

Word of God

The Book of Acts and Romans

EDITOR'S NOTE: *THE BIBLE IS LIKE NO OTHER BOOK, FOR IT HOLDS THE VERY WORDS OF GOD, WHICH HAVE POWER TO CHANGE THE LIVES OF ANY WHO READ IT AND PUT THEIR FAITH IN OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST. PSALM 34:8 SAYS, "OH, TASTE AND SEE THAT THE LORD IS GOOD! BLESSED IS THE MAN WHO TAKES REFUGE IN HIM!" THROUGH THE NEBRASKA LIVING TIMES YOU MAY "TASTE" AND SEE THE GOODNESS OF GOD THROUGH HIS VERY OWN WORDS, EACH MONTH, RIGHT HERE. MAY GOD BLESS YOU WITH HIS WORD!*

(CONTINUED FROM AUG./SEPT. 2019)

THE BOOK OF ACTS

CHAPTER 28

PAUL ON MALTA

1 AFTER WE WERE BROUGHT SAFELY THROUGH, WE THEN LEARNED THAT THE ISLAND WAS CALLED MALTA. 2 THE NATIVE PEOPLE SHOWED US UNUSUAL KINDNESS, FOR THEY KINDLED A FIRE AND WELCOMED US ALL, BECAUSE IT HAD BEGUN TO RAIN AND WAS COLD. 3 WHEN PAUL HAD GATHERED A BUNDLE OF STICKS AND PUT THEM ON THE FIRE, A VIPER CAME OUT BECAUSE OF THE HEAT AND FASTENED ON HIS HAND. 4 WHEN THE NATIVE PEOPLE SAW THE CREATURE HANGING FROM HIS HAND, THEY SAID TO ONE ANOTHER, "NO DOUBT THIS MAN IS A MURDERER. THOUGH HE HAS ESCAPED FROM THE SEA, JUSTICE HAS NOT ALLOWED HIM TO LIVE." 5 HE, HOWEVER, SHOOK OFF THE CREATURE INTO THE FIRE AND SUFFERED NO HARM. 6 THEY WERE WAITING FOR HIM TO SWELL UP OR SUDDENLY FALL DOWN DEAD. BUT WHEN THEY HAD WAITED A LONG TIME AND SAW NO MISFORTUNE COME TO HIM, THEY CHANGED THEIR MINDS AND SAID THAT HE WAS A GOD. 7 NOW IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD OF THAT PLACE WERE LANDS BELONGING TO THE CHIEF MAN OF THE ISLAND, NAMED PUBLIUS, WHO RECEIVED US AND ENTERTAINED US HOSPITABLY FOR THREE DAYS. 8 IT HAPPENED THAT THE FATHER OF PUBLIUS LAY SICK WITH FEVER AND DYSENTERY. AND PAUL VISITED HIM AND PRAYED, AND PUTTING HIS HANDS ON HIM HEALED HIM. 9 AND WHEN THIS HAD TAKEN PLACE, THE REST OF THE PEOPLE ON THE ISLAND WHO HAD DISEASES ALSO CAME AND WERE CURED. 10 THEY ALSO HONORED US GREATLY, AND WHEN WE WERE ABOUT TO SAIL, THEY PUT ON BOARD WHATEVER WE NEEDED.

PAUL ARRIVES AT ROME

11 AFTER THREE MONTHS WE SET SAIL IN A SHIP THAT HAD WINTERED IN THE ISLAND, A SHIP OF ALEXANDRIA, WITH THE TWIN GODS AS A FIGUREHEAD. 12 PUTTING IN AT SYRACUSE, WE STAYED THERE FOR THREE DAYS. 13 AND FROM THERE WE MADE A CIRCUIT AND ARRIVED AT

RHEGIUM. AND AFTER ONE DAY A SOUTH WIND SPRANG UP, AND ON THE SECOND DAY WE CAME TO PUTEOLI. 14 THERE WE FOUND BROTHERS AND WERE INVITED TO STAY WITH THEM FOR SEVEN DAYS. AND SO WE CAME TO ROME. 15 AND THE BROTHERS THERE, WHEN THEY HEARD ABOUT US, CAME AS FAR AS THE FORUM OF APPIUS AND THREE TAVERNS TO MEET US. ON SEEING THEM, PAUL THANKED GOD AND TOOK COURAGE. 16 AND WHEN WE CAME INTO ROME, PAUL WAS ALLOWED TO STAY BY HIMSELF, WITH THE SOLDIER WHO GUARDED HIM.

