

## THE LETTER TO THE ROMANS

At last Paul journeys to Corinth and arrives around December, 57 or early 58, his third visit to Corinth. He stays in Achaia (Greece) for three months, mostly in Corinth, ending in the spring of 58. Paul writes his letter to the Romans during this time, February-March, 58, while he is lodging with Gaius. Its quiet tone and the careful development of its elaborate plan are proof that for Paul this was not a period of continuing struggle but one of recuperation and preparation for a new work in the far West.

The church in Rome consisted mostly of Jewish Christians with a comparatively small Gentile Christian minority. Since it was not founded by Paul nor any of his helpers, Paul was not personally acquainted with the church as a whole although he may have been intimately acquainted with some individual members. He writes of his desire to visit them in order to exchange spiritual gifts and to obtain fruit through the preaching of the word among the Roman populace, the great mass of whom were unconverted. This trip to the capital of the empire had been planned for a number of years but repeatedly postponed due to external circumstances. Though he longs to visit them, the trip must be postponed further still since Paul is getting ready to journey to Jerusalem with the collection taken by the Gentile Christian churches which he founded. His planned visit and work in Rome, however, will not be of any protracted nature as Paul's real objective in his more extended missionary plan is Spain.

The contemplation of his missionary activity in Rome leads Paul to introduce the subject of the gospel as the universal means of salvation. Two thoughts are fundamental in this statement about the gospel:

- **Proposition one:** only the righteous attain eternal life.
- **Proposition two:** this is accomplished through faith alone.

In proof of this first proposition, Paul in the **first section (1:18-3:20)** of his letter shows that the wrath of God is directed against all unrighteousness and ungodliness of men. For their unrighteousness, men are responsible and inexcusable, throughout the course of history as well as at the final judgment. In this life, the righteousness of God goes unnoticed by the unrighteous due to God's many blessings showered upon all. In other words, this life is not the time of retribution. But at the final judgment, the righteousness of God will be revealed as retribution when the unrighteous are judged by the standard of God's righteousness. In God's impartial determination of the destiny of the individual soul, there is no distinction between Jew and Gentile. While the advantage of being an Israelite, the people of God's revelation, is not to be denied, this cannot in any way alter the fact that in the final judgment all men must appear before God as liars and sinners worthy of condemnation. No one, Jew or Greek, is to imagine that he is exempted *a priori* from this condemnation of a sinful race under God's wrath.<sup>52</sup>

From the course of the argument, condemnation seems to be the inevitable end of the entire human race. However, Paul writes in the **second section (3:21-5:11)** that the

<sup>52</sup> Zahn has, "Even Christians are not to imagine that they are exempted *a priori* from this condemnation..." (I: 358). However, it is difficult to discern his meaning at this point. "We" in 3:9 likely refers to Jews, not Christians (cf. 3:1-2).

righteousness of God proclaimed in the gospel is manifested in Christ and by faith becomes the possession of all believers, Jews and Gentiles alike. Thus Paul affirms his second proposition that Christians are justified by faith. Consequently, they have the assurance that they are at peace with God and in spite of all the afflictions of the present may and should cherish the confident hope of their future glory and final redemption.

In the **third section (5:12-8:39)** Paul writes about the doctrine of law and grace. Inasmuch as the Mosaic Law is described as subordinate to the two world principles, sin and righteousness, it is at once clear that the reign and supremacy of grace under the Christian dispensation cannot be limited or set aside by the subordinate dominion of the law. In proof of this, Paul calls attention to the fact that in the very community (Israel) where the law had served only to increase sin, redemptive grace had been revealed in its greatest fullness. Paul wishes to guard against the possibility of grace being looked upon as just one means of salvation among others, a possible conclusion if grace had been manifested first to another people without Israel's experiences with the law. Also, in answer to the objection that one need only to continue in sin in order to constantly receive new supplies of grace,<sup>53</sup> Paul writes that the new birth, which makes a sinful life on the part of believers seem unnatural, furnishes the strongest motive for holiness.

