

## Epistle to the Romans — Overview

*Editor Note: Before continuing our brother's meditations on the book of Romans, he has provided an outline of the divisions of this precious book to help in remembering its order.*

We now come to a division in Romans that introduces us into the true position of liberty before God that the Christian now has. A wonderful place unknown to man before. The major divisions of the book of Romans are presented somewhat in this order.

### Rom. 1:1-17

The introduction to the “Gospel of God”. Paul as a special Servant and apostle to communicate it to the world, and especially to the Gentile part of it. Including a salutation to the believers at Rome, whom he had not seen.

### Rom. 1:18 through 3:20.

Proving the guilt and need of man, and his need of the gospel. Gentiles and Jews are addressed. Also the impotence of the law to justify any, even the Jews, who had it. The introduction of the law but proved that we might know all the world as “guilty before God” (3:19) Verse 20 showing us that while we may learn that from the law somewhat of the knowledge of sin, we cannot by the deeds of law (our doing) be justified in God’s sight. But praise God, He has a “gospel,” and this is now to be unfolded in Romans.

### Rom. 3:21- 5:11

The question of God’s righteousness, (in contrast to the righteousness of man by means of law) by means of faith, in His Son’s death. (vs.3:24-25). The question of our “sins” is taken care of by means of forgiveness, through faith in Christ, and His work. In contrast to “our works”. “Our works” but proved us to be “guilty before God. And” with the pronouncement “all have sinned.” This section ends with the believer being justified by Christ’s shed blood, and our being reconciled to God, by means of the gospel concerning His Son, Jesus Christ. This section also ends with joy “we also joy in God” (5:11). The knowledge of the forgiveness of sins produces joy in the heart. What we have done is forgiven, far more painful, we must learn what we are. This is taken up in the next section.

### Rom. 5:12 through Ch. 6

Now the question of “sin” is taken up. What we are as sons of fallen Adam. By “one man (Adam) “sin” (not sins) entered into the world, and death by sin”. We see we are of this fallen race of humanity, of which Adam is the head, in the expression “all have sinned.” (Rom 5:12) However, not only do we have a “sin” nature, but death reigns over us without, or with the law.

We notice some four times (in chapter 5) the expression “one man” occurs. The question for us to answer is to which man do I belong? Two “heads” are presented, we either belong to Christ’s redeemed race, or Adam’s fallen race. “In Christ Jesus”, or “in the flesh”.

“Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men” (Rom 5:12). “the gift by grace, [which is] by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many.” (Rom. 5:15).

We note with Christ, it is “unto many”, not “upon all men”. This new position with God, is entered into by faith in Christ, and all men do not believe in Christ as their Saviour.

### Rom. 7

In ch. 7 we see the great struggle of a man, who seeks to please God, by himself by keeping the law. He is seen as “married” to the law, and thus subject to it.” Death, not doing, is his only hope of being free to be “married to another,” that is to Christ. (7:4). The more he desires to please God by his own means, the more miserable he becomes. When finally admitting he cannot please God he cries out “oh wretched man that I am” “Who (not what) shall deliver me?” Then turning to the Second Man, identifying himself with Christ, he then can cry out “I thank God through Jesus

Christ our Lord.” A new Master to deliver, not an old one to destroy. (In ch. 7, even the law had to leave us under the “dominion” of “sin” (6:14-15).

It is a remarkable observance, that all animal life, fears and struggles to not die. Yet for us, death, to the old man, is essential for freedom from it. (I speak of our sin nature, not our bodies) Yet often after learning our sins are forgiven, we still seek in our own power and life to please God, by means of the “old” man. It is impossible, and only leads to the misery of self occupation. This is the struggle of chapter 7. This is why it begins with the freedom into which death brings one, in the illustration of the example given of marriage.

#### Rom. 8

In a true sense, chapter 8 closes the great doctrines of the gospel as presented in Romans 8 concludes with the believers absolute security with God, by means of believing God’s gospel. “Who shall separate us from the Love of Christ?” (v.35) or “separate us from the love of God?” (v.39) Surely this is the gospel!

#### Rom. 9 to the End

Various effects of the gospel, in regard to Israel in a special way, but also the practical effect of the changes in man produced by belief in the “Gospel of God...concerning His Son” (1:1-3)

These are what I see to be the seven main divisions of the book of Romans, others may see divisions in a more minute, and accurate way. The reader will be richly blessed in the reading of Romans, in his own way, as taught by God.