

ROMANS PART 2 - CHAPTERS 9-16:

1. Chap 9-11 – Address issues about Israel and their failure and guilt before God. God had prepared Israel to be His beacon of life and hope to the world. He had provided them the Scriptures so they would know when the Messiah had come. In spite of these advantages, Israel failed to identify and respond properly to Jesus. Israel's failure was also Paul's failure; but just as Paul's failure was turned to gain and blessing in personal transformation, God could also transform Israel. In chapter 9 Paul reminds of God's Sovereignty and Righteousness, and complains that Israel instead of responding to God's Will, substituted their understanding of the righteousness of the Law. They presumed their meritorious obedience to the Law was what God required, rather than responding to God's Grace revealed in Jesus. Chapter 10 details that Israel had many opportunities to hear and obey, but chose not to. Chapter 11 speaks to the faithful remnant who responded to Jesus, with a future in mind where Israel will be restored because of God's faithfulness.

- a. 9:1-5 - Paul like the prophets of old is anguished by Israel's failures and apostasy.
 - i. Paul acts as the peacemaker who links present Israel to ancient Israel, as well as he seeks to diffuse the tension between Jews and Gentiles in the Church. Because of the position God has placed him in as a Pharisee and a Messianic Jew, he may speak authoritatively into both camps... both sides would be wise to listen to him.
 - ii. Paul also launches into a lengthy discussion of election relating to Israel in which he is trying to shed light on how Israel's Messiah could have arrived and the nation failed to follow Him.
 - iii. Israel was provided every advantage by God, and still failed. This brings light to Jesus' parable of the Prodigal [lost] Son (Luke 15:11-32) - the son who stayed with the father was representative of Israel, while the son who left was representative of the Gentiles. The Father loves both brothers... Israel and the Gentiles; He wants to bring them both into His Glory... but Israel wants the exclusive rights to the Father's love. This same tension held true in the 1st century of the Christian era.
- b. 9:6-7 - This is key... the Word of God has not failed; rather the human element has failed which is why Grace was necessary. Jews would accept Jesus as a teacher [Rabbi] and a Prophet [messenger from God], but they refused to accept Jesus as their Messiah - God in the flesh. Many passages in both the OT and NT help to demonstrate that Jesus Christ [Messiah] is fully God — a teaching often denied by sectarian groups and cults. Paul and New Testament writers all taught unequivocally that Jesus was "God in the flesh" - fully God and fully man. Below is a list that compiles some of the major passages that support this important Christian doctrine [from Zondervan's Expository Bible Commentary]:
 - i. Old Testament verses:
 1. God's Son is to rule from God's throne sitting at God's right hand. This means that the Son is equal in power with the Father - (Ps 2:7-12; 110:1-2)
 2. The promised Messiah will be known as "Immanuel" - (i.e., "God with us" - Isa 7:4; cf. Matt 1:23)
 3. The promised Messiah will be "Mighty God," ruling eternally - (Isa 9:6-7)
 4. The ruler born in Bethlehem has His origin from the beginning of all eternity - (Mic 5:2)