In the **fourth section (9:1-11:35)** Paul writes of the tragic fate of the nation Israel. It grieves him exceedingly that while Gentiles, who are little concerned about righteousness, are saved, Israel, with all its striving for legal righteousness, obtains neither this righteousness nor the righteousness of faith, stumbling at the revelation of God in Christ. However, he argues that this hardening of Israel is designed primarily to enable the Gentiles to obtain part in redemption. Moreover, that there is no permanent rejection of Israel is proved by the conversion of individual Jews. By fulfilling his work as an apostle to the Gentiles, Paul does so with the additional purpose of arousing his countrymen to jealousy and thus preparing the way for the conversion of Israel at the end of the world.<sup>54</sup>

Paul writes about obedience to authority in the **fifth section (12:1-15:13)**. He exhorts his readers to live a sober and self-controlled life in view of the coming of the day of Christ. This introduces the subject of a schism in the church concerning the use of meat, possibly of wine, and the setting apart of certain days based on religious grounds. Paul was well informed about this schism, probably through Aquila and Priscilla, who were in residence in Rome at this time. Paul rebukes the ascetics for their bigoted judgment of others, declaring them to be weak in faith and takes his own stand with those strong in faith. However, concerning the issue itself, he goes no further than to state that both practices are consistent with Christian profession. Those strong in faith are to avoid offending the conscience of the weaker

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53 A view known as *antinomianism* (cf. Rom. 3:8; 6:1, 15). This error has appeared in the church even in modern times.

54 This is Zahn's phrase (I:365). As a premillenarian, Zahn no doubt means the second advent of Christ.

brethren. They are not to influence them by a contemptuous treatment or by a challenging example to act against their conscience.

Paul closes with a **sixth section (15:14-16:27)**<sup>55</sup> that corrects the possible impression, produced by the elaborateness of the letter and its strenuous tone, that he regarded the Roman Christians in special need of instruction. That was not the case because he had discussed only certain phases of Christian truth in the letter and was conscious of reminding them of truths with which they were already familiar. Finally, Paul explains that it was the wide extent of territory in which he carried on his work that prevented him thus far from coming to Rome. However, with his mission completed in this area, that of laying the foundations for new churches, he was planning to visit them on his way to Spain where he would continue his work.

When Paul is about ready to leave Achaia and sail for Syria, the Jews make a plot against him, so he goes back through Macedonia, stopping at Philippi. He is accompanied by Sopater from Berea, Aristarchus and Secundus from Thessalonica, Gaius from Derbe, Timothy from Lystra, and Tychicus and Trophimus from the province of Asia. From Philippi these men go on to Troas to wait for Paul. Paul, Luke, and Silas, stay in Philippi until after the feast of Unleavened Bread in the year 58 and then sail from Philippi to join the others five days later at Troas. They all remain in Troas for seven days.

Paul then goes to Assos, a distance of 20 miles, on foot, while the others sail there. From Assos they all sail to Mitylene, and the next day to Kios. The following day they cross over to Samos and the next day arrive in Miletus. Paul decides to sail past Ephesus since he is in a hurry to reach Jerusalem by the Day of Pentecost. Thus he sends for the Ephesian elders to come to Miletus where he gives them a farewell address.

Paul and his companions next set sail for Cos and from there to Rhodes and Patara. Then they sail to Syria, landing at Tyre, where the ship is unloaded, and stay with the disciples seven days. Paul sets sail again, landing at Ptolemais, and stays with the brethren for one day only. From Ptolemais they go to Caesarea, about 30 or 40 miles away, and stay with Philip the evangelist. There the prophet Agabus predicts that the Jews of Jerusalem will bind Paul and deliver him to the Gentiles. Luke, Silas, and the people plead with Paul not to go to Jerusalem, but he is not dissuaded.

### PAUL IN JERUSALEM (ACTS 21:15-23:22)

Paul, Silas, and Luke head for Jerusalem, accompanied by Trophimus, Timothy, and other

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<sup>55</sup> Some scholars have argued against the genuineness of 16:1-16 with its many greetings because Paul was not personally acquainted with the church in Rome. However, there is no textual evidence against this section of Romans. Zahn (I:388, 393), as well as all modern evangelical scholars, is certain that this section was part of the original letter. However, the "doxology" of 16:25-27 is quite another matter. Some manuscripts include it at the end of the letter, some following 14:23, some following 15:33, and some omit the verses altogether. Zahn favors the view that the verses originally came after 14:23 (I:382). A number of modern evangelical scholars accept this doxology as genuine at the end of the letter; see, e.g., D. A. Carson, Douglas J. Moo, and Leon Morris, *An Introduction to the New Testament* [Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1992], pp. 246-247.

