

Notes on the Greek New Testament
Day 214 – August 2nd – Romans 15:22-16:2

Works frequently referenced in these notes on Romans

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 Moo, Douglas, J *Romans: The NIV Application Commentary*, Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 2000.
 Murray, John *The Epistle to the Romans*, 2 Vols, Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1959 & 1965.
 Wright, NT *The Letter to The Romans*, The New Interpreter's Bible, Vol 10, Nashville, Abingdon Press, 2002.

Verse 22

Διὸ καὶ ἐνεκοπτόμην τὰ πολλὰ τοῦ ἔλθεῖν πρὸς ὑμᾶς·

διο therefore, for this reason

It is because Paul has been 'fully proclaiming' the gospel all the way from Jerusalem to Illyricum (vv.18-19), that he has been hindered thus far from coming to Rome.

ἐνεκοπτόμην Verb, imperf pass indic, 1 s
 ἐγκοπτο prevent, hinder, detain
 ἔλθεῖν Verb, aor act infin ἐρχομαι

Cf. 1:23.

Verse 23

νυνὶ δὲ μηκέτι τόπον ἔχων ἐν τοῖς κλίμασι τούτοις, ἐπιποθίαν δὲ ἔχων τοῦ ἔλθεῖν πρὸς ὑμᾶς ἀπὸ ἰκανῶν ἐτῶν,

νυνι now

Since his work in other regions is finished he is now able to come to them.

μηκετι no longer

τοπος, ου m place

κλιμα, τος n region, district

"His aims for the eastern Mediterranean have been fulfilled; he no longer has any room for new work. This sounds extraordinary, given the tiny numbers of Christians we must envisage compared to the population in general; but Paul thinks of himself as a church-planter, and once he has established churches in the major centres of population and culture he has to rely on them to do for themselves the work of continued evangelism in their neighbourhoods. So, with Ephesus, Philippi, Thessalonica, Athens possibly, and Corinth established – not without difficulties and anxieties! – he quite genuinely concludes that it is time to move on." Wright.

ἐπιποθια, ας f longing, desire
 ἐτος, ους n year

Verse 24

ὡς ἂν πορεύομαι εἰς τὴν Σπανίαν, ἐλπίζω γὰρ διαπορευόμενος θεάσασθαι ὑμᾶς καὶ ὑφ' ὑμῶν προπεμφθῆναι ἐκεῖ ἐὰν ὑμῶν πρῶτον ἀπὸ μέρους ἐμπλησθῶ –

πορευομαι go, proceed, travel

ὡς ἂν πορευομαι So that I might go ...

"Parts of Spain had been occupied by the Romans since about 200 BC. But the Romans had fully organised the area as a province only in Paul's lifetime. There may have been a significant Jewish community there, although the matter is debated. Obviously Paul thinks it a good place to embark in a fresh church-planting ministry." Moo.

ἐλπίζω hope, expect

διαπορευομαι go through, travel through

θεαομαι see, look at, observe

προπεμφθῆναι Verb, aor pass infin

προπεμψω send on one's way, help on one's way

Used regularly in the NT in the context of missionary support (Acts 15:3; 20:38; 21:5; 1 Cor 16:6,11; 2 Cor 1:16; Titus 3:13; 3 John 6).

ἐκεῖ there, in that place, to that place

πρῶτον adv. first, in the first place

μερος, ους n part, piece, in part, partly

ἐμπλησθω Verb, aor pass subj, 1 s

ἐμπι(μ)πλημι and ἐμπιπλαω fill, enjoy

ὑμῶν πρῶτον ἀπο μερους ἐμπλησθω 'I have first enjoyed your [company] for a while'

Verse 25

νυνὶ δὲ πορεύομαι εἰς Ἱερουσαλήμ διακονῶν τοῖς ἁγίοις.

διακονεω serve, care for

Words from this root refer to the collection also in 2 Cor 8:4,19,20; 9:1,12,13.

Verse 26

εὐδόκησαν γὰρ Μακεδονία καὶ Ἀχαΐα
κοινωνίαν τινα ποιήσασθαι εἰς τοὺς πτωχοὺς
τῶν ἁγίων τῶν ἐν Ἱερουσαλὴμ.

εὐδοκεω be pleased, take pleasure in
κοινωνια, ας f fellowship, sharing in,
contribution

ποιήσασθαι Verb, aor midd infin ποιεω
πτωχος, η, ον poor

Cf. 1 Cor 16:1-4 and 2 Cor 8 and 9.

