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Paul Writes to the Romans

By W. F. BECK

THE JEWS IN ROME

SOME Jews came to Rome in 161 B. C., when Judas Maccabaeus sent them as ambassadors in order to get Rome to help him fight for Jewish freedom against Antiochus of Syria. The Roman senate granted Judas a treaty of mutual defense and friendship.¹ Other embassies sailed (like Paul two centuries later) over the Mediterranean to Rome. When they came home, they must have told their friends that Rome was a good place to live and to do business; for before a hundred years had passed, we find rich and influential Jews living in Rome. When Pompey captured Jerusalem in 63 B. C., he brought Jewish prisoners back to Rome to march in triumph through its streets. Many prisoners were publicly sold in the markets as slaves, and we may guess that wealthy Jews bought some of their chained fellow Jews. Other Jewish slaves, always stubbornly loyal to their traditions, were troublesome for their Roman masters, and most of them were soon free again.

Every year the Jews in Rome sent gold to Jerusalem, as Cicero tells us in 59 B. C. (*Pro Flacco*, c. 28.) In the same address he points to the Jews as at that moment thronging the steps of the tribunal, and he lowers his voice in pretended terror so they will not hear him. He calls the Jews a nation "born for slavery" and their religion a barbarous superstition, abhorrent to Rome. But Caesar was kind to them. During his time, and after him, the Jews were exempted from serving in the army and were given the privileges of worship, of building synagogues, and of collecting money for the Temple in Jerusalem. When Caesar was assassinated, the Jews mourned him so genuinely that Rome took special notice of it.

While some Jews rose to positions of wealth and honor and lived with the aristocrats in Rome, most of them were in the foreign district west of the Tiber. The comic writers pictured them as beggars, peddlers of small wares, sellers of matches, and fortunetellers. Here, on the right side of the Tiber, where there were muddy streets and many beggars, we find the schools, law courts, and the central synagogue of the Jews; however, there were nine other synagogues in different parts of the city.

In Paul's days there were a million or more people living in Rome.²

Half of these were slaves, and two thirds of those who were free lived on the food which the Emperor gave them. Among these lived some 30,000, possibly as many as 60,000, Jews.³

The first persecution of the Jews came under Tiberius. But neither repeated persecutions nor exile could drive them permanently from Rome. They soon returned and continued to grow in power until "the conquered race gave laws to its conquerors" (Seneca).

These Jews were missionaries. Some Jewish ambassadors who came from Jerusalem in 140 B. C. were sent home because they tried to spread religious propaganda in Rome. Horace, the poet who died thirteen years before the birth of Jesus, also mentions the zeal of the Jews in making converts. The Hebrew religion even came near the throne of Nero⁴ when his wife Poppaea befriended the Jews and dallied with their religion. The Jews had something to give to the Roman world, whose mythical gods had lost their hold on the imagination of the people.

THE CHRISTIANS IN ROME

Now and then the Jews in Rome would get back to Jerusalem. They had an undying affection for the land of their fathers and longed especially to celebrate their festivals in Jerusalem (Acts 20:16). They might also come as merchants bringing their goods or as exiles looking for a refuge. Some of these homecoming Jews may have heard Jesus teaching in the Temple and may have seen Him heal a blind or a lame man and must have brought the news—either as a report or as the good news which they believed—back to Rome. Jesus Himself may have converted "Andronicus and Junias," of whom Paul says, "They came to Christ before I did" (Rom. 16:7). Something similar may have happened to "Mary," who seems to have been another early Jewish Christian (16:6). Paul also writes about "Rufus, the chosen one in the Lord, and his mother—who also has been a mother to me" (16:13). Mark says that Rufus was the son of Simon of Cyrene, who carried the cross for Jesus (15:21); Mark may have written his Gospel in Rome only a few years after Paul wrote his Letter to the Romans.

Luke tells us that there were Jews who had come from Rome to live in Jerusalem.⁵ Some of these heard Peter preach and were among the three thousand who were converted on Pentecost and the five thousand mentioned later.⁶ Any of these or their children may have brought the miracle of Pentecost back to Rome.

Unintentionally Paul may have helped the church at Rome even in the early days when he persecuted the church in Jerusalem. After Stephen's death

a great persecution broke out against the church in Jerusalem, and all except the Apostles were scattered over the countries of Judea and Samaria. . . . The people who were scattered went from place to place, preaching the Word of God. (Acts 8:1,4.)

They

went as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch, and they spoke the Word of God, but only to the Jews. Among them were some men from Cyprus and Cyrene who came to Antioch and began to speak also to the Greeks and to tell them the good news of the Lord Jesus. The hand of the Lord was with them, and a large number believed and turned to the Lord. (Acts 11:19-21.)