disciples from Caesarea. They lodge with Mnason, who lives in a village between Caesarea and Jerusalem. In Jerusalem they are greeted warmly by the Jewish Christians and the following day see James and all the elders. Paul is informed that thousands of Jews have believed and that these Jews are zealous for the law. However, these Jews have been informed that Paul teaches that Jews who live among the Gentiles are to turn away from the Mosaic law. They are not to circumcise their children nor are they to live according to Jewish customs. At the suggestion of the elders, Paul participates in purification rites with four men who have taken a Nazarite vow.<sup>56</sup> He also pays the cost of the prescribed offerings for them. This act ensures that there is no truth in these reports circulating about him.<sup>57</sup>

When the seven days are nearly over, Jews seize Paul and drag him from the temple, claiming that he has defiled the Holy Place. The Jews had seen the Greek Trophimus from Ephesus in the city and assumed that Paul had brought him into the temple area. While they are beating Paul and trying to kill him, a report of the commotion comes to the attention of the local Roman commander.

Commander Claudius Lysias arrests Paul and has him bound with two chains. It is Pentecost of the year 58. He asks Paul who he is and what it is that he has done, but the uproar of the crowd is so great that he orders Paul to be taken into the barracks for questioning. Due to the violence of the mob, Paul has to be carried up the steps by soldiers. Once at the top of the stairs, Paul asks the commander if he might be allowed to speak to the people and permission is given. Once the crowd quiets down, Paul gives his defense, testifying to his early training in the Jewish law, his zeal for God, and his persecution of those that followed Jesus. He goes on to tell of his experience on the way to Damascus, of how God saved him, and of his call to preach the gospel to the Gentiles because the Jews did not accept his testimony.

Upon hearing this, the crowd turns violent again and shouts that Paul should be killed. The commander orders that Paul be taken into the barracks to be flogged and questioned. As he is stretched out to be flogged, Paul asks the centurion standing nearby if it is legal for a Roman citizen to be flogged when he has not yet been found guilty of a crime.<sup>58</sup> The centurion reports this to Commander Claudius Lysias, who becomes alarmed when he realizes that he has put a Roman citizen in chains.

The following day the commander releases Paul to stand before the chief priests and the Sanhedrin, since he wishes to know exactly why Paul was being accused by the Jews. Knowing that there were both Pharisees and Sadducees within the Sanhedrin, Paul speaks of his hope in the resurrection of the dead. This leads to a dispute within the Sanhedrin because the Sadducees did not believe in a resurrection while the Pharisees did. A great uproar ensues, and it becomes so violent that the commander fears for Paul's life. Therefore, he orders the troops to go down and take Paul away from them by force and bring him into the barracks.

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56 Num. 6:1-21.

57 Some have suggested that Paul was inconsistent here and out of the will of the Lord in following the request of James and the elders. However, nowhere is this implied in the NT. Paul never taught that Jewish Christians should abandon the practice of circumcision or the other aspects of the Mosaic law.

58 Acts 22:25-29. Paul was born a Roman citizen (vv. 27-28).

This arrest around Pentecost of 58 is the beginning of a five-year imprisonment and the effective end of Paul's third missionary journey. The following night the Lord speaks to Paul in a revelation. He is to take courage. As he has testified of Him in Jerusalem, so will he testify of Him in Rome.<sup>59</sup>

### PAUL'S FIRST ROMAN IMPRISONMENT (ACTS 23:23-28:31)

In Jerusalem a group of more than forty Jews plot to kill Paul, but he is informed of this by his nephew, who in turn informs Claudius Lysias, the Roman commander. He sends Paul to the Procurator, Antonius Felix, in Caesarea under the care of soldiers, informing him of Paul's Roman citizenship and the plot to kill him by the Jews. Paul is kept under guard in Herod's palace. Five days later the high priest Ananias comes to Caesarea with some of the elders and a lawyer named Tertullus, and they present their charges against Paul. Felix, who was well acquainted with the Christian message, motions for Paul to speak. In Paul's first major defense, he declares that he is innocent of the charges of sedition and sacrilege brought against him. He came to Jerusalem to deliver a collection that had been taken for the poor and to present offerings in the temple. Nowhere in the city was he found carrying on a discussion with anyone or causing a disturbance. However, Paul admits to worshipping the God of Israel according to the Way.<sup>60</sup> He has the same hope as those who have brought the charges against him, that of a resurrection of both the righteous and wicked. Felix postpones a decision on the charges, preferring to await the arrival of Commander Claudius Lysias. He does, nevertheless, grant Paul some freedom and permits his friends to care for his needs.