Verse 27

εὐδόκησαν γάρ, καὶ ὀφειλέται εἰσὶν αὐτῶν· εἰ
γάρ τοις πνευματικοῖς αὐτῶν ἐκοινώνησαν τὰ
ἔθνη, ὀφείλουσιν καὶ ἐν τοῖς σαρκικοῖς
λειτουργῆσαι αὐτοῖς.

ὀφειλετης, ου m debtor, one indebted
πνευματικος, η, ον spiritual, pertaining to
the spirit

κοινωνεω share, take part

ἔθνη Noun, nom & acc pl ἔθνος, ους n
nation, people; τα ἔ. Gentiles

ὀφειλω owe, ought, be bound or obligated
σαρκικος, η, ον belonging to this world
λειτουργεω serve, worship

K. F. Nickle (*The Collection: A Study in Paul's Strategy*) views this collection which Paul, along with representatives of the Gentile churches, was bringing to Jerusalem, against the background of Romans 9-11. He describes it as, "An eschatological pilgrimage of Gentile Christians to Jerusalem by which Jews were to be confronted with the undeniable reality of the divine gift of saving grace to the Gentiles and therefore they would be moved to seek Christ."

Wright does not favour this interpretation commenting rather, "For Gentiles to give money to Jewish Christians was a sign that the Gentiles regarded them as members of the same family; for Jewish Christians to accept it would be a sign that they in turn accepted the Gentiles as part of their family."

Verse 28

τοῦτο οὖν ἐπιτέλεσας, καὶ σφραγισάμενος
αὐτοῖς τὸν καρπὸν τοῦτον, ἀπελεύσομαι δι'
ὑμῶν εἰς Σπανίαν·

ἐπιτελεω complete, accomplish
σφραγιζω seal, secure with a seal
καρπος, ου m fruit, harvest

i.e. 'When I have safely delivered to them the sum that has been raised'

"The idea of 'sealing' (σφραγιζω, affix a seal) often connotes an official affirmation of authenticity (see, e.g. Est 8:8,10; John 3:33; cf. also Paul's references to believers being sealed by the Holy Spirit in 2 Cor 1:22; Eph 1:13; 4:30). Paul, as the apostle to the Gentiles, must accompany the gift to Jerusalem in order to authenticate its purpose as a healing gesture." Moo.

ἀπελεύσομαι Verb, fut midd dep indic, 1 s
ἀπερχομαι

Verse 29

οἶδα δὲ ὅτι ἐρχόμενος πρὸς ὑμᾶς ἐν πληρώματι
εὐλογίας Χριστοῦ ἐλεύσομαι.

οἶδα know

πληρωμα, τος n fulness, completeness,
fulfilment

εὐλογία, ας f blessing, praise

Paul probably meant that both he and his hosts would share this fullness of blessing, cf. 1:11-12.

Some MSS, followed by the TR, read του εὐαγγελίου του Χριστοῦ rather than simply Χριστοῦ. The shorter reading has good, early support.

ἐλεύσομαι Verb, fut midd dep indic, 1 s
ἐρχομαι

Verse 30

Παρακαλῶ δὲ ὑμᾶς, ἀδελφοί, διὰ τοῦ κυρίου
ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ διὰ τῆς ἀγάπης τοῦ
πνεύματος συναγωνίσασθαί μοι ἐν ταῖς
προσευχαῖς ὑπὲρ ἐμοῦ πρὸς τὸν θεόν,

παρακαλεω exhort, encourage, urge

'love of the Spirit' – Barrett and Moo understand this to be the love of which the Holy Spirit is the author while Murray thinks it to be a reference to the love which the Holy Spirit has for believers.

συναγωνίσασθαί Verb, aor midd dep infin
συναγωνιζομαι help, join with

The verb used suggests intensity – 'wrestle with me in prayer.'

Verse 31

ἵνα ῥυσθῶ ἀπὸ τῶν ἀπειθούντων ἐν τῇ Ἰουδαίᾳ
καὶ ἡ διακονία μου ἢ εἰς Ἱερουσαλὴμ
εὐπρόσδεκτος τοῖς ἁγίοις γένηται,

ῥυσθῶ Verb, aor pass subj, 1 s ῥυομαι save,
rescue

ἀπειθεω disobey, be an unbeliever

διακονια, ας f ministry, service

εὐπρόσδεκτος, ον acceptable

γένηται Verb, aor subj, 3 s γινομαι

Verse 32

ἵνα ἐν χαρᾷ ἔλθὼν πρὸς ὑμᾶς διὰ θελήματος θεοῦ συναναπαύσωμαι ὑμῖν.

