

ROMANS 57 –ROMANS' POSTSCRIPT

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ROMANS 16



PROLOGUE: PAUL'S SERVICE TO THE GOSPEL

- PAUL WAS ONE OF THE MOST PROLIFIC CHURCH PLANTERS OF HIS DAY
- PAUL REMINDS THE ROMANS OF HIS WORK IN THE GOSPEL
- BY GIVING THEM HIS GOSPEL HE IS TYING ALL CHURCHES TO ONE CHURCH: ROME
- ROME IS PAUL'S GOSPEL REPOSITORY – NOT GOD'S



PROLOGUE: PAUL FULFILLS GOSPEL MISSION

- GOD TELLS ANANIAS OF PAUL'S COMMISSION (AC 9:15-16)
- ACTS IS NOT SIMPLY ABOUT CHURCH BEGINNINGS
- ACTS IS ABOUT PAUL'S MISSION BEING FULFILLED TO CAESAR NERO, AND REJECTED
- PAUL IS TO SUFFER (ACTS 11:23-24)
- PAUL IS TO GIVE THE GOSPEL TO KINGS (NERO)

PROLOGUE: PAUL'S IMPASSIONED APOLOGIA

- FESTUS TURNS TO AGRIPPA AND BERNICE TO DETERMINE WHAT CHARGES TO WRITE TO ROME SINCE PAUL HAS NOT BEEN INDICTED ON ANY VIOLATION OF ROMAN LAW
 - AGRIPPA, KNOWN AS AGRIPPA II OR JULIUS MARCUS AGRIPPA, SON OF AGRIPPA I, GREAT-GRANDSON OF HEROD THE GREAT AND BROTHER TO HIS WIFE, HELD CUSTODIANSHIP OVER THE TEMPLE AND APPOINTED THE HIGH PRIEST AND SOME ASSOCIATED TERRITORIES
 - BERNICE, ALSO GREAT-GRANDCHILD OF HEROD THE GREAT, RULED THE PROVINCE OF JUDAEA AND LIVED WITH HER BROTHER BETWEEN HUSBANDS
 - PAUL GAVE AN ELOQUENT APOLOGIA WHICH NEARLY PERSUADED AGRIPPA TO BE SAVED BUT PUT OFF FESTUS WHEN RESURRECTION WAS MENTIONED, PAUL WAS NOT FREED

PAUL GREETES MANY ROMANS

- PAUL GREETES SEVERAL PEOPLE BY NAME SHOWING HE HAS PERSONAL KNOWLEDGE OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE GOSPEL IN ROME
 - MANY OF THESE PEOPLE ARE NOT MENTIONED ELSEWHERE
- THE FEW WHO ARE MENTIONED ELSEWHERE CANNOT BE CORRELATED WITH THESE PEOPLE EXCEPT:
 - TIMOTHY – PAUL'S DISCIPLE WHO IS WELL KNOWN TO US THROUGH OTHER EPISTLES
 - AQUILA & PRISCILLA – EARLY BELIEVERS IN THE WAY

AQUILA & PRISCILA

- LET US SPEND A MOMENT LOOKING AT THE TESTIMONY OF THIS HUSBAND-WIFE TEAM (ACT 18):
 - AQUILA (EAGLE) – JEW OF PONTUS WHO WAS ALSO OF THE SAME TRADE AS PAUL
 - PRISCILA (ANCIENT) – WIFE OF AQUILA WHO MAY ALSO HAVE BEEN JEWISH
 - BOTH HAD LIVED IN ROME BUT HAD BEEN FORCED TO LEAVE UNDER A DECREE OF CLAUDIUS WHO FORCED MOST JEWS TO LEAVE POSSIBLY DUE TO RIOTING OVER BELIEF OF CHRIST AND MET PAUL IN CORINTH
 - WHEN PAUL LEFT CORINTH, THEY STAYED AND ENCOUNTERED APOLLOS, AN ALEXANDRIAN JEW RECENTLY CONVERTED TO THE WAY; THEY BROUGHT HIM UP TO SPEED PROBABLY BASED ON WHAT THEY HAD LEARNED UNDER PAUL; IN THE POSTSCRIPT, THE COUPLE HAD RETURNED TO ROME

