

“Praying for a Blessed Visit” Romans 15:22-33

Author: Paul the apostle (a Roman citizen by birth), born to proclaim God’s gospel (Gal 1:15-17).

Date/Provenance: Late 50s AD (58-59). Written from Corinth on his third missionary journey.

Purpose: Systematic proclamation of the gospel that saves (Rom 1:16-17), Paul’s “Magnum Opus.”

- 22-25 – Paul’s stated goal of preaching the gospel where Christ has not yet been named (v20-21) explains why he has “so often been hindered” (v22) in coming to the church in Rome. It is not as though he would not joy in the fellowship there (see v23, Rom 1:8) but there are missionary concerns driving him as the apostle to the Gentiles. Even so, Paul was headed to Jerusalem to bring much-needed material aid there (see Gal 2:10). Did he ever get to Spain? Scholars debate. There is evidence he did get to the western part of Europe: “Paul, having taught righteousness to the whole world, having gone to the limits of the West...” (Clement of Rome, *1 Corinthians*, V.vii)
 - Though now he longs to fellowship with Gentiles, there was a time when as a well-informed pharisee he would not have wanted to sit at a table with any Gentiles at all. But now by God’s grace, he is bringing the gospel of peace to these former outsiders (Rom 10:14-17, Eph 2:14-18, 6:15). App: Are we motivated to see Christ confessed by every nation/tongue/tribe – even if it means our own children or grandchildren may be those called by the Lord to go into dangerous situations for the sake of spreading the gospel?
- 26-27 – After already explaining how believers are to treat one another in the church (see Rom 12:9-13), the apostle Paul *encourages* those Gentile believers in Macedonia and Achaia who have contributed towards the needs of Jewish Christians in Jerusalem (v26-27). From there, he challenges other Gentile believers to likewise see their glorious adoption into the family of God as cause to likewise contribute materially (v27, Rom 11:11-24). It is a duty *and* delight (Ps 119:13-16)!
 - 28-29 – Then what is collected will be “sealed” to them, this will bring “fullness” of blessing indeed as Paul visits Rome, since it will be evident in deeds of living faith (Jas 2:14-26). App: Consider the blessing of tangibly serving other saints alongside gospel partnership in prayer, ministry. Jesus fed the crowds bread *and* the bread of life.
 - Yes, as R.C. Sproul writes, “Paul would arrive at Rome in chains and still rejoice that he was there because of the privilege of being a minister of the gospel.” This is proved true as Paul requests prayer in Eph 6:19-20 in that very situation (cf. Acts 24:27, 28:17-31).
- 30-32 – Paul here asks for prayer (*appealing, pleading* to be lifted before God’s throne!) in the way that he himself is committed to praying: for deliverance from unbelievers in Judea and acceptable service to those believers in Jerusalem (v31), with the goal of coming to the church in Rome with joyous, refreshing fellowship (v32, thinking even ahead of time of glorifying God for *answered* prayers). Despite obstacles, Christ is at work building His church (see Acts 20:19-21, 20:35 for how Paul conducted himself despite his Jewish opponents). Notice again Paul’s natural Trinitarian language, appealing to the name of the Jesus and the love of the Holy Spirit as he considers the solemn need he has of prayer – as a Christ-appointed apostle! App: Do we pray great kingdom requests in Christ’s name anticipating good gifts from our Father (Mt 7:7-10)?
- 33 – The short benediction here is simple and to the point: That the God of peace, who removes the enmity we have with God by the finished work of Christ (Gen 3:15, Rom 5:1, 5:6-11, 8:7, Col 1:21-23), likewise brings the blessing of peace between human beings who are called to serve Him together in His body (Rom 12:16-18, 13:8-10, 14:19, 15:5-7, Num 6:24-26).
 - App: The blessing of God is given to His children. Walk in the light of the upright character of our God with great joy as you relate to other believers in the gospel-driven fellowship we share in household of faith (Gal 6:10, Eph 4:1-6, Col 2:6-7, 1 Jn 1:5-7).