Many a Christian Jew may have reached Rome by the busy seaways between Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Italy. With him may have come some converted centurion or a soldier of the troop that was called Italian (Acts 10:1,2) when it was ordered home. Christianity, running faster than Paul (Gal. 2:2), got to Rome ahead of him.

People whom Paul converted elsewhere would go to Rome and be added to the number of Christians who were there. On the moonlit deck of some Mediterranean coasting vessel Paul would talk to some traveler on his way to Rome and perhaps baptize him before they parted. In his missionary campaigns Paul had conquered place after place and dotted Syria, Asia Minor, Macedonia, and Greece with stations where he had planted the Cross. From city and village, wherever he preached, people went to live in Rome. Then, too, travelers came from Rome to Corinth, Ephesus, and other places in the East and, meeting some ardent Christian, were changed by the power of the Gospel; and so, many a person who left Rome as a Jew or a Gentile may have returned as a Christian.

Rome tolerated the Christians as it did the people of other religions, but it wasn't at all proud of Christianity. Tacitus, the Roman historian, said:

The name was derived from Christ, who in the reign of Tiberius suffered under Pontius Pilate, the procurator of Judea. By that event the sect of which He was the founder received a blow which for a time checked the growth of a dangerous superstition; but it revived soon after and spread with recruited vigor not only in Judea, the soil which gave it birth, but even in the city of Rome, the sink into which everything infamous and abominable flows like a torrent from all quarters of the world.⁷

There were Jews and Gentiles in the church at Rome. Sometimes Paul speaks especially to the Jews,⁸ and then again he will say, "I am

speaking to you non-Jews."⁹ He pictures Gentile Christianity as a wild olive grafted into the stock of Israel.¹⁰

The church at Rome like the church at Antioch¹¹ was the work of laymen. Paul says:

I was ambitious to preach the good news only where Christ's name was unknown so as not to build on the foundation others had laid.¹²

This excludes the work of an Apostle. Apparently lay Christians had been working for a good while in Rome, and their work was of a high caliber. They spoke of the Christ, in whom they believed and their lives reflected His glory. Paul says:

I am convinced, my fellow Christians, that your lives are full of good things, that you are equipped with knowledge of every kind and are able to admonish one another.¹³

The people whom Paul greets in the last chapter are veterans in the Lord's work. These veterans include slaves and freed men. Many a slave who gained his freedom remained as an intimate friend in the home of his former master (16:10, 11). Through such slaves the Gospel found its way into the palaces of the great.

Paul gives the first mention and the highest praise to Aquila and his wife Priscilla.¹⁴ These two, like many others, were of the moving kind, easily folding their tents and stealing away, either to obey a decree of the Emperor, to pursue a business opportunity, or to help build the Kingdom. Meeting Paul in Corinth (Acts 18:1, 2), they were immediately and totally devoted to him. They may have been Christians at Rome, and so, seeing the great Apostle, they were eager to live for him and help him in every way. All three, Paul, Aquila, and Priscilla, made tents for a living. While their hands were busy weaving, they were talking of Christ and His church. They lived and worked together a year and a half in Corinth and three years in Ephesus, a total of four and a half years.¹⁵ Paul lived in their home, and also the church met and worshiped in their home in Ephesus and in Rome.¹⁶ They were the finest helpers a pastor ever had: They seem to have converted Epaphroditus in Ephesus (16:5), and they thoroughly instructed Apollos without the help of Paul (Acts 18:26). They had lived in Rome before they met Paul, and they gave him a clear picture of the church that was there. Other banished Jews waited until Claudius died in 54 before they returned to Rome. Under Nero a large number of Jews were again living there. Aquila and Priscilla may have gone back to Rome when Paul in 55 left Ephesus after the riot (Acts 20:1). They are on the spot as Paul writes to the Romans.¹⁷ And when Phoebe

brings the letter to Rome, it is perhaps Aquila who reads it to the church. And wouldn't Aquila and Priscilla, from the treasury of their hearts, filled by years of living with the Apostle, supply the first and best commentary on his Letter to the Romans?

PAUL'S PLAN

The foundation of the church had been laid, the Eastern world had largely been evangelized, and Paul had lighted the Gospel in Asia Minor and in Greece. Since Paul was convinced that he was to pioneer and break the ground, he could say, "Now there is in this territory no more opportunity to work" (15:23).

