

Romans – The Gospel of God

Introductory Overview for the Book of Romans

Romans in the Bible – Among the books of the Bible, the **Book of Romans** stands out in **several** very **unique** ways.

Old Testament – Since it comes to us **after** the **coming** of our **Lord Jesus Christ**, it expounds upon the **special revelation** of God that has come to us **in** and **through** the **Person** and **Work** of **Christ**. Its **content** therefore **stands out** from **Old Testament** writing as God’s eternal plan, and the salvation history of the Old Testament is explained and interpreted in a way that **reveals** the **mystery** of the **prophets** in certain **terms**. It is a **culmination** of what they **wrote**, the very **fulfilment** of what they **promised**, explained with **application**. It is the **very apex** of what they **pointed** to in very **clear** and **precise** theological **explanations**. Because of its **content** it stands out above even the greatest Old Testament works. In this sense it is the very **pinnacle** or **climax** of what the Old Testament promised, explaining in certain terms how **God** has **fulfilled** much of what the **prophets** wrote **through Christ**, the long-awaited Jewish **Messiah**.

New Testament – As to **New Testament** books, **Romans** is the most **unique** and **profound** book of the Bible in **explaining** the **Gospel**. It presents the most **comprehensive theological treatise** on the **Gospel** and the **Doctrine** of

Salvation in all the New Testament. It gives an expansive **treatment** of the **depravity** of **mankind** and the **Doctrine** of **Sin**, for both **pre** and **post conversion** applications. With **Justification** at the **heart** of its **doctrine**, it explains the **judicial elements** of **God's Justice** and His fearful **Judgment**, the **basis** of His Judgments, and the **purpose** of **God's Law** in **Salvation** History. It **reveals** how **God's Law** and **Grace** work together in the **harmony** of the **Gospel**. It tells us in **certain terms** how people can be **justified before God** as a **free gift** through **faith** in **Christ**.

From this Book we get the famed "**Romans Road**," a brief **explanation** of the **Gospel** in **5 memory verses** from the book. The **Romans Road** lays out the plan of salvation through a series of **Bible** verses. When arranged in order, these verses form an easy, **systematic** way of **explaining** the **message** of **salvation**. ... Evangelical missionaries, evangelists, and lay people **memorize** and use the **Romans Road** when sharing the **good news**. The **verses** are 3:23, 5:8, 6:23, 10:9-10, 10:13.

This Book explains **Jew/Gentile** tensions with utmost **clarity** and **applies** it to the **Doctrine** of the **Church** and the **Christian Life**. It unfolds the **mystery** of **Israel's rejection** of their **Messiah** and explains that God has a yet future glory for the **ethnic nation** of **Israel**, according to the **promises** of the **prophets**, to be fulfilled after God reaches the **Gentiles** **nations** in this **Gospel Age**. It treats **spiritual gifts**, **Christian dignity**, **hospitality**, extolling **love** as the **fulfilment** of the **Law** in the **Christian Life**. It gives a clear and well-spoken

application of love in the Christian Life that will **even solve** the difficult **tensions** between **Jew and Gentile** believers in the **Church**. And these are just a **few** of its many **features**. Indeed, Romans **stands out** in all of the **New Testament** as a very great **treasure** and **gift** from God the Church!

Author and Date - Of course we know the **author** of **Romans** is **Paul the Apostle**. He was the Apostle to the **Gentiles**, who is the author of **13 New Testament books**. Paul's **scribe**, the man who **wrote** down the **words**, was a man named **Tertius** who is mentioned in Romans 16:22. According to Paul's statements in Romans **15:19-25**, it appears that Paul wrote Romans on his **3rd missionary journey** from **Corinth**, which **journeys** are recorded in the **Book of Acts**.

Background –First, **Paul did not plant the Church in Rome**.

The **Gospel** had apparently been in **Rome** for some time since we know that the **Emperor Claudius** expelled all the **Jews** living in **Rome** in **49AD** over some controversy concerning an important figure named "**Chrestos**." The was **recorded** by the Roman Historian **Suetonius**. It is commonly believed that this **Chrestos** was actually, "**Christos**," the **Latin** name for **Christ**.

The **ESV Study Bible** comments; *Over the years the Jewish Christians slowly filtered back into Roman churches. It is not difficult to imagine that tensions would develop between law observing Jewish Christians and Gentile Christians who lived free of the restrictions in the Mosaic law.*

Understanding this **tension** and **controversy** between **Jewish** and **Gentile Christians**, which was common all over the Roman and Greek **world** of the **1st Century**, helps us see **why** Paul was so **comprehensive** and **articulate** concerning the **Law** and the **Gospel**. It also explains the **focus** on the **Jew** in **Salvation History**, the **Jew** in **Law** and **Gospel**, and the lengthy **discussion** of **Israel's rejection** of their **Messiah** and God's **plan** for their **future** in chapters **9-11**. It helps us see **why** he wrote **chapters 13-14** on how to **apply** the **Law** and the **Jewish customs** now that we have been **saved** by **Christ**.

Romans Structure – by Christopher Ash