PAUL IN ROME

17 AFTER THREE DAYS HE CALLED TOGETHER THE LOCAL LEADERS OF THE JEWS, AND WHEN THEY HAD GATHERED, HE SAID TO THEM, "BROTHERS, THOUGH I HAD DONE NOTHING AGAINST OUR PEOPLE OR THE CUSTOMS OF OUR FATHERS, YET I WAS DELIVERED AS A PRISONER FROM JERUSALEM INTO THE HANDS OF THE ROMANS. 18 WHEN THEY HAD EXAMINED ME, THEY WISHED TO SET ME AT LIBERTY, BECAUSE THERE WAS NO REASON FOR THE DEATH PENALTY IN MY CASE. 19 BUT BECAUSE THE JEWS OBJECTED, I WAS COMPELLED TO APPEAL TO CAESAR—THOUGH I HAD NO CHARGE TO BRING AGAINST MY NATION. 20 FOR THIS REASON, THEREFORE, I HAVE ASKED TO SEE YOU AND SPEAK WITH YOU, SINCE IT IS BECAUSE OF THE HOPE OF ISRAEL THAT I AM WEARING THIS CHAIN." 21 AND THEY SAID TO HIM, "WE HAVE RECEIVED NO LETTERS FROM JUDEA ABOUT YOU, AND NONE OF THE BROTHERS COMING HERE HAS REPORTED OR SPOKEN ANY EVIL ABOUT YOU. 22 BUT WE DESIRE TO HEAR FROM YOU WHAT YOUR VIEWS ARE, FOR WITH REGARD TO THIS SECT WE KNOW THAT EVERYWHERE IT IS SPOKEN AGAINST." 23 WHEN THEY HAD APPOINTED A DAY FOR HIM, THEY CAME TO HIM AT HIS LODGING IN GREATER NUMBERS. FROM MORNING TILL EVENING HE EXPUNDED TO THEM, TESTIFYING TO THE KINGDOM OF GOD AND TRYING TO CONVINCED THEM ABOUT JESUS BOTH FROM THE LAW OF MOSES AND FROM THE PROPHETS. 24 AND SOME WERE CONVINCED BY WHAT HE

SAID, BUT OTHERS DISBELIEVED. 25 AND DISAGREEING AMONG THEMSELVES, THEY DEPARTED AFTER PAUL HAD MADE ONE STATEMENT: "THE HOLY SPIRIT WAS RIGHT IN SAYING TO YOUR FATHERS THROUGH ISAIAH THE PROPHET:

26 "GO TO THIS PEOPLE, AND SAY, "YOU WILL INDEED HEAR BUT NEVER UNDERSTAND, AND YOU WILL INDEED SEE BUT NEVER PERCEIVE."

27 FOR THIS PEOPLE'S HEART HAS GROWN DULL, AND WITH THEIR EARS THEY CAN BARELY HEAR, AND THEIR EYES THEY HAVE CLOSED; LEST THEY SHOULD SEE WITH THEIR EYES AND HEAR WITH THEIR EARS AND UNDERSTAND WITH THEIR HEART AND TURN, AND I WOULD HEAL THEM."

28 THEREFORE LET IT BE KNOWN TO YOU THAT THIS SALVATION OF GOD HAS BEEN SENT TO THE GENTILES; THEY WILL LISTEN."

30 HE LIVED THERE TWO WHOLE YEARS AT HIS OWN EXPENSE, AND WELCOMED ALL WHO CAME TO HIM, 31 PROCLAIMING THE KINGDOM OF GOD AND TEACHING ABOUT THE LORD JESUS CHRIST WITH ALL BOLDNESS AND WITHOUT HINDRANCE.

THE BOOK OF ROMANS

CHAPTER 1 GREETING

1 PAUL, A SERVANT OF CHRIST JESUS, CALLED TO BE AN APOSTLE, SET APART FOR THE GOSPEL OF GOD, 2 WHICH HE PROMISED BEFOREHAND THROUGH HIS PROPHETS IN THE HOLY SCRIPTURES, 3 CONCERNING HIS SON, WHO WAS DESCENDED FROM DAVID ACCORDING TO THE FLESH 4 AND WAS DECLARED TO BE THE SON OF GOD IN POWER ACCORDING TO THE SPIRIT OF HOLINESS BY HIS RESURRECTION FROM THE DEAD, JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD, 5 THROUGH WHOM WE HAVE RECEIVED GRACE AND APOSTLESHIP TO BRING ABOUT THE OBEDIENCE OF FAITH FOR THE SAKE OF HIS NAME AMONG ALL THE NATIONS, 6 INCLUDING YOU WHO ARE CALLED TO BELONG TO JESUS CHRIST,

7 TO ALL THOSE IN ROME WHO ARE LOVED BY GOD AND CALLED TO BE SAINTS:

GRACE TO YOU AND PEACE FROM

GOD OUR FATHER AND THE LORD JESUS CHRIST.