5. The righteous Branch of David is called "The LORD Our Righteousness" - (Jer 23:5-5; 33:15-16)
6. The one who will appear in the temple is "the Lord" - (Mal 3:1)
- ii. Self-Affirmations of Jesus:
 1. His is "Lord" of the Sabbath, having created it... Lord from the inception of creation - (Matt 12:8; Mark 2:28; Luke 6:5)
 2. He is the "I am" - self existence that only God can claim (Ex 3:14; John 8:57-58)
 3. He is one with the Father... one nature, the same as - (John 10:30)
 4. He is the judge of the living and the dead - (Matt 25:31-32; John 5:22, 27; cf. Ps 98:9)
 5. He deserves the same honor as the Father (John 5:23)
 6. He presented Himself equal with God (John 5:16-18; 10:33)
 7. He, like God, is everywhere present... Omnipresent (Matt 28:20)
 8. He, like God, is all-powerful... Omnipotent (Matt 28:18)
 9. He, like God, is all-knowing... Omniscient (John 1:47-50; cf. 2:22-23)
 10. He has the authority, which belongs only to God, to forgive sins (Matt 9:2-7; Mark 2:5-12; Luke 5:20-25)
 11. Believing in Him and believing in God are the same (John 14:1)
 12. To know Him is to know the Father, and vice versa (Matt 11:27; Luke 10:22)
 13. He is the only way to the Father, and to see Him is to see the Father (John 14:6-10)
- iii. Other Testimonies in the Gospels and in Acts:
 1. Jesus is the eternal Word of God (John 1:1)
 2. Jesus was present at the time of creation (John 1:2-3)
 3. Jesus is the One and Only God (John 1:18)
 4. Thomas confessed Jesus as "My Lord and my God" (John 20:28)
 5. Evil spirits recognized Jesus as "the Holy One of God" (an OT term used for God - Mark 1:24; cf. Isa 6:3; 30:15)
 6. Jesus is "Lord" (the same Greek word as translates "Yahweh" as "LORD" in the LXX Acts 2:36; 10:36)
 7. Jesus is "the Holy and Righteous One" (Acts 3:14; cf. Isa 6:3; 30:15; Jer 23:6)
 8. Jesus is the coming Judge (Acts 10:42; 17:31; cf. Ps 98:9)
- iv. The Testimony of Paul:
 1. Jesus is "God over all" (Rom 9:5)
 2. Jesus is in very nature God and equal with God (Philip 2:6)
 3. Jesus is "Lord" (the same Greek word as translates "Yahweh" as "LORD" in the LXX - Rom 10:9; 1Cor 2:8; Philip 2:11; Col 2:6)
 4. Jesus is the fullness of the Deity (Col 1:19; 2:9)
 5. Jesus was present at the time of creation (Col 1:16)
 6. There is only one God and Lord (1Co 8:5-6; Eph 4:5-6)
 7. Jesus is "our great God and Savior" (Tit 2:13; cf. 1Tim 4:10; 2Tim 1:10)
- v. The Testimony of the Other New Testament Letters:
 1. The Son is "the exact representation of God" (Heb 1:3)

2. The Son is God (Heb 1:8)
 3. God commands the angels to worship the Son, an act that is deserving only to God (Heb 1:6; cf. Matt 4:10; Rev 19:10; 22:8-9)
 4. Jesus, like God, is unchanging (Heb 13:8; cf. Mal 3:6)
 5. Jesus is "our God and Savior" (2Pet 1:1)
 6. Jesus is "our Lord and Savior" (2Pet 1:11; 2:20; 3:18)
 7. Jesus Christ is "the Righteous One" (1John 2:1; cf. Jer 23:5)
 8. To acknowledge the Son is to acknowledge the Father (1John 2:23)
 9. The Son Jesus Christ is "the true God" (1John 5:20)
- vi. The Testimony in Revelation:
1. Jesus is "the Alpha and Omega," "the First and the Last" (a term ascribed to God in the OT - Rev 1:8; 2:8; 21:6; 22:13; cf. Isa 44:6; 48:12)
 2. Jesus is "the Almighty" (Rev 1:8)
 3. Jesus is "the Living One"... meaning self-existence (Rev 1:18; cf. Josh 3:10; Ps 42:2; 84:2)
 4. Jesus holds the key of David (ascribed in the OT to God Rev 3:7; cf. Isa 22:22)
 5. Jesus is "Lord of Lords" (Rev 17:14; 19:16)
 6. Jesus received worship from people, an act that rightly belongs only to God (Rev 5:11-14; cf. 19:10; 22:8-9)
- c. 9:8-9 - Paul redefines election as being the "Children of the Promise" who are now both Jews and Gentiles... this is the Church which is the culmination of the people of faith throughout redemptive history. In the community of faith - Israel is not excluded, but rather the Gentiles are included; and not all of each camp will respond to God's Grace, but those who do are His children.
- d. 9:10-18 - deals with the reality of God's sovereign prerogative of election. The nature of Scripture in redemptive history is that it provides a view looking back at what happened, looking into the present of what is happening now, and also looking into the future as to what is yet to happen. This requires Spiritual wisdom and insight to understand:
- i. God knows the end from the beginning, while humanity is locked into a historical timeline. The conundrum for humanity is because God knows what will happen, this doesn't denigrate humanity's responsibility to choose based on faith revealed.
 - ii. God is outside of time... there is likely a whole different order of reality going on in eternity than what humanity can understand.
 - iii. We don't know all the particulars of how God's Sovereign will and humanity's free will co-exist and integrate, but we have Paul's insight that "all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose [Rom 8:28ff].
 - iv. The reality of election plays out from the dawn of creation when the universe was set into motion, at that time God knew when Jesus would enter history - His star [sign] being written [revealed] in the heavens - Matt 2:1-2. [See the DVD documentary "The Star of Bethlehem" website is www.bethlehemstarmovie.com]
 - v. This argument demonstrates rather effectively seeing God's mercy and grace in terms of the new light of the Gospel of Grace.