PHOEBE – DEACONESS

- PAUL HAS HIGH PRAISE FOR THIS WOMAN, PHOEBE (LIGHT)
 - IT APPEARS THAT PAUL ENTRUSTED PHOEBE TO CARRY HIS LETTER TO ROME EVEN THOUGH IT IS HIGHLY UNLIKELY THAT SHE WOULD HAVE TRAVELED ALONE IN THOSE DAYS
 - SHE WAS A TRUE SERVANT (διδάκτορας, diakonos – ONE WHO SERVES) AND A PATRON OR FINANCIAL SUPPORTER OF THE CHURCH OF CENCHREAE, CORINTHIAN PORT ON THE EASTERN ISTHMUS
- PAUL OFTEN MENTIONED WOMEN WHO WERE FAITHFUL BELIEVERS AND SUPPORTERS IN THE EARLY CHURCHES – SUCH AS LYDIA (TRAVAIL) WHOM PAUL FOUND PRAYING (JEWISH)
 - PAUL ESTABLISHED PHILIPPAN CHURCH WITH HER SUPPORT, MERCHANT OF PURPLE (EXPENSIVE); NOT ENOUGH JEWISH MEN TO HAVE A SYNAGOGUE, ONLY WOMEN WERE PRAYING BY RIVER (AC 16:11-15, 40)

NO CENTRALIZED ROMAN CHURCH

- ACTS RECORDS CHURCHES BEGAN IN HOMES AND ONLY LATER ESTABLISHED BUILDINGS
 - PAUL MENTIONS AQUILA AND PRISCILA HAD A CHURCH IN THEIR HOME SPECIFICALLY; DUE TO THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE MENTIONED THERE WERE PROBABLY SEVERAL HOME CHURCHES
 - CHURCHES IN JERUSALEM BEGAN IN THE HOMES OF BELIEVERS
 - LYDIA'S HOME IN PHILIPPI WAS A HOME CHURCH
 - IT WAS UNUSUAL BUT PAUL RENTED A BUILDING IN EPHESUS FOR THE CHURCH TO MEET (AC 19:6-10)
 - THERE IS NO INDICATION THAT GOD DESIRED A CENTRALIZED CHURCH SYSTEM WHICH WOULD INSTITUTIONALIZE ERROR AND SUPPRESS OPPOSITION SUCH AS OCCURRED WITH ROMAN CATHOLICISM AND ITS OFFSHOOTS: GREEK ORTHODOXY AND PROTESTANT DENOMINATIONS

INDIVIDUALS ARE REPOSITORIES OF TRUTH NOT CHURCHES

- BY NAMING PEOPLE WHO ARE NOT MENTIONED ELSEWHERE, PAUL REINFORCES THE CONCEPT THAT CHRIST DIED FOR INDIVIDUALS AND NOT FOR FACELESS, CENTRALIZED ORGANIZATIONS
 - EACH BELIEVER IS A REPOSITORY OF GOD'S TRUTH IN MATURATION
 - SUPPRESSING THE GOSPEL MEANS SUPPRESSING EVERY BELIEVER; SOMETHING SATAN HAS NOT BEEN ABLE TO ACCOMPLISH
 - THIS PATTERN ALSO APPLIES TO THE WRITTEN WORD; IF THE ORIGINAL DOCUMENTS HAD BEEN PRESERVED BY A CENTRALIZED BODY THEN THE BIBLE WOULD REFLECT ONLY THEIR BELIEFS
 - PLETHORA OF MANUSCRIPTS, WHOLE OR PARTS, HAS INSURED THAT GOD'S WORD IS PRESERVED
 - SHOWS CHRIST'S UNITY VIA DIVERSITY AS OPPOSED TO SATAN'S TOP-DOWN AUTHORITARIANISM

PAUL WARNS INDIVIDUALS OF FALSE TEACHERS

- THIS REPRESENTS PAUL'S EXPERIENCE WITH FALSE GOSPEL TEACHERS
 - THEY CAUSE DIVISIONS BY APPEALING TO COVETOUSNESS, I.E., LUSTS (1CO 3:1-9, 1CO 2:15-17)
 - THEY PROMOTE SCANDALS (CRITICAL THEORY) LEADING THE FOOLISH ASTRAY (1Ti 1:2-7, 6:3-9)
 - AVOID (ἀπολινα ἐκκλῆσις) THEM, JUST AS THE CHURCH IS THE CALLED-OUT ONES (ἐκκλησία ἐκκλησία), THESE ARE TO THROW-OUT THESE FROM THEIR MIDST
 - THESE SEEK ONLY TO SATISFY THEIR LUSTS AT THE EXPENSE OF BELIEVERS VIA LIES AND DEATH AS SATAN DOES, AS PETER AND JUDE ALSO WARNED (JO 8:44, JA 4:1-4, 2PE 2:1-3, 1JO 2:15-17, JUDE 8, 10-13)
 - YOUR GOODNESS IS WELL KNOWN, BUT, REMAIN WISE IN GOOD, FREE FROM EVIL (1PE 2:13-17)
 - VICTORY LIES NOT IN UNITY OF MAN BUT IN THE WORK OF CHRIST AND THE SPIRIT (JE 5)

