phoebe, a servant at the church in Cenchrea in Corinth (16:1, 2). We are unsure of how the gospel had spread there, however it may have been spread by men and women converted on the day of Pentecost. Present at Pentecost were “strangers of Rome, Jews and Proselytes” (Acts 2:10).
- The nature of the book is doctrinal
- The main subject is the gospel as revealing the righteousness of God.
- Romans has 16 chapters and 433 verses

Key chapter/verse

- Chapter 3 – All are under sin / 1:16, 17

Key phrase / word / thought

Righteousness of God (1:17) / Righteousness (x66); Faith (x62); justification (x17); impute (x19); in Christ (x33); law (x78); sin (x60); flesh (x20); and death (x42) / Justification by faith (3:28)

About Paul

Paul was an Israelite of the tribe of Benjamin and both his parents were Hebrews. He was a native of Tarsus, in Cilicia, and by birth a free citizen of imperial Rome. Before his conversion he was known by his Hebrew name Saul, but he used Paul (which means “little”), his Roman name, among the Gentiles. His parents sent him early to Jerusalem to study the law under the well-known doctor of the law Gamaliel. Around 66-67 A.D. Paul was beheaded in Rome by Emperor Nero. During his life he planted many churches and wrote 13 epistles, yet still referred to himself as the “chief of all sinners” as his life came to a close (1 Tim. 1:15), not deserving to be called an apostle (1 Cor. 15:9).

Name and titles for Christ

Jesus Christ (1:1); Son of God (1:4); Lord Jesus Christ (1:7); Christ Jesus (3:24); Our propitiation (3:24, 25b); God’s righteousness (3:24, 25b); Our Lord (4:24; 7:25); Our sin-bearer (4:25); Our justifier (4:25); Christ (5:6); The Gift of eternal life (6:23); Firstborn among many brethren (8:29); His own Son (8:32); God Blessed forever (9:5); the Stumblingstone and Rock of offense (9:33); End of the law of righteousness (10:4); Jesus as Lord (10:13); the Deliverer (11:26); Lord of the dead and the living (14:9) and minister of the circumcision (15:8).

Key characters – Peter and Paul

Outline

- I. Introduction (1:1-13)
- II. Paul’s Relation to the Gospel (1:14-17)
- III. The Need for the Gospel (1:18-3:20)
- IV. The Gospel’s Central Theme (3:21-5:21)
- V. The Power of the Gospel (6-8)
- VI. Relation of the Gospel to the Jew (9-11)
- VII. Transforming Power of the Gospel (12:1-15:13)
- VIII. Epilogue (15:14-16:27)

The Old Testament in Romans

- Just shall live by faith – 1:17 with Hab. 2:4
- None righteous – 3:4 with Psalm 51:4
- None understands – 3:11 with Ps. 14:2

- No fear of God – 3:18 with Ps. 36:1
- Abraham seed to be many nations – 4:18 with Gen. 15:5
- Gentiles called a people – 9:25 with Hos. 2:23
- Remnant of Israel saved – 9:27, 28 with Isa. 10:22, 23
- Christ a stumblingstone – 9:33 with Isa. 28:16
- The feet of those who preach – 10:15 with Isa. 52:7
- Believing the Lord's report – 10:16 with Isa. 53:1
- Hearing the gospel – 10:18 with Ps. 19:4
- God found by those who seek Him – 10:20 with Isa. 65:1
- The prophets killed – 11:3 with 1 Kings 19:10, 14
- A deliverer from Zion – 11:26, 27 with Isa. 59:20, 21
- Vengeance is the Lord's – 12:19 with Dt. 32:35
- Feeding our enemies – 12:20 with Prov. 25:21, 22
- Every knee shall bow before the Lord – 14:11 with Isa. 45:23
- God's mercy among the Gentiles – 15:9 with Ps. 18:49
- Christ, the root of Jesse – 15:12 with Isa. 11:1, 10
- Christ preached to the heathen – 15:21 with Isa. 52:15

Archeological considerations

To the Jews first (1:16), The Jews were the vehicle of God to bring the savior, Jesus Christ, into the world. Yet they had taken this to extremes and used it as a springboard for their hatred of other peoples. God's salvation was not, however, just for the Jews. Excavations of Herod's temple between and inner and outer court have been found and warn Gentiles that entering the inner court was punishable by death.

Romans catacombs Early New Testament saints sought refuge in these underground burial places to escape persecution from Roman soldiers. Persecution was such that no Christian was safe. Emperor worship was the rule of the day and any soldier could ask any person for a certificate stating they advocated emperor worship. If they could not then they were given two chances to renounce Christ and then were executed. Those who



Ruins of Herod's temple in Samaria

could escape fled to the catacombs.

Things to Think About

- **Gospel to the Jews** - In the first century the Jews made up the core of Christianity and were hesitant to go to the Gentile world. One must wonder if it is not exactly the reverse today. Are we as Christians hesitant to go to the Jews and try to convert them?
- **The Gospel in Romans** - The gospel (1:5) is the good news to sinful men. It is also the gospel of God (1:1; 15:16), revealing its source. It is the gospel of Christ (1:9, 16; 15:19, 29), which tells us the means by which the good news came. It is the gospel of peace (10:15) because it brings peace between God and man. It is the gospel of Paul (16:25) because Paul was charged to preach it, as are we. All of these refer to the same good news, which brings salvation (1:16).