

Week 1: Introduction to The Epistle to the Romans + Chapter 1 (The apostolic blessing and encouragement to the believers)

Week 1: Introduction to the book of Romans + Chapter 1 (The apostolic blessings and encouragement to the believers)

- **Brief introduction about St. Paul**

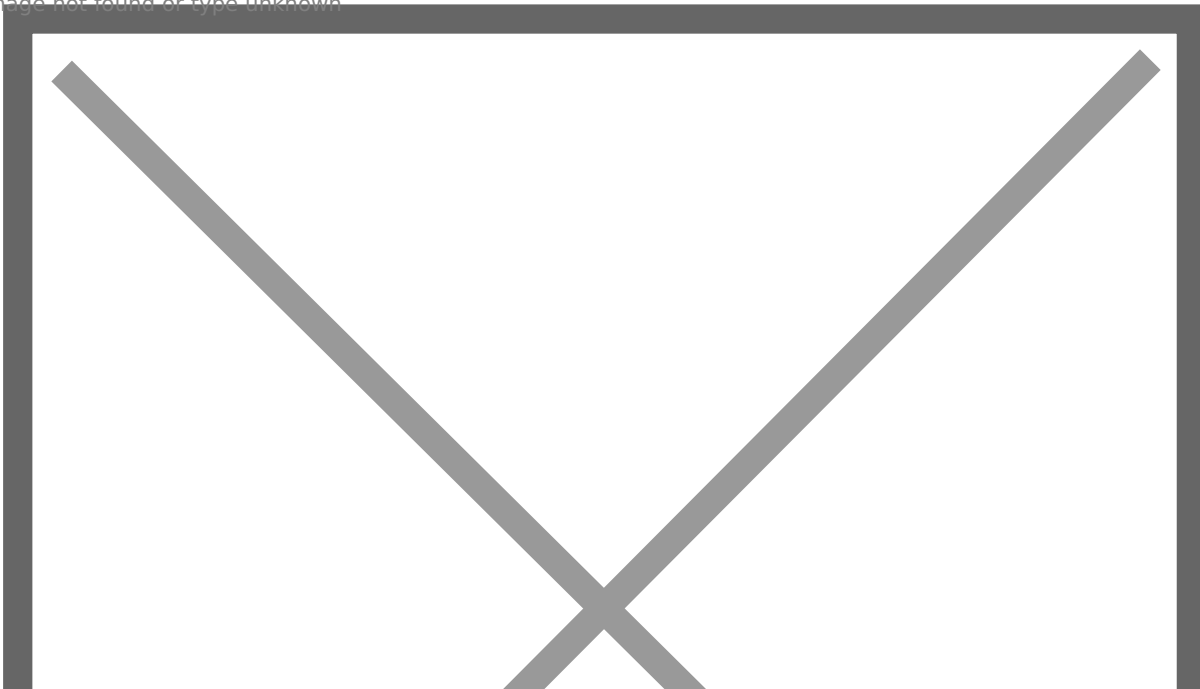
- **St. Paul wrote 14 epistles** out of the 27 books in the New Testament.
- **Known as the Apostle of the Gentiles**
 - The Lord said to him: "I will send you far from here to the Gentiles" (Acts 22:21)
- **Received 4 crowns:** martyrdom, purity, apostleship, and righteousness.
 - Unmarried: "For I wish that all men were even as I myself. But each one has his own gift from God, one in this manner and another in that." 1 Corinth 7:7
- **His early preparation for ministry**
 - Roman Citizen: Born a Roman citizen, enabling safe travel and legal protection.
 - Greek education: Born in Tarsus, major center of Greek learning, exposure to Greek philosophy.
 - Jewish heritage: Adhering to Jewish law and traditions and studied under Rabbi Gamaliel in Jerusalem

- **Missionary trips:**

- **1st Journey (44 AD, 2 years):**
 - Asia Minor (Turkey), with Barnabus and St. Mark.
 - After this journey, a council is held among the apostles and elders of the church in Jerusalem to determine that the gentile converts need not submit to the Law of Moses regarding circumcision.
- **2nd Journey (51 AD, 3 years):**
 - Mainly in Macedonia (Greece), with Silas and Luke.
 - 2 Epistles: 1 & 2 Thessalonians.
- **3rd Journey (54 AD, 4 years):**
 - Asia minor and Macedonia

- 4 Epistles: **Romans**, 1 & 2 Corinthians, Galatians.
- **4th Journey (Rome):**
 - 8 Epistles: 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon, Philippians, Ephesians, Colossians, Hebrews.

