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Romans 16

(2019)

Bible House of Grace contains an easy to read New and Old Testament commentary full of spiritual treasures and pearls, complete with an insightful resource guide illuminating God's love and grace.



Learn the
Bible
at Home

Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man, as to such I neither claim perfect knowledge or perfect understanding.

Romans 16.

Topics.

- Paul extols brothers and sisters to the brethren in Rome
- Greet one another with a holy kiss.
- Watch out for those who create obstacles and divisions.
- The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet.
- The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.
- The mystery that was kept secret for long ages.

The previous chapter: in the previous chapter Paul used Old Testament Scriptures to persuade the Jewish and Gentile brothers and sisters that they should rejoice and praise the Lord as one family united together in Christ. Paul was travelling to Jerusalem with the offerings the churches in Macedonia and Achaia had happily taken up to help their Jewish brothers and sisters in Jerusalem. The chapter ended with Paul saying after his visit with the Jewish brethren he intended to visit the church in Rome and then travel to Spain.

NOTE: for information concerning people, places and the meaning of words see Map Locations and People of the Bible, and Bible Dictionary on Website Menu.

ROMANS 16:1-5

1

Paul extols Brothers and Sisters to the Brethren in Rome.

- **Romans 16:1-5:** I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a servant of the church at Cenchreae, ²that you may welcome her in the Lord in a way worthy of the saints, and help her in whatever she may need from you, for she has been a patron of many and of myself as well. ³Greet Prisca and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus, ⁴who risked their necks for my life, to whom not only I give thanks but all the churches of the Gentiles give thanks as well. ⁵Greet also the church in their house. Greet my beloved Epaphroditus, who was the first convert to Christ in Asia.
- Remember this is a letter Paul is writing to the Christian brothers in Rome.

Cenchreae: was one of two ports of Corinth.

Phoebe: means, bright to shine or make manifest she was a supporter of Paul and many others in the faith.

Prisca: means little and Aquila; means an eagle they risked their own lives to save Paul.

Epaphroditus: means praised what a thrill he must have been to Paul since he was the first Christian in Asia.

NOTICE: Prisca and Aquila had a church in their home it is interesting to keep in mind while reading the New Testament Scriptures that there were no church buildings during that era, rather churches were in the homes of faithful brothers and sisters who believed in Christ.

There is in the secular global world today a mindset that the church is a Sunday meeting in a religious building but the church should never be limited to the established religious institutions, denominations or church buildings though they may form a part of the body of Christ they are not the only part. There are many individual Christians in all countries of the world who meet in coffee bars, social outings and mostly their own homes (as the early church did) to give thanks to Christ and share their discoveries of God's word and their spiritual experiences with Him. Many of these people are helping others and simply manifesting the reality of their faith to the people that come into their lives. God is not limited to any one pattern or organisation; He is far too creative for that. Jesus church is global and is manifested in a vast variety of ways across the face of the earth. In many third world countries church is held outside under a tree (for shade) with its members sitting on the dusty ground often with dogs, chooks and other animals roaming around. Building God's house (temple) is about becoming more Christ like, and living in the will of God. New Testament Christianity is fluid and not restricted to a particular building or even a special day. The Christianity Christ taught is so exciting and real, it cannot be contained. It has no limitations and overflows into every moment of a Christian's life; these facts shine a spotlight upon the truth that, the New Testament House of God is global, moving and manifested in the lives of all those who are faithful and who belong to the Lord Jesus Christ. The body is the reflection of Christ on earth and therefore should be walking in the same Spirit of love, kindness, compassion and grace etc. that Christ walked in while on earth. Building God's church is not about financing opulent mega million dollar buildings, but rather it is about people gathering together to share their faith in any place they are able, nevertheless a building maybe required for practical purposes (i.e., the size of the congregation), but if it is built using guilt and borrowing such vast amount of money that not only the oversight of that church, but also the congregation are put under financial oppression it is not in the will of God. Building God's house (temple) is about becoming more Christ like, and living in the will of God. New Testament Christianity is fluid and not restricted to a particular building or even a special day. The Christianity Christ taught is so exciting and real, it cannot be contained. It has no limitations and overflows into every moment of a Christian's life; these facts shine a spotlight upon the truth that the New Testament church is global, moving and manifested in the lives of all those who are faithful and who belong to the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus said:

- I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me (John 10:14) (John 10:26-27).

For further information see the title:

- Church (The Definitions of a Church) in, Various Topics (ON WEBSITE MENU).