LONGING TO GO TO ROME

8 FIRST, I THANK MY GOD THROUGH JESUS CHRIST FOR ALL OF YOU, BECAUSE YOUR FAITH IS PROCLAIMED IN ALL THE WORLD. 9 FOR GOD IS MY WITNESS, WHOM I SERVE WITH MY SPIRIT IN THE GOSPEL OF HIS SON, THAT WITHOUT CEASING I MENTION YOU 10 ALWAYS IN MY PRAYERS, ASKING THAT SOMEHOW BY GOD'S WILL I MAY NOW AT LAST SUCCEED IN COMING TO YOU. 11 FOR I LONG TO SEE YOU, THAT I MAY IMPART TO YOU SOME SPIRITUAL GIFT TO STRENGTHEN YOU— 12 THAT IS, THAT WE MAY BE MUTUALLY ENCOURAGED BY EACH OTHER'S FAITH, BOTH YOURS AND MINE. 13 I DO NOT WANT YOU TO BE UNAWARE, BROTHERS, THAT I HAVE OFTEN INTENDED TO COME TO YOU (BUT THUS FAR HAVE BEEN PREVENTED), IN ORDER THAT I MAY REAP SOME HARVEST AMONG YOU AS WELL AS AMONG THE REST OF THE GENTILES. 14 I AM UNDER OBLIGATION BOTH TO GREEKS AND TO BARBARIANS, BOTH TO THE WISE AND TO THE FOOLISH. 15 SO I AM EAGER TO PREACH THE GOSPEL TO YOU ALSO WHO ARE IN ROME.

THE RIGHTEOUS SHALL LIVE BY FAITH

16 FOR I AM NOT ASHAMED OF THE GOSPEL, FOR IT IS THE POWER OF GOD FOR SALVATION TO EVERYONE WHO BELIEVES, TO THE JEW FIRST AND ALSO TO THE GREEK. 17 FOR IN IT THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD IS REVEALED FROM FAITH FOR FAITH, AS IT IS WRITTEN, "THE RIGHTEOUS SHALL LIVE BY FAITH."

GOD'S WRATH ON UNRIGHTEOUSNESS

18 FOR THE WRATH OF GOD IS REVEALED FROM HEAVEN AGAINST ALL UNGODLINESS AND UNRIGHTEOUSNESS OF MEN, WHO BY THEIR UNRIGHTEOUSNESS SUPPRESS THE TRUTH. 19 FOR WHAT CAN BE KNOWN ABOUT GOD IS PLAIN TO THEM, BECAUSE GOD HAS SHOWN IT TO THEM. 20 FOR HIS INVISIBLE ATTRIBUTES, NAMELY, HIS ETERNAL POWER AND DIVINE NATURE, HAVE BEEN CLEARLY PERCEIVED, EVER SINCE THE CREATION OF THE WORLD, IN THE THINGS THAT HAVE BEEN MADE. SO THEY ARE WITHOUT

EXCUSE. 21 FOR ALTHOUGH THEY KNEW GOD, THEY DID NOT HONOR HIM AS GOD OR GIVE THANKS TO HIM, BUT THEY BECAME FUTILE IN THEIR THINKING, AND THEIR FOOLISH HEARTS WERE DARKENED. 22 CLAIMING TO BE WISE, THEY BECAME FOOLS, 23 AND EXCHANGED THE GLORY OF THE IMMORTAL GOD FOR IMAGES RESEMBLING MORTAL MAN AND BIRDS AND ANIMALS AND CREEPING THINGS.

24 THEREFORE GOD GAVE THEM UP IN THE LUSTS OF THEIR HEARTS TO IMPURITY, TO THE DISHONORING OF THEIR BODIES AMONG THEMSELVES, 25 BECAUSE THEY EXCHANGED THE TRUTH ABOUT GOD FOR A LIE AND WORSHIPED AND SERVED THE CREATURE RATHER THAN THE CREATOR, WHO IS BLESSED FOREVER! AMEN.

26 FOR THIS REASON GOD GAVE THEM UP TO DISHONORABLE PASSIONS. FOR THEIR WOMEN EXCHANGED NATURAL RELATIONS FOR THOSE THAT ARE CONTRARY TO NATURE; 27 AND THE MEN LIKewise GAVE UP NATURAL RELATIONS WITH WOMEN AND WERE CONSUMED WITH PASSION FOR ONE ANOTHER, MEN COMMITTING SHAMELESS ACTS WITH MEN AND RECEIVING IN THEMSELVES THE DUE PENALTY FOR THEIR ERROR.

28 AND SINCE THEY DID NOT SEE FIT TO ACKNOWLEDGE GOD, GOD GAVE THEM UP TO A DEBASED MIND TO DO WHAT OUGHT NOT TO BE DONE. 29 THEY WERE FILLED WITH ALL MANNER OF UNRIGHTEOUSNESS, EVIL, COVETOUSNESS, MALICE. THEY ARE FULL OF ENVY, MURDER, STRIFE, DECEIT, MALICIOUSNESS. THEY ARE GOSSIPS, 30 SLANDERERS, HATERS OF GOD, INSOLENT, HAUGHTY, BOASTFUL, INVENTORS OF EVIL, DISOBEDIENT TO PARENTS, 31 FOOLISH, FAITHLESS, HEARTLESS, RUTHLESS. 32 THOUGH THEY KNOW GOD'S RIGHTEOUS DECREE THAT THOSE WHO PRACTICE SUCH THINGS DESERVE TO DIE, THEY NOT ONLY DO THEM BUT GIVE APPROVAL TO THOSE WHO PRACTICE THEM.

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