

The Blood Shield

Romans 3: Justification, Propitiation, and the
Passover

Introduction

- ▶ One of the keys to understanding this book is not to examine it in a vacuum. (Two factors for understanding):
 1. Paul's present circumstance (time and foresight)
 - ▶ His location: Probably Troas or Philippi (receiving much needed rest)
 - ▶ He is on his way back to Jerusalem with relief money that the Gentile churches have raised for the Jewish "home church" of Jerusalem.
 - ▶ He is likely contemplating his/the Roman church's future as well
 - ▶ The Roman Church:
 - ▶ Still dealing with the effect of the reversal of Claudius' decree
 - ▶ So many leaders! (Look at all the names that are in 16 that he greets)
 - ▶ A launchpad for other works (his own intention is to go into Spain to try to plant (Lyons); see Rom. 15:22-29)
 - ▶ Himself:
 - ▶ He also clearly has at least some knowledge of how he is going to get there (Acts 20:17-38)

Introduction

2. Paul's kerygma (proclamation)

- ▶ Paul does not necessarily think that the Romans are deficient, but he wants to make sure that they are sufficient for the work that lay ahead of them. (Tertius; Andronicus and Junia)
- ▶ Knowing that he does not have much time, he writes Romans to make sure that they know his “proclamation” or the message that he was tasked with carrying (Rom. 16: 25-27)
- ▶ Other sources of Paul's kerygma before this:
 - ▶ Acts 13:13-41
 - ▶ Acts 17:22-34
 - ▶ Galatians (though the word is not directly used)
 - ▶ The last chapter and a half of 1 Thessalonians and first chapter and a half of 2 Thessalonians (again the word is not directly used: “Last Day” talk)
 - ▶ I Cor. 1:18-2:5 and 15
 - ▶ Acts 20: 27- Paul will tell the Ephesian elders that he had given them the “whole counsel of God” while he was with them, which would tell us that he had proclaimed this in Ephesus as well.
- ▶ Romans, then, becomes the most vital expression of what “THE GOSPEL” genuinely is and being familiar with it gives us the ability to express it whenever and wherever we might find ourselves.

Romans 3:1-8

- ▶ The beginning of chapter 3 gives us the rest of Paul's argument for the Gospel being needed by everyone (focus here on the Jews as it was in the last half of 2)
- ▶ Paul tells those listening that Jews had an advantage:
 - ▶ "pisteuo"=I believe, have faith in, trust in; I am entrusted with; to entrust a thing to one
 - ▶ "logion"=a divine declaration; a statement originating from God; the Mosaic Law
- ▶ God spoke to them first, even as He is speaking to the Gentiles right now, however, they demonstrated their unfaithfulness as well (his list in chapter 1 applies to them as well)
- ▶ However, their hypocrisy does not "katargeo" (=to render inoperative, abolish, make no effect of, annul, render inert) the faithfulness of God to His plan (nothing that we can do can change His mind about the plan of redemption)!
- ▶ 5-8: Paul indicates that he is going to show us how God is just in all this (biggest stumbling block for us from our perspective)

Romans 3:9-18

- ▶ 9-18: According to Paul's Gospel, Jews AND Gentiles are guilty and the OT Scriptures demonstrated this; he quotes from Psalms, Jeremiah, and Isaiah to make his point
- ▶ 19-20: ALL are accountable to the Law whether Gentiles (conscience and creation) or Jews (same plus the "oracles")
- ▶ ALL are accountable because despite these clear indications of the worth and glory of God, we still have a "worship" problem (back to chapter 1); God is justified in His condemnation of us all
- ▶ "...through the Law comes knowledge of sin."-Gal.3:24-27 ("tutor")
- ▶ It is at this point, Paul starts to turn his argument from "the problem" to "the solution"

Romans 3:21-26

- ▶ Paul now moves towards indicating what it is that allows us to be able to escape our condemnation and His justified wrath: the sacrifice of Christ
- ▶ The two sentences that make up the last half of vs. 22 through to the end of 25 are doing a lot of important theological “lifting” and anyone who is living/presenting the Gospel should understand them thoroughly (causes us to worship with more depth!; Lk. 7:36-50)

Romans 3:24

- ▶ Vs. 24: "...and are justified by His grace as a gift..."
 - ▶ "justified"=dikaioo- to show to be righteous, declare righteous; I plead the (innocent) case of; acquit; I regard as righteous; a legal term meaning that one has conformed to the proper standard and are hence "cleared of all the charges"
 - ▶ "grace"=charis- grace, kindness, favor, blessing; and extension towards freely; disposed towards blessing (John Calvin-God's blessings destroy the "traps" of the enemy...and He has endless blessings!)
 - ▶ "gift"=as a gift; something given without payment; unearned, undeserved, or done out of compulsion of any kind

Romans 3:24

- ▶ Vs. 24: “...through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,”
 - ▶ “apolutrosis”=a release effected by the payment of ransom; deliverance; to buy that which was previously lost or forfeited; literally re-buying; emphasis on the resulting distance between the rescued person and that which previously enslaved them
 - ▶ The word is generally understood in reference to slaves that had become so because of a monetary debt they could not repay/that they were working off
- ▶ NOTE: it is the “debt” of righteousness that we could not pay, **DUE TO THE SIN WE CARRY**, not the “debt” of sin. The corrupting power of sin is what makes what we produce worthless!

Romans 3:25

- ▶ Vs. 25: “...whom God put forward as a propitiation by His blood,”
 - ▶ “Hilasterion=a sin offering by which the wrath of the deity shall be appeased; a covering
- ▶ “Hilasterion” refers directly to two interrelated things in the OT (Septuagint):
 - ▶ The literal lid of the Ark of the Covenant (“mercy seat”)
 - ▶ The literal blood that would be sprinkled on the Ark/Holy of Holies yearly
- ▶ God’s wrath must be spent somewhere; it will either fall on you directly or you covered by the “Blood Shield.” (God spent His wrath on the Son at the Cross!)

Romans 3:25

- ▶ Vs. 25. “...he had passed over former sins.”
 - ▶ ”paresis”= passed-over-from-close-beside; an overlooking or suspension of; remission for the debt and punishment of the debt; used only in Rom. 3:25 to mean that God was suspending the judgement that He passed on sin/those in it based upon the absolutely sure, upcoming sacrifice of Christ.”
 - ▶ This is an intended and direct reference to the Exodus story (The important implication of the Tenth Plague)
 - ▶ The death angel “passed over” the houses that were “under the blood”
 - ▶ Specific conditions for being “under the blood” that night (not just anything was permissible)...however...
 - ▶ ...ANYONE that was under the blood would have been saved on that night! (Preview of what God is doing now with the Jews and Gentiles)

Romans 3:26-31

- ▶ This chapter ends with Paul summing up his argument this far:
 - ▶ God is just because His wrath is justified
 - ▶ God is just because He is the justifier (provided the way of escape)
 - ▶ This applies to everyone, Jew or Gentile
- ▶ All mouths are closed at this point because the Law closes them, and we are now left with only the way of faith rather than works (circumcision is not valuable on its own)
- ▶ Today, will you come under the “Blood Shield?”