ROMANS 16:6-15

Paul extols Brothers and Sisters in Rome continued:

- **Romans 16:6-15:** Greet Mary, who has worked hard for you. ⁷Greet Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen and my fellow prisoners. They are well known to the apostles, and they were in Christ before me. ⁸Greet Ampliatus, my beloved in the Lord. ⁹Greet Urbanus, our fellow worker in Christ, and my beloved Stachys. ¹⁰Greet Apelles, who is approved in Christ. Greet those who belong to the family of Aristobulus. ¹¹Greet my kinsman Herodion. Greet those in the Lord who belong to the family of Narcissus. ¹²Greet those workers in the Lord, Tryphaena and Tryphosa. Greet the beloved Persis, who has worked hard in the Lord. ¹³Greet Rufus, chosen in the Lord; also his mother, who has been a mother to me as well. ¹⁴Greet Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas, and the brothers who are with them. ¹⁵Greet Philologus, Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints who are with them.

NOTICE: amongst this group are Jewish and Gentile brothers and sisters who were all fellow workers in Christ and served the Lord by helping Paul both physically and spiritually and by working hard for the benefit of others. What a thrill it must have been for Paul to have Andronicus and Junia with him since they were both known to the twelve apostles long before Paul was even converted to Christ, imagine the amazing conversations they would have had over a camp fire. Rufus was most likely an older woman since Paul says she has been a mother to him.

ROMANS 16:16

Greet one Another with a Holy Kiss.

- **Romans 16:16:** Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the churches of Christ greet you.

Holy in this context carries the idea of the kiss being physically and morally pure and blameless, like you would kiss a brother or sister after not having seen them for a long while in contrast to a romantic or sensual kiss. It is a kiss that expresses the bond of friendship and endearment that brothers and sisters within the same family have toward each other.

ROMANS 16:17-19

Watch out for those who Create Obstacles and Divisions.

- **Romans 16:17-19:** I appeal to you, brothers, to watch out for those who cause divisions and create obstacles contrary to the doctrine that you have been taught; avoid them. ¹⁸For such persons do not serve our Lord Christ, but their own appetites, and by smooth talk and flattery they deceive the hearts of the naive. ¹⁹For your obedience is known to all, so that I rejoice over you, but I want you to be wise as to what is good and innocent as to what is evil.

3

Since the Bible was written in an entirely different culture to ours and the body of Christ is a global family filled with people from different nations, countries, cultures, backgrounds, knowledge, levels of education, hurts and troubled pasts there is always going to be certain amount of Scripture we will all understand differently. Paul in this letter to the brothers and sisters in Rome tells them to avoid those who cause divisions contrary to the doctrine that he has taught them. It should be noted that in the context of his letter the doctrines Paul has in mind are the following three:

1. Doctrines that are contrary to the teaching that salvation is by grace through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ contrasted to works of the law, self-effort and adhering to ceremonial rites, holy days and keeping religious customs and traditions etc.
2. Doctrines that are contrary to the truth that Jews and Gentiles are now one in Christ, contrasted to them being two separate nations.
3. Doctrines that are contrary to godly behaviour and that lead people away from the Lord Jesus Christ.

These are the three major topics Paul has focused on in this letter to the brothers and sisters in Rome and the doctrines he has in his mind when he says be careful of those who cause divisions and create obstacles. Naturally within the global family of Christ there are many varied understandings of many Scripture, but not all teachings are important to know to be saved to eternal life nor does one have to have perfect understanding of every teaching of the Bible. No-one has to be a walking Bible encyclopaedia to be in the family of Christ and saved to eternal life, but should any teacher proclaim a message of works and self-effort to be saved or teach that Jews and Gentiles are two separate groups in Christ, or teach doctrines that lead people away from godly behaviour and from Christ Paul says they should be avoided (Rom. 16:17-19).

The God of Peace.

- **Romans 16:20:** The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

The title "The God of peace" shines a brilliant spotlight on the truth that one of the things God loves the most is peace, when we are seeking in prayer an answer for any given situation it is helpful to ask ourselves the following two questions:

1. What is the most peaceful way to solve this?"
2. What is the loving thing to do?

Paul tells us God is the God of peace and John wrote:

- Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love (1 John 4:8).
- God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him. (1 John 4:16).

Since God is love and the God of peace our primary focus in all our relationships and behaviour should flow from love and the desire for peace. This means that in all our conflicts we should be seeking what is best for the well-being of others and what will restore peace these are the things we should contend for.