- e. **9:19-21** - the Potter-clay illustration speaks to the right of the Creator to create what He desires, and the responsibility then of the created is to be the best we can be in the context God placed us.
 - i. The value to God is not in either our wealth or contribution, but in the individual currency of faith and obedience.
 - ii. The driving imperatives of Scripture are the Great Commandment - loving God and others, and the Great Commission - evangelism and discipleship... but all flows out of our individual love for and walk with God.
- f. **9:22-24** demonstrates God's generosity to both the wicked and the elect. This duality also needs to be balanced:
 - i. The notion of "prepared for destruction" in 9:22 needs to be balanced with Peter's teaching that "God wants no one to perish" (2 Pet 3:9).
 - ii. This is not about God creating people with which to populate hell [rigid predestination]. Instead it is the result of man's choice in refusing God rather than God actively preparing man for refusal [God's foreknowledge of our choice].
- g. **9:25-29** - Paul quotes OT prophecy that supports God's redemptive plan for the Gentiles in light of His mercy and grace.
 - i. The remnant in verse 27 are those Israelites who have heard and responded to God's Grace. Note that not all of Israel is expected to be saved.
 - ii. It is reasonable in light of God's election being for a remnant of Israel, that there is also a remnant that will emerge of the Gentiles.
- h. **9:30-33** - Humanity's responsibility has always been to seek righteousness by faith - and where the Gentiles were responding, Israel stumbled... but that is not necessarily the end of the story... Paul still has hope for Israel's redemption.
- i. **10:1-3** - Israel's zeal is dislocated - though they based it upon the Word, their zeal was not faith submitted to God... instead it was human formed and self-serving... being a defective faith.
- j. **10:4-10** - The Old Covenant and Mosaic Law was intended to lead humanity [Jew 1st and then Gentile] to the Messiah... where righteousness comes by faith and not by works. Faith is not merely a matter of knowing the truth [mind] - cognitive rationalization, but rather such knowledge leading to a love of God [heart] - this is personal relationship. The speaking of it affirms what we already know and experienced in terms of belief.
- k. **10:11-13** - Faith is available to all... Jew 1st and then Gentile. What God is rejecting is faithless Israel and Gentiles, while He accepts faithful Israel and Gentiles.
- l. **10:14-15** - the effective perseverance and proclamation of the Word is commendable.
- m. **10:16-21** - God will judge accordingly those who have striven against His will and purpose, as was communicated by God's appointed messengers. Because the Jews had the blessing of bearing the Word of God, they also had a greater responsibility to respond in faith.
- n. **11:1-6** - God has always had a remnant of faithful servants who willingly advanced God's purposes. This is not inconsistent with Jesus teaching about the narrow gate - Matt 7:13-14.
- o. **11:7-10** - the unfaithful remain hardened by their own sin - being both their rebellious and wicked nature.

- p. 11:11-15 - because of their unfaithful response, Israel has been presently rejected, which has allowed the Gentiles to be included... but God still hasn't given up on Israel.
 - q. 11:16-24 - as a consequence, the Gentiles should not be smug in thinking they have replaced the Jews. God's covenant love for humanity in general and Israel in particular remains true due to God's faithfulness.
 - r. 11:25-36 - God's mercy and love started with all of humanity, and then progressively narrowed to the Jews who carried forward His Word. With Jesus Grace spread out again first with the Jews and then with the Gentiles. Now that the Gentiles have responded to this Word, God will use it to complete the cycle and bring all humanity under His mercy and Grace.
2. Chapters 12:1-15:13 - Encompassing Christian Life and conduct:
- a. 12:1-2 - Introductory appeal - on becoming a Living Sacrifice:
 - i. This introduces an important portion of Paul's text on what it looks like to live as God desires us to live.
 - ii. Voluntary obedience is the heart of this appeal by Paul. In light of God's mercy and grace, Christians need to lay down the right to living their own life their own way and on their own terms. Instead, a Christian's preference is to honor God in Spiritual worship with a submitted life. Humanity is not under compulsion here, submission is a love offering in response to the greatness of God's gift to us.
 - iii. Greek philosophy viewed the body and the spirit as different aspects of the individual. To the Greeks, the body had little value being transitory, the soul or spirit being eternal had great value.
 - iv. Hebrew theology looked at humanity as an integrated being... a composite of spirit and body. This gives insight into the Great Commandment order to love God taken from the Hebrew Shema - love your God with all your mind [cognitive], all your heart [emotive], and all your strength [physical].
 - v. Christian theology declares the body as being the Temple of the Living God [Spirit] - 1 Cor 3:16; 6:19. Because God lives within each believer, we should live a life consecrated to God.
 - vi. To be "transformed" is the nature of life in the Spirit where we are progressively being sanctified [transformed into the likeness of Jesus]. As we cooperate with the work of the Spirit, we are able to "test and approve" what God's will is for us as His servants... in which we no longer "conform" to the world's standard.
 - vii. Just as the Spirit integrates the individual human being, He also integrates the Church in community.
 - b. 12:3-21 - Christian behavior in the Church - Paul now explains how the Christian life plays out individually and in community... where each person has a unique role and contribution:
 - i. 12:3 - Humble Servanthood - not thinking too highly of yourself... it is a fundamental problem in the fallen human condition to want to be someone of importance. The sin of the Tower of Babel was that unified humanity wanted to "make a name for themselves" (Gen 11:4). The men God proclaimed as great were those who either were by nature or were made by circumstances... humble before God.