PAUL CLOSES IN PRAISE TO GOD

- GOD ALONE KEEPS BELIEVERS IN TRUTH, FOR LEFT TO OUR OWN UNDERSTANDING WE WOULD QUICKLY BE MIRE IN LIES, SIN AND DEATH LIKE MAN AND WOMAN (GE 3:1-5)
 - BELIEVERS FIND STRENGTH BASED ON THE TRUE GOSPEL WHICH RESTS ON THE WORK OF CHRIST
 - REQUIRES DILIGENCE TO STUDY THE SCRIPTURES, HERMENEUTICS, AND PREACH/TEACH THE TRUTH TO BELIEVERS WHO ARE TO SEARCH OUT THE TRUTH IN THE SCRIPTURES FOR THEMSELVES (AC 17:10-13, HE 5:11-14)
 - MYSTERY (μυστήριον mystery) – GENERALLY HIDDEN IN SCRIPTURE BUT NOW CLEARLY REVEALED
 - DISPENSATION OF LAW TO JEWS – HIDDEN FROM ANTEDILUVIAN AND PRE-LAW PEOPLE
 - DISPENSATION OF FIRST FRUITS TO GENTILES – HIDDEN FROM THE JEWS

TRUTH REVEALED TO ALL VIA THE WORD

- ALL SCRIPTURE IS PROPHETIC AS REVELATION OF GOD'S TRUTH OF SALVATION FOR ALL
 - ANTEDILUVIAN – SALVATION AVAILABLE TO ALL BUT REJECTED BY MAJORITY WHO TRIED TO ELIMINATE GOD'S TRUTH, KILL OPPOSING BELIEVERS (EXEMPLIFIED IN CAIN AND ABEL) (GE 4:1-12)
 - POSTDILUVIAN – TRUTH NEARLY ELIMINATED VIA CENTRALIZED GOVERNMENTAL WORSHIP WHICH BABEL DISRUPTED; SAFEGUARDED THROUGH SHEW'S LINE, EBER (HEBREWS) (GE 10:6-10, 11:1-9, 14:26)
 - JEWS REPOSITORY OF GOD'S TRUTH, BIBLE, AND AS WITNESSES TO THE ANCIENT WORLD (RO 9:1-5)
 - THIS MANTLE HAS BEEN PASSED TO THE GENTILES DURING DISPENSATION OF FIRST FRUITS TO TAKE THE GOSPEL THROUGHOUT THE ENTIRE WORLD (JE 28:18-20)
 - AFTER CHURCH'S RAPTURE, TRUE JEWS WILL BE CALLED TO PROCLAIM THE GOSPEL (JE 7:1-12)

GLORY BELONGS TO FATHER VIA CHRIST ALONE

- PLAN OF SALVATION FOR ALL PEOPLES IS BOTH SIMPLISTIC IN ITS UNDERSTAND BUT VERY COMPLEX IN ITS IMPLEMENTATION AS TO PALE INTO INSIGNIFICANCE BESIDE THE INTELLECTUAL CAPACITY OF SATAN AND MAN (15:18-19)
 - SATAN AND MAN COULD ONLY VISUALIZE A MAN ATONING FOR SIN – PURPOSE FOR ADAM'S FALL
 - SATAN AND MAN COULD ONLY VISUALIZE SELF-RIGHTEOUSNESS VIA KEEPING RULES, USUALLY
 - SATAN AND MAN COULD NOT VISUALIZE LIFE BEYOND THIS PHYSICAL CREATION; ALL REMAIN LOST
- IN ETERNITY PAST, FATHER'S PLAN FOR MAN INCLUDED SON BECOMING MAN TO DIE FOR SIN AS SIN THEREBY SATISFYING FATHER'S JUSTICE ETERNALLY WHILE IMPARTING GOD'S NATURE INTO EACH BELIEVER JOINING ALL INTO A DECENTRALIZED INTIMATE UNITY WITH THE FATHER

CLOSE OF PAUL'S GOSPEL

- ROMANS IS THE CONCISE PRESENTATION OF PAUL'S GOSPEL WHICH HE LEARNED FROM BOTH THE BIBLE (OLD TESTAMENT) AND REVELATION FROM CHRIST (2CO 12:1-4)
 - IT IS HIS GOSPEL ONLY IN SO FAR AS IT WAS THE TRUTH GIVEN HIM ALONE BY CHRIST
 - THE ELEVEN HAD THE EXPERIENCE OF BOTH THE EARTHLY AND RISEN CHRIST AND WHETHER THEY HAD ADDITIONAL REVELATION IS UNKNOWN; EACH HAD THEIR UNIQUE STAMP UPON THE GOSPEL
 - EACH OLD TESTAMENT WRITER HAD A UNIQUE STAMP ON THE TRUTH GIVEN THROUGH HIM
 - THERE CAN BE NO CASE MADE THAT PAUL TAUGHT A DIFFERENT TRUTH THAN THE OTHER APOSTLES OR THAT HIS TRUTH DIFFERED FROM CHRIST'S FOR THEN IT WOULD NOT BE TRUTH
 - PAUL CONSISTENTLY LOOKS BACK TO CHRIST AS THE ONLY SOURCE OF TRUTH AND LIFE