Satan will soon be crushed under your feet: the word Satan is of Hebrew origin and corresponds to Greek word (satanas), it means an accuser or calumniator (meaning to accuse somebody falsely, or slander somebody). Following are the six most common thoughts concerning the words the God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet and what they mean:

1. Since Paul will be visiting the brothers and sisters in Rome very shortly some believe that his words the God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet is referring to his visit in Rome as he would be a powerful messenger from God to crush the men of Satan who are causing divisions and contentions amongst them and in doing so restore them to peace and tranquillity.
2. Other scholars believe Paul was referring to Rome's destruction of Jerusalem which would also take place in a very short time (70 AD) since its fall meant that the prideful, hypocritical and very powerful Jewish religious rulers who had enormous authority and influence over the nation of Israel and were aggressively persecuting the early Christian church would be robbed of their authority and power.
3. Some consider Paul was referring to the spread of the Gospel in the Gentile world, whereby Satan fell as lightning from heaven, and was cast out of the idol temples (but this was greatly fulfilled already).
4. Others believe Paul's words refer to the time of Constantine, when Satan's seat at Rome was overturned and persecution of Christians was stopped.
5. Still others have thought Paul refers to the latter day, when Satan will be bound a thousand years.
6. Other teachers believe it refers to that day when Satan will be forever under the feet of those in Christ and never able to inflict upon them any more suffering and trouble. This idea maybe applied to every brother and sister in Christ now as an encouragement since they can

assure themselves that they will be more than conquerors through Christ who has loved them and that in a very little time, when death comes they shall enter into the joy of the Lord where they will be out of the reach of the influences and harm of any of Satan's servants.

It would be pointless to argue over which of the six scenarios Paul had in mind since they can all be applied to the words; the God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. For further information concerning Satan, see the title:

- Satan.
- In, Satan and his Family (ON WEBSITE MENU).

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you: (v20 these words of Paul carry the following two thoughts: -

1. That brothers and sisters in Christ are enabled by grace to abide in the Good News of the Gospel of Christ and remain in peace and unity in the victory of grace Christ has won for them through his death and resurrection.
2. That the faithful in Christ are truly wise in recognising those who do not aim at promoting Christ's interest, nor do his will, but serve their own belly—their carnal, sensual, secular interests to please not Christ, but their pride, ego and selfish ambition causing divisions and enticing brothers and sisters by good words and fair speeches back under the law and self-effort.

ROMANS 16:21-23

Paul sends the Greetings of the Church in Rome.

5

- **Romans 16:21-23:** Timothy, my fellow worker, greets you; so do Lucius and Jason and Sosipater, my kinsmen. ²²I Tertius, who wrote this letter, greet you in the Lord. ²³Gaius, who is host to me and to the whole church, greets you. Erastus, the city treasurer, and our brother Quartus, greet you.

Tertius: was a scribe or amanuensis who at Paul's dictation wrote this letter to the brothers and sisters in Rome and here added his personal salutation.

ROMANS 16:24-27

The Mystery that was Kept Secret for Long Ages.

- **Romans 16:24-27:** The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you all ²⁵Now to him who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages ²⁶but has now been disclosed and through the prophetic writings has been made known to all nations, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith—²⁷to the only wise God be glory forevermore through Jesus Christ! Amen.

The mystery kept secret for long ages, but is now revealed refers to the Good News of the Gospel of Christ which proclaims that Israel's Messiah, the Christ and Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ would die and be raised to eternal life and that by God's grace through faith in Christ the Gentiles would become heirs with Israel to the promises God made to Abraham and therefore being united by faith both the Jews and Gentiles would become one new nation in Christ (also called a new creation, the body of Christ, the family of God and the church). Together Jews and Gentiles will be raised as one people to rule and reign with the Lord Jesus Christ when he returns in spectacular and awesome power and glory as, King of kings

and Lord of lords (Rev. 19:11-16) to rule and reign from God's Holy city Jerusalem (on Mount Zion God's Holy Mountain) to establish God's Kingdom on earth during his glorious millennial reign. In the first resurrection (Rev. 20:4-5) the dead in Christ and the faithful, who are alive, will be gathered together to rule and reign as kings and priests with the Lord over those nations who are left outside the Holy City of God. Christ the King united with his people will not only bring peace to the Middle East, but establish God's Kingdom of steadfast love, faithfulness, righteousness, joy and peace throughout the world and the glory of God will cover the earth. Jesus will do justice to the poor and oppressed, he will be a faithful and compassionate King forever. He will not allow anyone to strike terror in the earth or use lies and deception to enlarge their own wealth and power. The land will abundantly produce and even the deserts will flourish. The animals will not feed on each other and even the lamb will be able to lie down with the wolf and everyone will eat of their own hands because all that they plant will produce. All nations the LORD has made will come and worship before the Lord Jesus Christ. They will glorify God's Name, proclaiming the LORD is great and does wondrous things and that He alone is God. The book of Revelation states:

- Jesus Christ, the faithful witness who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood has made us kings and priests unto God and his Father is coming in glory and every eye shall see him, and they also who pierced him and all kindreds of the earth (Revelation 1:5-7).