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- **Introduction:**

- **Author:** St. Paul
- **Written to:** believers in Rome

- **Time of writing:**

- 58 AD in Corinth, before Paul's visit to Rome in 62 AD

- **Purpose of the book**

- The need for all people, Jews or Gentiles, to be justified by Christ.
- How a person can obtain justification and its blessings in life.
- The rejection of faith by many Jews is temporary, but some will return to faith in Christ after the Gentiles accept the faith.
- Basic teachings for practical Christian living.
- Care for those weak in faith and encourage them

- **Outline**

- **The apostolic blessing and encouragement of the believers (Chapter 1).**
- The need for all humanity to be justified by Christ, how they can receive it, and its blessings (Chapters 2-8).
- God chose the Gentiles just as He did to the Jews, who rejected Him but they will repent at the end of days (Chapters 9-11).
- Practical commandments for Christian behavior (Chapters 12-15).
- Paul's fatherly care and his greetings to his beloved friends (Chapter 16).

- **Reading:**

- Chapter 1

- **Resources:**

- Bible Explanation of the Epistle to Romans - Fr. Daoud Lamei English
- The Epistle to Romans by Fr. Tadros Yacoub Malaty- English

- **Key verse:**

- "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek." Romans 1:16

- **Comments:**

- **Preaching Christ (verses 1-7)**

- The Apostle Paul always takes pride in identifying himself as a servant of the Lord Jesus by his own will because Christ loved him first, called him, and chose him as an apostle by appearing to him personally. His mission is to preach the gospel.
- Just as Christ chose Paul, He also wants to choose us, despite our weaknesses and sins.
- We see in this introduction that the Lord Jesus is the center of the message. Through His resurrection from the dead, it was revealed to us that He is indeed the living God who rose by the power of His divinity.
- The Lord Jesus offered the grace of redemption to all humanity—not because we deserve it, but because of His love for us.

- **Encouraging the believers (verses 8-12)**

- *Verse 9 " For God is my witness, Whom I serve with my spirit in the Gospel of His son..."*
 - Only worship acceptable before God, is worship in spirit, where we walk according to the commandments of the Gospel.
 - Care about praying for those you know, trusting that your prayer opens their hearts to know God and strengthens them in Him, while also deepening your personal relationship with God first.

- **Paul's desire to preach in Rome (verses 13-17)**

- St. Paul declaring that he is ready to offer all his abilities and talents in serving and preaching among them.
- *Verse 17: "For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written , "The just shall live by faith."*
- From faith to faith, means that Christ's redemption transferred us from **the first faith in the Old Testament**—where a person had to follow the works and commandments of the Law and offer many sacrifices to **the second faith in the New Testament**, based on trusting in the sacrifice of Christ the Redeemer on the cross.

- **Rejecting God and worshipping idols (verses 18-23)**

- St. Paul declared, God's wrath upon the Gentiles who rejected God and worshipped idols. No one has an excuse to claim ignorance of God because His voice is within them—their conscience.
- God's living creation—humans, animals, plants, mountains, seas, and stars, along with the marvelous order of nature, clearly testifies to the existence of a great God behind this creation.

- **Taking part in impurity and adultery (verses 24-32)**

- When man replaced God with idols, God allowed him to fall into impurity. In other words, God left the wicked to act according to their own will.
- That doesn't mean, God would hand them over to evil; rather, they fell by their own choice, like a patient who refuses to listen to his doctor's advice.

- **Review/recap questions:** ** Servant may add more questions

- What is the central message of St. Paul's preaching?
- What transition does "from faith to faith" refer to in the life of believers?
- According to St. Paul, why is no one excused from acknowledging God's presence?

- **Homework:** **Servant may add more questions

1. **How many epistles did St. Paul write in the New Testament?**

- A. 12
- B. 13
- C. 14
- D. 15

2. **St. Paul is also known as:**

- A. Apostle of the Jews
- B. Apostle of the Gentiles
- C. Apostle of Love
- D. Apostle of Miracles

3. **On which missionary journey did St. Paul write the Epistle to Romans?**

- A. 1st Journey
- B. 2nd Journey
- C. 3rd Journey
- D. 4th Journey

4. **During St. Paul's 3rd missionary journey, how many epistles did he write?**

- A. 2
- B. 3
- C. 4
- D. 5