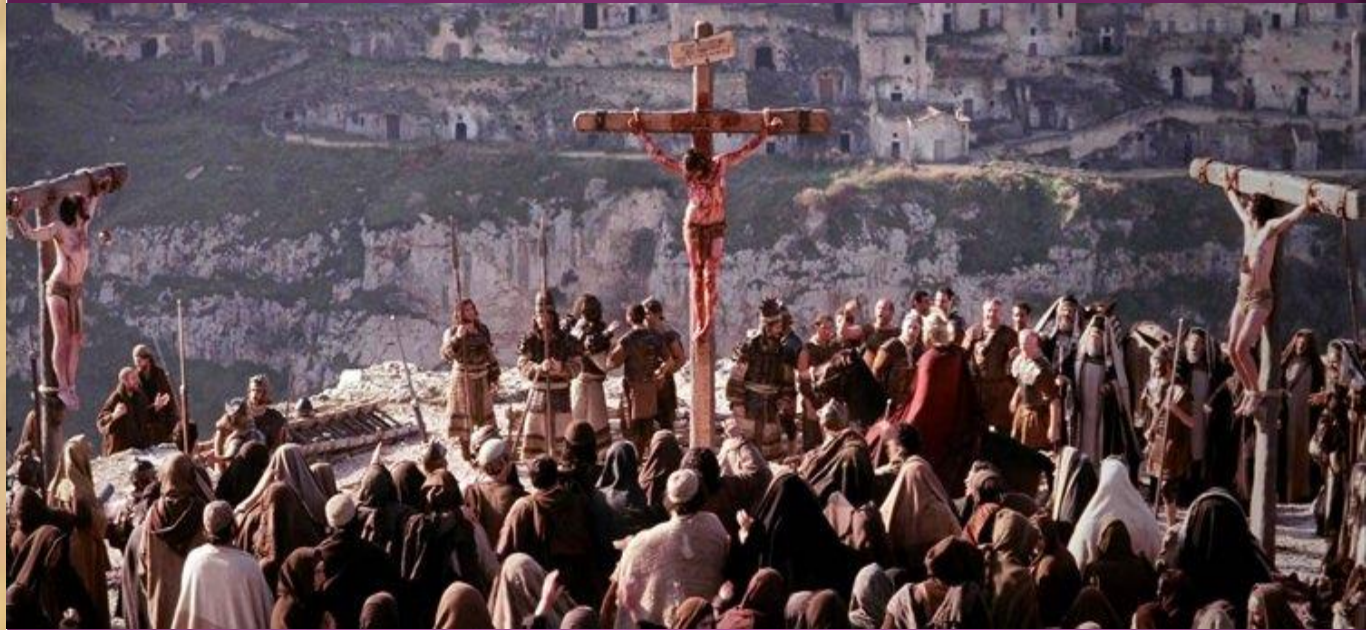


Romans

15:(7)8-13

CHRIST JESUS



FOR THE JEWS AS PROMISED;
FOR THE GENTILES AS PROPHESED

Romans

15:8-13



Continuation

Paul now begins to broaden his perspective to take into account the main thrust of the whole letter to the Roman house-churches. The strongest evidence that Paul wraps up his theological exposition rest on what follows his final theological hinge (v.7); since in vv.14-33, Paul will detail this plan to visit Rome that returns the hearers to comparable sentiments that he expressed in vv.8-13. Therefore, this section serves as the culminating theological statement of Paul's letter to the Romans, which extends from 1:18 through 15:13.

The section that we will now study serves a twofold purpose. First, it functions as the conclusion to 14:1–15:6; and, secondly, it also contains a summary of some of the major themes of this letter.

Romans

15:8



The Servant, Christ Jesus

To the Jew First (v.8; cf. 1:18)

8For I say that Christ came to be and remains a servant of [the] **circumcision** in behalf of [the] truth of God in order to confirm the promises of the **fathers...** [For [the] wrath of God is revealed from heaven upon all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, the unrighteousness by suppressing the truth...]

“For I say...,” conveys the sense of a solemn doctrinal declaration. Identifying the Lord Jesus Christ with the title *“servant”* (διδάκονος) expresses our Lord’s own self-understanding of His mission. He *“came not to be served [διακονηθῆναι] but to serve [διακονῆσαι] and to give His life as a ransom in behalf of many”* (St. Matthew 20:28; St. Luke 22:27).