PAUL UNIFIED SINNERS

- PAUL DID SOMETHING NO ONE ELSE HAD ACCOMPLISHED, HE DETAILED HOW EVERYONE WAS UNIFIED IN SIN WHETHER WITH OR WITHOUT THE MORAL LAW: ALL STOOD CONDEMNED
- IF ALL WERE CONDEMNED BY SIN, THEN ALL COULD BE SAVED BY CHRIST REGARDLESS OF ETHNICITY OR CULTURE
 - STANDING UPON THE JEWISH LAWS WAS NEGATED BY THE VERY FATHER OF JUDAISM, ABRAHAM WHO BELIEVED GOD NEARLY HALF A MILLENNIUM BEFORE THE MORAL LAW WAS GIVEN
 - IF ABRAHAM COULD BE SAVED WITHOUT THE LAW, AND CIRCUMCISION, THEN EVERYONE COULD BE SAVED WHO DID NOT HAVE THE LAW
 - PAUL LAID THE BASIS FOR SALVATION AS FAITH ALONE BASED ON CHRIST ALONE

LAW STRENGTHENS THE FLESH

- THE JEWISH RELIANCE ON LAWS, AND THE GENTILES USE OF CIVIL LAWS, ONLY SERVED TO EMPOWER THE FLESH; THE SINGLE MOST IMPORTANT DIFFERENCE BETWEEN TRUE FAITH AND LOST FAITH; RELIANCE ON RULES (COMMANDMENTS) (RD 7:12-25; COI 3:21-28)
 - EACH COMMANDMENT OR ENACTED LAW, AWAKENS THE FLESH TO ADDITIONAL SIN(S)
 - ATTEMPTS TO KEEP THE LAW ONLY INCREASES ONE'S SINFULNESS
- ONLY CHRIST FULFILLED THE LAW, AS MAN, REMOVING ITS CONDEMNATION OF ORDINANCES
 - THIS IS THE BASIS FOR OUR RECEIVING OUR NEW NATURE, MIND OF GOD
 - MORAL LAW IS NOW OUR MEASURE OF MATURITY GUIDING US AS WE GROW IN CHRIST

OUR LIVES SHOW OUR TRUE FAITH AND LOVE

- BECAUSE WE HAVE BEEN BOUGHT WITH A PRICE, WE ARE SLAVES TO CHRIST RATHER THAN SLAVES TO SIN (RD 6:15-22; 1CO 7:23-25)
 - WITH OUR NEW NATURES WE IMITATE CHRIST AND OFFER OUR BODIES AS LIVING SACRIFICES AS HE DID (1CO 10:33-11:1; HE 10:5-10)
 - WE ARE THE GRAIN AND WINE OFFERINGS CONCLUDING THE PASSOVER OFFERING OF CHRIST; THIS IS THE CONTINUAL MESSAGE OF THE EUCHARIST
 - OUR LIVES ARE LIVING SACRIFICES, EITHER TO CHRIST OR SATAN, EACH MOMENT WE CHOOSE WHOM TO FOLLOW INDICATING CURRENT SOURCE OF OUR FAITH, THE RECIPIENT OF OUR LOVE
 - FAITH IS ONLY SEEN BY THE WORDS AND WORKS OF OUR LIVES: WHAT DO WE SHOW OTHERS?

EPILOGUE: INDIVIDUALS ARE REPOSITORIES OF TRUTH NOT CHURCHES

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PAUL REMAINS CONTROVERSIAL TODAY

- WE BEGAN OUR STUDY IN ROMANS DISCUSSING THE NEW PERSPECTIVE ON PAUL (NPP) WHICH WAS NOT A NEW PERSPECTIVE BUT AN OLD, TIRED ATTACK OF SATAN IN A NEW TIME
 - PAUL DID NOT LEGITIMIZE JEWISH LEGALISM; HE CONDEMNED IT AS ANOTHER GOSPEL OF SATAN
 - PAUL DID NOT PROMOTE CULTURAL SALVATION; I.E., BEING SAVED SIMPLY BY BEING A MEMBER OF A CULTURAL GROUP OR BELIEF SYSTEM; SALVATION IS ALWAYS BETWEEN PERSON AND GOD ALONE
 - PAUL ALWAYS HAD A HIGH-VIEW OF SCRIPTURE; IT WAS THE VERY VOICE OF GOD AND TRUTH
- EVANGELICALISM HAS IGNORED PAUL'S WARNING AGAINST FALSE TEACHERS TO ITS HARM
 - EACH PERSON WILL GIVE AN ACCOUNT TO CHRIST; WILL YOUR OFFERING BE AS GOLD OR STRAW? (1CO 3:12-15)