- ii. **12:4-5** - every Christian has their place in the Church, just as each part of the physical body has its function in contribution to the whole, so does each person have their function in contribution to the health and growth of the Church.
- iii. **12:6-8** - each individual has been gifted - both naturally and supernaturally for their ministry in God's Kingdom. These gifts are given by the Spirit:
 - 1. **Prophecy** - 1Co 14:3, 31 - demonstrates that the nature of this gift is primarily the communication of revealed truth that both convicts and builds up the hearers. This gift is prominent in the other listings of gifts (1Co 12:28; Eph 4:11), where prophets are listed as second only to apostles. Humility is key as a prophet is not to be governed by either their emotions (1Co 14:32) or by their love of speaking (1Co 14:30). Instead, they are to be governed by their dependence on the Spirit of God.
 - 2. **Serving, teaching, encouraging, giving, leadership, and mercy** are other Spiritual gifts that Paul mentions here, but his main point is not to elaborate on the gift but in the manner in which we serve. The context in ministry is not to become something you are not intended or gifted for, but to understand your gifting and employ it as God intended.
- iv. **12:9-21** - includes wonderful examples of demonstrating Spiritual life and maturity:
 - 1. **12:9-10** - Life within the Church must be predicated on love and serving others:
 - a. Love others sincerely, hate what is evil.
 - b. Cling possessively to what is good.
 - c. Be devoted to brother love that thinks of others instead of yourself.
 - 2. **12:11-13** - The basis for healthy life in the Church is a dedicated relationship to our Lord:
 - a. Christian service is marked by zeal and Spiritual fervor.
 - b. Christian life is marked by joy in our hope, patience even in affliction, faithfulness in prayer.
 - c. Church life is family life based on meeting each other's needs and being hospitable.
 - 3. **12:14-21** - Spiritual life in a counter-cultural community demonstrates the priorities modeled by Jesus:
 - a. 14 - Bless those even though they persecute you.
 - b. 15 - Be emotionally open and vulnerable to all.
 - c. 16a - Live in harmony with all.
 - d. 16b - Do not be proud but be humble and associate with the lowly as well as the affluent.
 - e. 17 - Do what is right and avoid evil.
 - f. 18 - "If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone." - This demonstrates that there are those that you can't live harmoniously with, but we can choose to model hope and tolerance... without becoming a door mat to abusive or wicked individuals. The point here is our behavior may be a vehicle the