And in Revelation chapter five we are told that:

- Christ was slain, and by his blood he redeemed a people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation and made them a kingdom and priests to God and they shall reign on the earth (Revelation 5:9-10).

At the end of this glorious Kingdom age God descends to earth on a Great White Throne the sea, death and hades (the grave) give up the dead. They stand before God and are judged according to what is written in certain heavenly books according to what they have done. Death and those counted unworthy are cast into the Lake of Fire a symbol of eternal destruction (i.e., total extinction) (also called the, Second Death) (Rev. 20:11-15). Christ hands the Kingdom over to his heavenly Father and God is ALL in ALL and ETERNITY begins in all its fullness and majestic royal glory. For further information see titles:

- Kingdom of God (ON WEBSITE MENU).
- The Second or Great White Throne Judgment.

In, Resurrection (ON WEBSITE MENU).

JEWS AND GENTILES BECOME ONE NEW NATION IN CHRIST

To understand God's eternal promises made thousands of years ago it is important to know that:

- The promised seed of the woman in (Genesis 3:14-15).
- The promised seed of Abraham.
- The promised seed of David.

Is Christ and to know that all the eternal promises God made to Israel are now fulfilled in Christ and are therefore no longer limited to Israel only, but extend and embrace all those who belong to Christ. This is because God is now creating one new nation in Christ made up of both Jews and Gentiles. (Gentiles are everyone who is not a Hebrew or Jew).

The apostle Paul said:

- Therefore remember that at one time you Gentiles in the flesh, called "the uncircumcision" by what is called the circumcision (Jews), which is made in the flesh by hands— ¹²remember that you (Gentiles) were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the *COMMONWEALTH OF ISRAEL* and *STRANGERS* to the *COVENANTS* of *PROMISE*, having no hope and without God in the world. ¹³But now in Christ Jesus you (Gentiles) who once were far off (from God) have been brought near by the blood of Christ. ¹⁴For he himself is our (Jews and Gentiles) peace, who has made us both *ONE* and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility ¹⁵by abolishing the law of commandments and ordinances, that he (Jesus) might create in himself *ONE NEW MAN* (or Nation) in place of the two (Jews and Gentiles), so making peace, ¹⁶and might reconcile us (Jews and Gentiles) both to God in *ONE BODY* through the cross, thereby killing the hostility (between the Jews and Gentiles). ¹⁷And he (Jesus) came and preached peace to you (Gentiles) who were far off (from God) and peace to those who were near (Jews). ¹⁸For through him (Jesus) we both (Jews and Gentiles) have access in *ONE SPIRIT* to the Father. ¹⁹So then you (Gentiles) are *NO LONGER* strangers and aliens, but you are *FELLOW CITIZENS* with the *SAINTS* (the Jews) and members of the *HOUSEHOLD* of God, ²⁰built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone ²¹in whom the *WHOLE STRUCTURE* being joined together (Jews and Gentiles) grows into a holy temple in the Lord. ²²In him you (Jews and Gentiles) also are being built together into a *DWELLING PLACE* for *GOD* by the Spirit (Ephes. 2:11-22).

Gentiles were separated from Christ, alienated from the, Commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus they have been brought to God by the blood of Christ. Jesus has made Jews and Gentiles both one by abolishing the law of commandments and ordinances so that Jesus might create in himself one new man (Nation) in place of the two (Jews and Gentiles). In Jesus both Jews and Gentiles are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit. Christ is the head of this new nation and its Jewish and Gentile citizens are now equal in status before God because in Christ we are all brothers and sisters in the same eternal family that God is now establishing in the Lord Jesus Christ throughout all nations of the world.

The practical application: of what this means, is that all the future and eternal promises God made to Israel apply to whoever belongs to Christ. The book of Revelation states:

- When Christ returns in glory every eye will see him, even those who pierced him and all the tribes of the earth (Rev. 1:7).

And in Revelation chapter five we are told that:

- Christ was slain, and by his blood he ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation (i.e., Jews and Gentiles) and he has made them a kingdom and priests to God and they shall reign on the earth (Rev. 5:9-10).

As the founder of Bible House of Grace, I would like to thank the many Christian scholars, commentators and theologians who have gone before me, and the many today, who have freely made available their works to enhance the knowledge of the Bible to all people worldwide. It is only with the help of these faithful writers that much of Bible House of Grace exists as it does today.