Several days later Felix and his wife Drusilla send for Paul. Paul speaks about faith in Christ Jesus. He also discusses righteousness, self-control, and the judgment to come. At this point Felix becomes frightened and dismisses Paul, saying that he will send for Paul again when it is more convenient. At the same time Felix is waiting for Paul to offer him a bribe, so he sends for him frequently.<sup>61</sup> Paul refuses to offer any bribe and is thus compelled to remain under arrest in Caesarea for two and a quarter years. Luke most likely stayed in the vicinity of Caesarea the entire time.

Two years later Felix is succeeded as procurator by Porcius Festus, who takes office in the summer of the year 60. Paul is still in prison in Caesarea. Festus travels to Jerusalem where the chief priests and Jewish leaders appear before him and present their charges against Paul. They urgently request that Festus, as a favor to them, have Paul transferred to Jerusalem. They were planning an ambush to kill him along the way. However, Festus replies

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59 Acts 23:11.

60 Acts 24:14. The description, *the Way*, was an early term used to describe Christianity when it was still considered an aberrant sect of Judaism; see Acts 9:2; 24:22.

61 Acts 24:26. Taking bribes was forbidden by the *Lex Iulia de repetundis* (roughly, *law against extortion*), although this law was often violated by governors (F. F. Bruce, *The Acts of the Apostles* [Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1951], p. 428). Felix may have actually wanted the money, but there is another possibility. Paul's strong presentation of morality and judgment described in v. 25 frightened Felix so much that he adjourned the hearing. Perhaps unable to answer Paul's arguments, he instead hoped to impugn Paul's character. That way he could simply dismiss those arguments as so much hypocrisy. Thus, he gives Paul many opportunities to offer him a bribe.

that he will be going to Caesarea shortly and suggests that some of their leaders come along and press charges against Paul there.

Some eight to ten days later Festus goes down to Caesarea and convenes court the following day. Here Paul delivers his second defense. He testifies that he is innocent of any wrongdoing against the law of the Jews, against the temple, or against Caesar. This defense before Festus takes place in the late summer of 60. When Festus, who wishes to do the Jews a favor, asks Paul if he would be willing to go to Jerusalem and stand trial before him there, Paul insists that he should be tried in Caesar's court where he now stands. Paul's revelation two years ago had reconfirmed his conviction that in spite of his arrest, Rome was to be his destination, and these two years of imprisonment in Caesarea had not quenched his desire to go there. In response, Festus rules that Paul should be sent to Caesar.<sup>62</sup> However, before Paul leaves for Rome, Festus explains the situation concerning Paul to King Agrippa, who had just arrived in Caesarea to pay his respects to Festus.<sup>63</sup> Agrippa wants to hear Paul himself, so Paul presents a third defense before King Agrippa. After Paul finishes, King Agrippa tells Festus that Paul has not done anything worthy of death or imprisonment and that he might have been set free had he not appealed to Caesar.<sup>64</sup>

Paul departs from Caesarea for Rome in September of the year 60. He is put aboard an Adramyttian ship that is about to set sail. Sailing with him are Aristarchus and Luke, making a total of 276 men on board.<sup>65</sup> He is in the custody of the centurion Julius, who belonged to the Imperial Regiment.<sup>66</sup> The ship puts out to sea and the next day lands in Sidon where Julius allows Paul to go to friends who provide for his needs.<sup>67</sup> The ship puts out to sea again, and after sailing across the open waters off the coast of Cilicia and Pamphylia, lands at Myra. There Paul is put aboard an Alexandrian ship sailing for Italy.

The sailing is extremely difficult, and the ship moves slowly along the coast to Fair Havens, near the town of Lasea on the island of Crete, where it puts in to port. Much time has been lost, and the question arises whether to continue the voyage, since sailing had become

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62 "You have appealed to Caesar, to Caesar you shall go" (Acts 25:12).

63 This is Agrippa II. King Herod Agrippa I was grandson of Herod the Great, who ruled at the time of the birth of Christ. Agrippa I, like his grandfather, had been king over Judea under Roman authority. He died in A.D. 44, the same year that he had had the Apostle James put to death (Acts 12:1-2). However, instead of giving Judea to his son Agrippa II, the Roman Emperor Claudius made Judea a Roman province under a procurator, the position now held by Festus. By the year A.D. 60, Agrippa II had been made king over neighboring regions.