Paul is quite clear that Jesus is *“a servant of [the] circumcision.”* As in 3:30 & 4:9, the noun is **περιτομή** *“circumcision,”* by synecdoche – the Jewish people identified by one of their most distinctive features! Contextually, this seems rather obvious in light of the reference to *“fathers,”* the circumcised patriarchs, later *“his people”* in the OT citation in 15:10, and then the six-fold use of the term ἔθνη for *“Gentiles”* or other *“nations”* in contrast to Israel (vv.9-12).

Romans

15:8



The
Servant,
Christ
Jesus

Our Lord's Ongoing Ministry to the Jews (v.8)

8For I say that Christ came to be and remains a servant of [the] circumcision in behalf of [the] truth of God in order to confirm the promises of the fathers...

The double aspect of the perfect tense of “*came to be and remains*” (γεγενῆσθαι), conveys a significant truth; that our Lord’s service to the Jewish people encompasses both His past earthly ministry, death, and resurrection accomplished in their behalf. This then is followed by His ongoing deliverance of the benefits attained by His salvific work. Our Lord’s salvation is delivered through His Word and is received through faith whenever one hears the Good News of His Word and believes (cf. 10:6-15). Christ’s ongoing role as a servant who receives all believers (Jew & Gentile) to Himself not only resounds to God’s glory, but also serves as an affirmation “*in behalf of [the] truth of God.*” The vocabulary of “*[the] truth*” (ἀλήθεια—in this sense, the Divine truth revealed to man) carries the Hebrew sense of faithfulness. God’s faithfulness is expressed by Christ’s work “*to confirm the promises*” that includes all nations as beneficiaries; hence, as you will see in v.9, “*Gentiles!*”

Romans

15:9a



Christ's
Service
Adds
Gentiles

^{9a}and [in order that] the Gentiles might glorify God for [His] mercies, just as it stands written:

Gentiles stand among the “*you*” whom Christ received unto Himself “*to [the] glory of God*” (v.7). They are included in the “*many*” (πολλῶν, Matt 20:28) whom Jesus came to serve by giving His life as a ransom. The inclusion of Gentiles among the people of God coincides with the illustration of grafting wild olive branches into the Olive Tree (cf. 11: 17, 19, 24). The “*mystery*” of 11:25 equally involves the fullness of the Gentiles entering God’s Israel! While the manner in which this would happen was “*once*” a mystery that mystery has come to be and now stands revealed through the servant-hood of Jesus. Paul insists the extension of “*mercies*” to the Gentiles should not have been surprising. On the contrary, their addition is “*just as it stands written!*”

Romans

15:9b

(Ps. 18:49)



Scriptural Affirmation #1

9b“On account of this, I will acknowledge you among the Gentiles and I will sing to your name.”

St. Paul quotes Ps. 18:49 and there David rejoiced in the victory given to him by Yahweh, and so, directed his praise to Yahweh. Now the exalted Lord Jesus speaks these same words to His Father as He rejoices that His suffering, death, and victorious resurrection have opened the kingdom of God to Gentiles! As His Gospel is being proclaimed among them, Jesus is receiving them unto Himself to the glory of God (v.7). Therefore, Jesus Christ is the One in whom the words ultimately come to fulfillment. Paul, as a preacher of the Gospel, also assumes the role of the speaker “*I*” (written in the Future Middle, 1st person singular verb (ἐξομολογήσομαι)) as he acknowledges Christ “*you*” (σοί) among the Gentiles.

Romans

15:10

(Dt. 32:43)



Scriptural Affirmation #2

¹⁰And again it says, “Rejoice, Gentiles, together with his people!”

Paul now continues his Scriptural affirmation from the Septuagint (LXX) of Deut 32:43. Paul expands the Greek that allows not only a much more universal aspect, but the crucial reading of “*together with his people*” (μετὰ τοῦ λαοῦ αὐτοῦ - literally: “*with the people of Him.*”) transforms a potentially very hostile meaning into one much more sympathetic to Gentiles. This allows Paul to lift this single clause for an expansion of this theology (again, remember, Paul is under Divine inspiration), that is in accord with the Yahweh’s original purpose and promise that was made to Abraham.

