

Chapter One  
STUDIES IN THE EPISTLE OF PAUL TO THE ROMANS  
**Overview of the Epistle to the Romans**

A danger in a verse-by-verse exposition of a book of the Bible is to fractionalize the teaching of that book. That is why it is important to maintain a general overview of any book and to be inductive (maintaining the context of any portion of a book in light of the overview of that book and the teaching of all of Scripture regarding what any given verse says).

The Epistle to the Romans is Paul's doctrinal thesis. Just as Hebrews is a doctrinal treatise for the Jews, Romans is the doctrinal treatise for the Gentiles. It establishes the mind of God on all the central doctrines of the Christian faith. The Romans epistle answers the question; where can the righteousness that is necessary for salvation be found? It then goes on to show that the answer is found in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

“<sup>16</sup> For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. <sup>17</sup> For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith” (Romans 1:16-17).

Romans 1:18 begins this progressive revelation. Paul builds his argument like a good lawyer presenting his case before the Sanhedrin. He begins (1:18-32) by proving that man is not only unregenerate, but without God's intervention he will become progressively become more degenerate.

Chapter 2:1-16 builds on the argument from the perspective that God will judge all unregenerate people regardless of how moral they think they are.

“But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things” (Romans 2:2).

“Who will render to every man according to his deeds” (Romans 2:6).

“For there is no respect of persons with God” (Romans 2:11).

“In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel” (Romans 2:16).

Romans 2:17 through 3:8 deals with those who profess to possess man-kind righteousness on the basis of human efforts at obedience to commands and keeping certain ceremonies. Paul reveals that God's judgment will come on them for their dead externalism.

“Behold, thou art called a Jew, and retest in the law, and makest thy boast of God,” (Romans 2:17).

“But he *is* a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision *is that* of the heart, in the spirit, *and* not in the letter; whose praise *is* not of men, but of God” (Romans 2:29).

“But if our unrighteousness commend the righteousness of God, what shall we say? *Is* God unrighteous who taketh vengeance? (I speak as a man)” (Romans 3:5).

Romans 3:9-20 declares that all men, Jews and Gentiles alike, are lost and under the condemnation of sin. There is no human being that is righteous in any way before God. He also states that the purpose of the Law is to declare man's guilt. It was never intended for man to achieve personal righteousness through obedience to the Law. The purpose of the Law was to show mankind his guilt of sin, that condemnation was deserved and mankind's inability to satisfy God's demand for justice.

<sup>9</sup> What then? are we better *than they*, No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin; <sup>10</sup> As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one” (Romans 3:9-10).

<sup>19</sup> Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. <sup>20</sup> Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law *is* the knowledge of sin” (Romans 3: 19-20).

Chapter 3:21 through chapter 5:7 defines propitiation as the satisfaction of God’s righteous demands for justice in regard to sin by the judicial payment of the wages of sin in the sacrifice of Christ with righteousness given to man as a gift of grace through faith (justification).

<sup>21</sup> But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; <sup>22</sup> Even the righteousness of God *which is* by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference” (Romans 3:21-22).

<sup>25</sup> Whom God hath set forth *to be* a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; <sup>26</sup> To declare, *I say*, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus” (Romans 3:25-26).

“Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt” (Romans 4:4).

“But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness” (Romans 4:5).

<sup>24</sup> But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; <sup>25</sup> Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification” (Romans 4:24-25).

<sup>1</sup> Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: <sup>2</sup> By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God” (Romans 5:1-2).

<sup>8</sup> But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. <sup>9</sup> Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him” (Romans 5:8-9).

Chapter 5:12 through chapter 8:39 reveals God’s answer to the problem of sin through the Gospel of Jesus Christ. From 5:12 through 7:6 Paul shows that God deals with sin judicially. Judicially in Adam God has condemned the whole human race. Judicially in Christ God has paid the price of condemnation for the whole human race. The verb tenses are all in the past tense signifying something God has done judicially and historically once for all through the sacrifice of Christ.

“Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned” (Romans 5:12).

“But not as the offence, so also *is* the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, *which is* by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many” (Romans 5:15).

“For if by one man’s offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ” (Romans 5:17).

“That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord” (Romans 5:21).

“Knowing this, that our old man is {literally: ‘was’, not ‘is’} crucified with *him*, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin” (Romans 6:6).

In Romans 7:7 through 8:39, Paul shows how the Gospel deals with individual sin in an individual’s life and the continual strife of the fallen nature in its desire to sin. The answer to this question is revealed in the fact that the Holy Spirit is mentioned in chapter 8 no less than 19 times.

“<sup>1</sup> *There is* therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. <sup>2</sup> For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death” (Romans 8:1-2).

Chapters 9, 10 and 11 deal nationally and dispensationally with Israel as a covenant people. Chapter 9 establishes that just because Jews are Abraham’s *seed* does not mean they are true Israel.

“<sup>6</sup> Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they *are* not all Israel, which are of Israel: <sup>7</sup> Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, *are they* all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called. <sup>8</sup> That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these *are* not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed” (Romans 9:6-8).

Chapter 10 establishes that it was because of Israel’s national unbelief that they remained unsaved. The gospel of Jesus Christ is the means God intends to restore Israel to its proper relationship with Him.

“<sup>4</sup> For Christ *is* the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. <sup>5</sup> For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them. <sup>6</sup> But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down *from above*;) <sup>7</sup> Or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.) <sup>8</sup> But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, *even* in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; <sup>9</sup> That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. <sup>10</sup> For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. <sup>11</sup> For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed” (Romans 10:4-11).

Chapter eleven establishes that the hope of a spiritual Israel lies in each individual believing the gospel of Jesus Christ and the eventual restoration of Israel as a nation through faith in Jesus as Messiah.

“I say then, Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, *of the tribe of Benjamin*” (Romans 11:1).

“<sup>26</sup> And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: <sup>27</sup> For this *is* my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins. <sup>28</sup> As concerning the gospel, *they are* enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, *they are* beloved for the fathers’ sakes” (Romans 11:26-28).

Chapters 12 through 15 detail specific appeals to believers in regard to their new spiritual responsibilities. Chapter 12 details the appeal for personal consecration to Christian service, and relationships with others.

“<sup>1</sup> I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is* your reasonable service. <sup>2</sup> And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God” (Romans 12:1-2).

Chapter 13 details the appeal for responsibility in regard to human government and love towards the lost.

“Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God” (Romans 13:1).

“Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law” (Romans 13:8).

“Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love *is* the fulfilling of the law” (Romans 13:10).

“But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to *fulfill* the lusts *thereof*” (Romans 13:14).

Chapters 14 and 15 appeal to individual responsibility in regard to things which are doubtful and to the consideration of weaker brothers in Christ who fail to practice righteousness because of ignorance.

“Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, *but* not to doubtful disputations” (Romans 14:1).

Chapter 15:14 through chapter 16 is the benediction and doxology with greetings to certain individuals.