64 Agrippa's famous line (Acts 26:28), "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian," (KJV) has been interpreted in a number of ways. Few apparently think that he was near conversion. Agrippa may have spoken playfully, or he may have spoken with scornful sarcasm, both suggested as possibilities by Charles John Vaughan, *Studies in the Book of Acts* [Minneapolis: Klock & Klock Christian Publishers, 1985; reprinted from MacMillan & Co., (New York, 1890)], p. 571. The NIV translates the Greek as a question.

65 Acts 27:37. Some texts have "about 276," but the exact expression "276" is much better attested. There is also no improbability in the large number. These ships were capable of carrying many people. Josephus once set sail for Rome in a ship that had 600 on board (*Vita*, 3).

66 The phrase, "troop of the Emperor," was possibly a popular name for the corps of officer-couriers detailed for communication service between the emperor and his armies. Julius, a legionary centurion, would be one of these couriers. See F. F. Bruce, *The Acts of the Apostles* [Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1951], p. 452.

67 A Roman citizen who had appealed to Caesar would be treated very differently from ordinary prisoners.

increasingly dangerous.<sup>68</sup> Paul warns of disaster if they should decide to continue, not only in the loss of the ship but in the loss of their own lives as well. Nevertheless, Julius follows the advice of the pilot and owner of the ship. Since the harbor was unsuitable to winter in, the majority decides to sail on in hopes of reaching Phoenix and spending the winter there. They leave Fair Havens, but while sailing along the shore of Crete, the ship is engulfed in a storm of hurricane force. The cargo is jettisoned, and on the third day the ship's tackle is also thrown overboard. After many days of being driven along in the storm, all hope of being saved is abandoned. However, an angel of God reveals to Paul that everyone on board will survive, though the ship itself will be lost. After fifteen days a bay with a sandy beach is sighted and the decision is made to run the ship aground if possible. However, before the ship can reach the beach it hits a sandbar. The bow sticks fast and the stern is broken to pieces by the pounding surf. Those who could do so swim to shore, while the rest use planks or pieces of the ship to get there. All reach land in safety. They find out that they are on the island of Malta, and hospitality is accorded them during the three months of winter.

In the spring they put out to sea again in a ship that had wintered in the island and land at Syracuse where they stay three days. After a stop at Rhegium and a week's stay at Puteoli, they finally arrive at Rome in March of 61 after a six-month voyage. Paul is allowed to live by himself, but there are soldiers to guard him. He stays in his own rented house for two years and preaches the word boldly and without hindrance. Aristarchus appears to have shared this dwelling with him. Luke seems to have remained in Rome from the time of his arrival until after the year 66. Also engaged in missionary work in Rome at this time were Timothy, Epaphras, Demas, Tychicus, Mark, and Jesus Justus. The time of their arrival is not known. This is the end of Luke's record in the Book of Acts.<sup>69</sup>

### THE PRISON EPISTLES

Paul writes Colossians, Philemon, and the circular letter to the churches in the province of Asia (our Ephesians) in the summer of 62 and sends them by Tychicus and Onesimus. Onesimus himself carries the letter to Philemon, his master, who lives in Colossae, and informs the Christians there of Paul's condition. Onesimus apparently was also entrusted with the letter to the church in Colossae since in it Paul writes that Tychicus will arrive and tell them of his (Paul's) situation. Tychicus has been commissioned by Paul to deliver the circular letter (our Ephesians) to the churches in the inland cities of the province, which includes Colossae. As Onesimus was instructed to return to his master by the shortest route, he arrives in Colossae before Tychicus.

Philemon, converted through the influence of Paul, probably in Ephesus, was a well-to-do citizen of Colossae. He was married and had a son named Archippus. A portion of the church

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68 The dangerous season for navigation was from September 14 to November 11. Then from November 11 until the end of winter, all travel on the open sea ceased. A yearly festival was held on the 5th of March celebrating the re-opening of navigation. While at Fair Havens, Paul probably observed the fast of the Day of Atonement (27:9). Therefore, it was well into the dangerous period when the decision had to be made whether to continue the journey. Fair Havens was not a good place to winter the ship (27:12).

69 Zahn argues that due to the abruptness of the end of Acts, Luke probably intended to write a third book (III:57-58).

of Colossae met in his house, and a part of the letter to Philemon was directed to them while another part was directed to him personally. His slave Onesimus had run away, apparently stealing the money for the journey from Philemon. He had come to Rome where he was saved through Paul's ministry. Paul asks that Philemon receive him back in a kindly spirit, not as a worthless slave but as a dear brother.