θέλημα, ατος n will, wish, desire
 συναναπαύσωμαι Verb, aor midd dep subj, 1
 s συναναπαυομαι have a time of rest
 with, enjoy a refreshing visit with

This verse exhibits a number of variant readings. Some MSS read θελήματος Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ rather than θελήματος θεοῦ; some omit συναναπαύσωμαι ὑμῖν. There are then various combinations of these variants.

συναναπαύσωμαι ὑμῖν almost as if, after the troubles he foresees in Jerusalem, his time at Rome will be a time of rest and recuperation – a time of holiday!

Verse 33

ὁ δὲ θεὸς τῆς εἰρήνης μετὰ πάντων ὑμῶν ἀμήν.

εἰρηνη, ης f peace

Chapter 15 – Postscript

"One of the most important lessons of Romans 15 might be put thus: God allowed Paul to dream of Spain in order that he might write Romans. No matter that Paul probably never reached Spain. What mattered was that he wrote this letter, which has been far more powerful and influential than any missionary visit, even by Paul himself, could ever have been. Perhaps ... half of our great plans, the dreams we dream for our churches and for our world, and even for ourselves, are dreams God allows us to dream in order that, on the way there, we may accomplish, almost without realising it, the crucial thing God intends us to do." Wright.

Chapter 16

The number of greetings in this closing chapter is extraordinary. Paul asks the Romans to greet 26 individuals, two families and three house churches. All the more extraordinary since Paul had never visited Rome. Some scholars suggest that Romans 16 was never sent to Rome but was part of another letter, perhaps one sent to Ephesus (so T. W. Manson). However, no significant MSS of Romans omit this chapter. Moo comments, "Many of these Roman Christians (like Priscilla and Aquila, v.3) had spent years in exile away from Rome, where they had opportunity to get to know Paul. Perhaps, indeed, the relatively small number of Christians Paul knows in Rome enables him to send greetings to virtually everyone he is aware of in the city."

Wright comments, "In five cases, Paul mentions, along with a name or pair of names, the Christians within the household (16:5a, 10-11, 14-15). He may or may not have wanted to mention all the individual Christians he knew in the city, but he was certainly keen to mention all the household churches he knew: we can only guess which ones might have been 'weak' and which 'strong,' but we can be reasonably sure he was careful to greet them all with equal enthusiasm. All sorts of things can be read into accidental omissions. Paul did not want to arrive at Rome and find that he had caused fresh divisions by appearing to favour one group over another."

Verse 1

Συνίστημι δὲ ὑμῖν Φοίβην τὴν ἀδελφὴν ἡμῶν, οὗσαν καὶ διάκονον τῆς ἐκκλησίας τῆς ἐν Κεγχρεαῖς,

συνιστημι recommend, commend
 ἀδελφη, ης f sister, female believer

Phoebe may have been the bearer of this letter. Probably a businesswoman who is able to travel independently.

διάκονος, ου m & f servant, helper,
 deacon

Was Phoebe a deacon in the formal sense of this term? Moo thinks that the phrase διάκονον τῆς ἐκκλησίας τῆς ἐν Κεγχρεαῖς "makes it more likely that Phoebe holds an official position in the church there. Phoebe is probably a 'deacon,' serving the church by ministering to the financial and material needs of the believers (see esp. 1 Tim 3:8-12; cf also Phil 1:1)." So also Wright who says, "Attempts to make διάκονος something else [other than a deacon in the church] fail."

ἐκκλησια, ας f congregation, church

Cenchrea was one of the ports of Corinth.

Verse 2

ἵνα αὐτὴν προσδέξησθε ἐν κυρίῳ ἀξίως τῶν ἁγίων, καὶ παραστήτε αὐτῇ ἐν ᾧ ἄν ὑμῶν χρήζη πράγματι, καὶ γὰρ αὐτὴ προστάτις πολλῶν ἐγενήθη καὶ ἐμοῦ αὐτοῦ.

προσδέξησθε Verb, aor midd dep subj, 2 pl
 προσδεχομαι receive, welcome, accept
 ἀξίως adv (from ἀξίος) worthily
 παραστήτε Verb, aor act subj, 2 pl παριστημι
 and παριστανω provide
 χρῆζω need, have need of
 πραγμα, τος n matter, thing
 προστατις, ιδος f helper, good friend

Moo suggests that the word may have the meaning here it often bears in secular Greek, namely 'patron, benefactor.' "Phoebe was probably a wealthy businesswoman, who used her wealth to support the church and its missionaries (like Paul). Her ministry in the church and beneficence to the church's workers make her worthy of a Christian greeting and any assistance the Roman church can give her."

ἐγενήθη Verb, aor indic, 3 s γίνομαι