Romans

15:11

(Ps. 117:1)



Scriptural Affirmation #3

11And again: **“Praise the Lord, all the nations, and let all the peoples praise Him!”**

The phrase **“all the nations”** (πάντα τὰ ἔθνη) represents all Gentiles; however, it stands in synonymous parallel to **“all the peoples.”** The summons is universal, including Israel, among **“all the nations.”** This seems especially clear when one examines the reasons for this call to **“[P]raise the Lord.”** Those reasons Paul concisely gave in v.8: **“in behalf of [the] truth of God,”** and **“for [His] mercies”** in verse 9. Recall that those phrases speak to the Jews (v.8) and to the Gentiles (v.9), underscoring the all-inclusive emphasis of this verse.

Romans

15:12

(Is. 11:1)

Scriptural
Affirmation

#4

¹²And again Isaiah says, “There will be the Root of Jesse, and the [One] arising to rule *Gentiles*; on Him [the] *Gentiles* will hope.”

Lastly, Paul begins v.12 with Isaiah, the one source that Paul readily identifies. It seems that Isaiah is one of Paul’s favorite sources and Isaiah is named more than any other prophet in Romans (cf. 9:27, 29; 10:16, 20). Perhaps together with the dual references to “*Gentiles*” (ἔθνω̄ν and ἔθνη), this signals the end of the catena.

Romans

15:12

(Is. 11:1)



Scriptural
Affirmation
#4

¹²And again Isaiah says, “There will be the **Root of Jesse**, and the [One] arising to rule **Gentiles**; on Him [the] **Gentiles** will hope.”

There is an interesting Greek use of “*root*” (ρίζα). In the Hebrew, it is often translated as “*shoot*,” since the Messiah is prophesied to grow from the royal line of David after the “*family tree*” of Israel would be chopped down in Divine judgment and only the “*stump*” would remain with the “*holy seed*” (Is. 6:13). Historically, Northern Israel was conquered by the Assyrians, and then the Southern Kingdom of Judah fell to the Babylonians. “**The root of Jesse**” was, therefore, already established as a title for the royal Messiah. “**Root**” has the same meaning in the Fourth Suffering Servant Song of Is. 53; as does the Messianic “*branch*” also seen in Is. 4:2; 11:1; Jer. 23:5, 33:15; and Zech. 3:8 and 6:12.

Romans

15:13



Concluding
Prayer for
All Y'all

¹³Now *may the God of hope fill you* [with] all joy and peace while believing, so that *you* might have an abundance in hope by [the] power of [the] Holy Spirit.

The plural pronoun “*you*” provided the opening frame to this section. Paul employs the identical form twice in this concluding prayer. As in 15:5, his prayer has a verb in the past optative (*πληρώσαι*, “*may God fill you*”), which provides an added signal that Paul is closing this section.

Paul invokes God as “*the God of hope.*” This is an unusual description of God found nowhere else in the NT or the LXX. This opening phrase identifies God as the source of “*hope*” seen in 5:4 and 15:4; yet, God is also *hope’s* object. Why is God the God of hope? Because He generates hope! It is, however, difficult to suppress the thought in this instance that the title points also to God as the object of hope.

Romans

15:13



Concluding
Prayer for
All Y'all

¹³Now may the God of hope fill you [with] all joy and peace while believing, so that you might have an abundance in hope by [the] power of [the] Holy Spirit.

Paul's now makes a petition that God would fill his hearers with **"joy"** (χαρά) and **"peace"** (εἰρήνη), both of which describe the essence of His kingdom (14:17). The concluding reference to **"[the] Holy Spirit"** also aligns with 14:17. As there, the gifts of **"joy"** and **"peace"** both come from God through His Spirit, but are then also to be exercised by believers. Paul is certainly thinking specially of the **"weak"** and **"strong!"**

Due to the service of Christ (v.8) and by the working of the Holy Spirit through God's Word and Sacraments, Paul's prayer continues to carry the same power as it rings out to all nations and peoples in this very day (v.11). To that end:

Romans

15:13



Concluding
Prayer for
All Y'all

“Now may the God of hope fill you [with] all joy and peace while believing, so that you might have an abundance in hope by [the] power of [the] Holy Spirit.”

Next
Sunday

PAUL'S MINISTRY



Romans
15:14-22

PEACE
IN CHRIST
JESUS