- Spirit may use to convict others. We are to be wise and be available, but not be stupid.
- g. 19 - "Do not take revenge... make room for God's wrath" - this is a difficult matter, we are encouraged not to seek revenge, but neither should we pray for God's wrath against others. We should pray for conviction, remorse, repentance, restoration, and reconciliation - but be aware that there are those who will steadfastly refuse Grace, and then we allow God to be God.
 - h. 20 - heaping coals on their head is not a means to repay hurt, but rather it is selfless Christian service to others who may otherwise contend with them in the hope that their obedience may bring conviction, remorse, repentance, restoration, and reconciliation.
 - i. 21 - In Paul's theology, by doing all these things, our counter-cultural life will overcome evil by doing what is good. This concept may also be found in the Gospels where Jesus is quoted by John, "but take heart... I have overcome the world" (John 16:33b). In this passage Jesus is encouraging His disciples before His death and resurrection. Jesus does not overlook the trial that will affect them all, because the conflict between good and evil is inevitable in a world alienated from God. Jesus does however, proclaim victory over it... and because He is victorious, we are also.
- c. 13:1-14 - Christian behavior in submission to governmental authorities - Jewish zeal for Zionism is an original form of Jihad - they believed that by forcing God's hand, He would intervene. This notion remains in much of the radicalized religious movements of our day. Paul's theology is completely different - instead of an active resistance and violent overthrow, Paul advocates passive resistance that is attractational and transformational.
- i. 13:1-7 - God is in control of all human history including present governments. God holds government leaders responsible for properly caring for and leading their people. Paul is advocating passivity in light of the Roman government that is morally wicked, but not necessarily desperately evil. There are times when to be good you must take a stand against evil, this is not the situation that Paul is speaking into.
 - ii. 13:8-10 - Love in patient endurance is the best approach for the Christian, until it comes time to flee.
 - iii. 13:11-14 - The Christian's attitude should be to live life in a manner pleasing to God, until God moves us elsewhere or takes us home into eternity. Ultimately, all of humanity will enter eternity, and all will bear the consequences of their life actions.
- d. 14:1-15:13 - Christian behavior amid personal and cultural disparity - it is probably one of humanity's givens that we think others should think, act, and believe as we do. When people think differently or believe differently, we usually want to talk them into believing or acting as we do. Now in this section, Paul is advocating for unity in the body as well as tolerance and acceptance among believers. He also argues that our actions speak louder than our words, thus our actions that others are observing may move people in ways our

words cannot. Regardless, mutual respect is expected, and tolerance in matters where our consciences diverge from other believers being the appropriate approach.

- i. 14:1-12 - the first matter Paul addresses is a squabble between Messianic Jews and Gentile converts to Christ. The Jews initially held on to the traditional food prescriptions under the Mosaic Law. Paul here argues for “tolerable indifference” on some matters of conscience. Those who forbid certain eating practices [Jews] and those who argue against them [Gentiles] should not despise or degrade one another, but to accept each other as God does. In this 1st segment, the Jew is the weaker brother and the Gentile the stronger.
- ii. 14:13-15:2 - in this second issue, Gentiles who are accustomed to practices that Jews find offensive, are advised to practice restraint as a matter of love toward their brother. In this segment, the Gentile is the again the stronger brother, and the Jew the weaker. In both of these illustrations, only Paul could speak so authoritatively into both camps. The response for both is restraint in love.
- iii. 15:3-6 - Paul uses the example of Jesus - the strong should always be the one who helps and supports the weaker.
- iv. 15:7-8 - is Paul’s concluding appeal to the Jews on these matters.
- v. 15:9-12 - is Paul’s concluding appeal to the Gentiles on these matters.
- vi. 15:13 - “May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit” is a fitting benediction.

3. Conclusion 15:14-16:27

- a. 15:14-21 - Paul’s personal reflections - Paul’s apostolic ministry which is inclusive even though focused especially on the Gentiles is validated by the Spirit both through demonstrations of wisdom and works, as well as Paul’s tireless ministerial outreach.
- b. 15:22-29 - Paul’s plans include a visit to Rome when God allows.
- c. 15:30-33 - Paul’s prayer requests helps to draw both camps into agreement in praying for Paul and the ongoing outworking of ministry... this is an intimate and unifying request.
- d. 16:1-16 - are Paul’s personal greetings and closing thoughts. Paul would have known the people he is referencing in his final greetings in either a second hand [knowing someone who knew them] or possibly even 3rd hand manner [knowing someone who knew someone who knew them]. Regardless, the Romans originally reading this letter would have known exactly who he was speaking about... and some were likely there in their midst. This was a very clever way of helping to validate what Paul has been saying. Though the Romans would have known about Paul, few probably had met him. By listing people they knew, Paul makes his argument more personal. It may also have helped to strengthen some individuals who were already in agreement with what Paul was teaching.
- e. 16:17-20 - this is a parting salvo to weaken those who might still be in opposition to Paul. Particularly on the strength of the people Paul has specifically listed, Paul’s argument would have more punch and penetration.
- f. 16:21-23 - Paul is letting the Roman Church know that there is a much wider fellowship throughout the world for who Paul remains an authority. This helps place differences into a context much larger than the local Church in Rome.

- g. 16:25-27 - is Paul's concluding doxology in the context of our eternal God and His Glory.**