

BOOK OF ROMANS

1. This book of Romans is divided into 4 major sections
 - a) Chapters 1 to 4: God's righteousness revealed.
 - b) Chapters 5 to 8: New race under Jesus Christ revealed.
 - c) Chapters 9 to 11: Shows that God has not rejected Israel and will fulfil His promises to Israel.
 - d) Chapters 12 to 16: Shows how the Church must be unified.
2. This is an epistle written by God the Father, through Apostle Paul, to His children (you and me). As a letter, we must understand what our Abba Father wants to say to us! It is not a lecture to prepare us for examinations but a letter from our loving Father to His children.

Chapters 1 to 4 – The Righteousness of God revealed

Chapter 1

1. Romans 1:1. Paul said he was a bond servant of Christ. Bond slaves do not have any rights, neither do they have any rest day! Therefore, bond slaves need a good master! Paul was happy to be a bond servant of Christ. He said, "He is mine and I am His!"
2. Romans 1:1-17, Paul introduced himself as he had not been to this church in Rome before.
3. Romans 1:18-32, Paul spoke about the wrath of God and said that everyone is a sinner with no excuse. But prior to these verses on the wrath of God, Paul spoke about the Good News (the Gospel) in Rom 1:16-17. So Paul gave the Good News first before the bad news of God's wrath. The book of Romans is about the Gospel, the Good News, which is "the power of God unto Salvation for ALL who believe".
4. What about those who do not know God? There is no such person because God is revealed in His creation and nature (See Rom 1:19-20), just like a watch shows that it has a designer or creator. So there is NO excuse for any man.

Chapter 3

1. Romans 3:10 says there is none righteous; all of us need the Gospel!
2. Romans 3:21-22. So if everyone is a sinner, what is the solution? The solution is the righteousness of God through faith in Christ. At Calvary, a sinless Man went to the Cross and paid for our sins and then He rose from the dead. There is NO need to work for righteousness and no one can achieve righteousness by his own works!
3. Romans 3:28. We are justified by faith apart from the works of the Law, unlike all other religions!

Hence in Chapters 2 to 4, God is revealing His righteousness to us! Righteousness to be given to us through faith in Christ.

Chapter 4

1. Romans 4:3. Abraham believed God and he was counted righteous! Abraham did not achieve salvation by obeying the Law. Abraham, although advanced in age, believed that God will indeed give him descendants and the Messiah will come through his descendants! The most righteous or right thing we can do is to trust God! It is not trusting ourselves to obey the Law! Self-righteous people believe in themselves, not in God!
2. Romans 4:9. Abraham believed and was counted righteous before his circumcision. His only great deed was to trust God, nothing else, not even circumcision! Abraham was the father of faith, a model for all! Abraham was not the father just of the Jews because when he was counted righteous, he was not yet circumcised! Therefore, Abraham was the father of faith of both Jews and Gentiles who believed in Christ! This is why the Bible says, "In Abraham, all the nations shall be blessed!" (See Galatians 3:8). The church in Rome had both Jews and Gentiles. The clash between the Jews and Gentiles happened because the Jews missed this important aspect and still hoped to achieve righteousness by works! They wanted the Gentile believers in their church to be circumcised too.

Chapters 5 to 8 – New Race under Christ

Chapter 5

1. God created a new human race under Christ. Adam was head of the race of fallen men!
2. Romans 5:12 states that sin came through one man - Adam and hence death to all, and mankind became a condemned race.
3. Romans 5:18-19 say that through one act of righteousness by Christ, came a new race! The new race trusts Christ as Head of the new race. To be part of this new race, a person needs to have faith in Christ and to trust Him. Habakkuk 2:4 says that the just (or righteous) shall live by his faith! Chapter 5 refutes the thinking that some people have, that they can just believe in Christ and go on sinning!

Chapter 6

1. Sacrament of Baptism is covered here.
2. Baptism by immersion in water has great symbolism unlike baptism by sprinkling. The immersion of a Christian in water symbolises the death and burial of the fallen old man in us and the coming out of the water symbolises resurrection to a new life with Christ.
3. Romans 6:5-6 say that we are united in death and resurrection with Christ. The old man in us has no ability to overcome sin. When we are saved, the new man in us will have power to overcome sin. This is what John 3:3-5 mean by "born again". The new

man is now part of a new race with his home in eternity and he has the ability to overcome sin as a new creation (See 2 Corinthians 5:17).

4. Romans 6:19. Now the new man is a slave of righteousness living a life leading to holiness through sanctification.
 - a) Sanctification takes place after Justification by Faith at the moment of believing Christ.
 - b) At the moment we believed Christ, we are counted righteous; we have the imputed righteousness from Christ. Justification (the first stage of Salvation) is the step where a believer becomes a man in the new race!
 - c) But Sanctification (the second stage in Salvation) is a process, not a single step. It is not imputed but imparted, stage by stage, in our lifetime. As we present our bodies as a living sacrifice to God (as in Rom 12:1-2), God will give us grace to overcome the power of sin with the help of the Holy Spirit. While we have no part in justification except to trust, we have to work out our salvation in Sanctification (as in Phil 2:12-13).
 - d) Glorification (the third stage in Salvation) is being received into the new place where there is no sin.
5. So, Justification delivers us from the Penalty of Sin (past). Sanctification delivers us from the Power of Sin (now or present). Glorification delivers us from the Presence of Sin (future). Being “born again” means you will want to do right and have new desires to please God. Therefore, it is not just believing and then continuing to sin as you like!