Paul's letter to the Colossian church as a whole was also to be read in the neighboring church of Laodicea. Paul was not personally acquainted with either of these churches. They had been founded by Epaphras, Paul's disciple. Therefore, Paul was very interested in their welfare. For their part, the churches also felt a spiritual love for Paul, and his wish to deepen this relationship was the occasion for the letter. Paul writes of the stewardship of God committed to him, that of declaring fully the word of God and the secret of God made known to the saints, revealed in all its fullness to the Gentile church.<sup>70</sup>

However, there were false teachers in Colossae whose dangerous influence greatly concerned Paul. These false teachers were Jewish Christians given to asceticism.<sup>71</sup> They had therefore given the Colossian Christians numerous regulations about abstinence from food and drink and about the observance of fasts, new moons, and Sabbaths. These false teachers criticized them for not having observed these regulations up until now, declaring that they could not attain Christian perfection without doing so. In opposition to this derogatory judgment of the Colossians' faith, Paul assures them that in Christ they possess all essential blessings and that Christ is the source and foundation of a life pleasing to God. It was through baptism that they received a circumcision that in comparison with the circumcision of the Jews is much more comprehensive and fundamentally sanctifying. Genuine Christian sanctification rests upon fellowship with Christ. They are to let the peace that Christ gives have exclusive rule in their hearts and allow all questions to be answered under its influence. If they give the word of Christ a proper chance to unfold in all its richness, they will not need the instruction of worldly wisdom but will be able to instruct and correct one another.

The circular letter now called the Epistle to the Ephesians was not directed to the church at Ephesus at all but was written to a number of churches whose origins were due to the preaching of various missionaries.<sup>72</sup> The readers were made up of the entire group of churches in the province of Asia to which Paul, up to this time, had remained unknown. This group included the churches at Colossae and Laodicea. It did not, of course, include those at Ephesus and Troas, where Paul had previously ministered. Paul, nevertheless, feels a responsibility to watch over and promote the development of these churches in the province of Asia, especially when they were in danger of being led astray by an unsound form of Christianity.

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70 This "secret" or "mystery" is more fully explained in Eph. 3:6; see also the summary of Ephesians to follow.

71 The exact nature of the false teaching is not entirely clear, though some aspects are evident from Paul's refutation. It was a syncretism of Jewish (2:8, 11, 16, 18, 21; 3:11) and Greek (2:3, 23) elements. Some also think it was an early form of the Gnosticism that plagued the church in the second century.

72 The phrase "in Ephesus" in Eph. 1:1 is a textual variant. The textual evidence is somewhat evenly arrayed for and against its genuineness. Zahn discusses the issue at length and concludes that the phrase was not part of the original letter (I:482). One of the strongest arguments against its genuineness is the observation that Paul and the intended readers seem not to know each other personally (Eph. 1:15; 3:2). By contrast, Paul had spent a considerable amount of time in Ephesus (Acts 19:10; 20:17-38).

He begins his letter with praise to God for the result of the gospel accomplished in his field of labor (Gentiles), though without his aid. His obligation to these Gentile Christians arises from his commission that put him under obligation to all Gentiles.<sup>73</sup> Even though they lack a personal relationship with Paul, these churches in Asia are not to feel excluded from the Gentile Church for which Paul labors and is in bonds.<sup>74</sup> His design is to protect them from the danger of becoming isolated and lost and to make them realize more strongly that they are a part of the whole church, consisting of Gentile and Jewish Christians, all members of the one body of Christ. Paul contrasts the former limitation of salvation to Israel to the present inclusion of the Gentiles. The Gentiles, Paul writes, are now heirs together with Israel, members together of one body, sharers together in the promise of Jesus Christ, the mystery made known to Paul by revelation.<sup>75</sup>

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73 See footnote 5.

74 Paul frequently points out in the prison epistles that he is in bonds or is a prisoner *for the sake of the Gentiles* (e.g., Eph. 3:1; Col. 1:24; 4:3). This is not metaphorical as in the phrase "bond-servant of Christ" (Phil. 1:1; cf. II Cor. 5:14), but he refers, of course, to his Roman imprisonment. This imprisonment came about because of the anger of unbelieving Jews in large part over Paul's work among the Gentiles and his adamant view that the Gentiles need not come to God under the Law of Moses (cf. Acts 21:27-28; 22:21-22; 26:19-23).

75 Eph. 3:1-7.