Chapter 7

Then why was the Law given since it cannot save?

1. Romans 7:7. The Law was given to show us what is good and what is bad. But the Law cannot save us.
2. Romans 7:8-9. For example, when the Law says, “Thou shall not covet”, our sinful nature will disagree with the Law. The more we are told not to do it, all the more we are stirred to do it! The Law shows us how sinful we are. The Law itself is good.
3. Romans 7:18-20 say that there is nothing good in my flesh. I do not do the good I want and vice versa! Christians struggle with that. Even if our mind says, “No”, our flesh wants it. The new race will struggle between the new mind and the old flesh of the body (i.e. lust and the old bad habits). If a Christian has no struggle, then he is not a true believer. It is part of the journey of Sanctification.
4. Romans 7:24 asks, “Who will deliver me from this body of death?” The answer is Christ. Ask the Holy Spirit, living in you, to help you.

Chapter 8

1. Romans 8:2. Christ sets us free from the power of Sin! Victory after victory, we will become more like Christ each day as we obey Him.

2. Romans 8:28. This applies only to those who love God and want to do God's will. Now we are in a different race! We are in the Sanctification stage, wanting to be pleasing to Him.

Chapters 9 to 11 - God fulfils His promises to Israel

These three chapters are about Israel. Paul was writing to both Jews and Gentiles. Paul said that God will fulfil His promises to Israel. The Gentile believers outnumbered the Jewish believers in the Roman church at that time. The Gentiles thought that the Jews were gone for good. Even today, the people who adopt the Replacement Theory think that God has forgotten Israel. But this is unthinkable, God will never leave His adulterous wife, Israel.

1. Romans 9:31-32. Israel pursued righteousness by Law and works and not by faith, so they stumbled over the acceptance of Christ as their Messiah. Israel insisted on self-righteousness and rejected the Cross! The Jews could not accept a Messiah who died on the Cross humbly! It did not fit their image of a Conquering King.
2. Romans 10:3-4. Israel was ignorant that the righteousness of God could only be attained through faith in Christ! Self-righteous people do not need anyone and hence they thought that they did not need Jesus and could achieve righteousness acceptable to God by themselves!
3. Romans 11:1. God did not abandon the Jews as Paul himself was a Jew!
4. Romans 11:8. God gave the Jews a spirit of stupor, eyes that were blinded and ears that were dulled.
5. Romans 11:25. However, Paul said that this is only a partial hardening of Israel till the fullness of the Gentiles has come! God allowed Israel to be dull so that Gentiles could come into the Kingdom of God and then Israel's spiritual eyes will be opened again!
6. Romans 11:33. God plans this so that the world could be saved and not just Israel! This is the wisdom of God. The old race (Israel) is only temporarily displaced and not abandoned!

Chapters 12 to 16: How the Church can live together as one unified race (Inclusive of both Jews & Gentiles)

The Church is a multi-national, multi-ethnic, world-wide religion. So how can this new race with diversified backgrounds and different geographical locations live together as one unified race, regardless of being Jews or Gentiles?

Chapter 12

Rom 12:1-2. We need to offer ourselves to God, serving not ourselves but others! However, it is not natural so we need to renew our mind. Since Christ offered Himself, we should now offer ourselves. We can only serve Christ by serving His people. But our mind is always wanting others to serve ourselves, so we need a transformation of our mind!

Chapter 13

We must obey the government authorities etc. We like to be our own boss so we need to learn to be humble and obedient to God by subjecting ourselves to the governmental authorities God placed over us.

Chapter 14

There were specific problems in the Roman church with both Jews and Gentiles

1. Rom 14:2. Paul talked about food because the Jews had lots of food rules even as Christians. Paul said that we should not let cultural differences divide us! Unity is needed. The Jerusalem Council in the book of Acts already said there was no need for Gentile Christians to abstain from any food except blood.
2. Rom 14:5. Paul addressed the issues of special days observed by the Jews.
3. We have to remember that in non-doctrinal matters, we can agree to disagree on such preferences or side issues for the sake of unity.

Chapter 15

Paul said he hoped to visit Rome one day, while enroute to Spain. Paul had also collected funds for the Jerusalem brethren who were facing famine. Practical issues were addressed in this epistle. As a Church, we have to care for the physical needs of others including those Christians who are not in our country so that we can live as a unified body of Christ, as an international Church.

Chapter 16

Paul knew many people in the Roman church. He had met them as there were traders amongst them who travel often. So, this epistle was also a personal letter.

What are the key verses in the Book of Romans?

Romans 1:16-17. The righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith and the just shall live by faith. We are saved from hell to Christ-likeness for the day of glorification. We are now given the power to live a life we can never live on our own strength. It is not just to receive Salvation as a passport to heaven but we now have the Holy Spirit for the purpose of Sanctification.