But to be done in the East meant that he was ready for the West. In the year 56 (?) he says that he had "for many years" (15:23) longed to see the Christians in Rome. The idea may have been in his mind before 49 (?), when in Corinth he first met Aquila and Priscilla (Acts 18:1,2), whose news from Rome must have set aflame the purpose slumbering in his soul.¹⁸ In Ephesus he said, "I must also see Rome" (Acts 19:21). From Corinth he writes to the Romans:

I long to see you. . . . I am eager to bring the good news also to you in Rome. . . . I hope to see you on my way there and, after I have enjoyed being with you a little, to have you send me on my journey there. . . . I will pass through you to Spain. I know that when I come to you, I shall bring a full blessing of Christ.¹⁹

Paul could have sailed from the western port of Lechaeum to Rome. But he decided to sail from the eastern port of Cenchreae to Jerusalem in order to bring gifts from Galatia, Macedonia, and Corinth to Jerusalem.²⁰ He writes:

Right now I am going to Jerusalem to bring help to the holy people there, because Macedonia and Greece decided to share their goods with the poor among the holy people in Jerusalem. They decided to do this; and they owe a debt to the Jews; for if the non-Jews received a share of their spiritual goods, they in return ought to serve them with their earthly goods. (15:25-27.)

This money wasn't simply to feed hungry mouths. It was to accomplish a higher purpose, and for that it needed Paul's interpretation. This collection was the homage which the world of Gentile Christians paid to their mother church in Jerusalem and by which Paul meant to perfect a more cordial union between the Gentile and Jewish branches of Christianity. Christian Jews in Rome who once had been members of the Jerusalem church and who may have had relatives and friends suffering in the famine of their homeland will have understood and approved.

Paul loved Jerusalem, but Rome was his goal.²¹ Jerusalem had been the holy city for God's people. But already the growth of a strong church at Antioch in Syria had been a definite step in decentralizing a church whose eyes had been focused on Jerusalem. God had selected Paul for the task of enlarging the sphere of Christianity, and he was most effective in freeing it from its Jewish cocoon. When he began his first missionary journey, his Jewish name "Saul" changed to the Roman name "Paul" (Acts 13:9). While he may have had the name "Paul" as a Roman citizen from his birth, his first great campaign into the Gentile world gave meaning to the name, just as it showed him why he had been born (Gal. 1:15, 16). When the Jews rejected the Gospel and the Gentiles accepted it, the scene was concretely clarified. Paul knew Christianity was meant to be the religion of the world. He may have seen Rome as the hub of a world-wide church, perhaps for many centuries, and its importance as the support and distributing center for the church everywhere.

The church for Paul was universal, and so he dealt with every kind of person, the bigoted Pharisee, skeptical Sadducee, time-serving Herodian, meticulous Jew, trifling Greek, practical Roman, dreamy Oriental, and impulsive barbarian. The word "all" sounds through the Letter to the Romans like the continued tolling of a bell: "All have sinned" (3:23); "He did not spare His own Son, but gave Him up for all of us" (8:32); "all" . . . "all" . . . "all" — seventy-three times we hear it in the letter.²² "The heart of Paul is the heart of the world" (Chrysostom).

Reflecting the imperial justice for which Rome stood in the world, the Gospel in Romans is forensic: The world stands before the bar of God; God is just when He condemns or acquits; the believer is pronounced righteous and adopted to be God's child. We have here God's dealing with men as it is expressed in our Creed: The Father (1—3:20), the Son (3:21—7:25), the Holy Spirit (8—13); and three elements of Christianity: faith (3—7), hope (8), and love (12—14). Gentiles (1) and Jews (2) are sinners and are made righteous by faith (3), as we see from Abraham (4). While in Adam we have sin and death, in Christ we have righteousness and life (5, 6). We fight against sin (7). The Spirit is within us (8). God rejects a disloyal Israel in order to preserve a real Israel (9). The Word brings faith (10). Gentiles are the branch grafted into the olive tree (11). Christians should live for God (12), obey the government (13), and be kind to the weak (14). Then Paul speaks of his plans (15) and sends greetings (16).

The Letter to the Romans was a culmination of Paul's third journey.

He had spent much time on this journey thoroughly instructing disciples whom he had won on his second journey. In Ephesus he had for several years systematically taught the Christians in the school of the orator Tyrannus "the whole plan of God."²³ In Macedonia he had done similar work (Acts 20:1,2). Now in this Letter to the Romans he seems to sum up everything he has taught his Christians. It may be so complete and final because he is "ready not only to be bound but even to die in Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus" (Acts 21:13). Paul has reached the top of his career. After this he is imprisoned and finally beheaded. And so he gives us in this letter the material which meets the needs of the world, and he leaves it—if his prison letters were written at Ephesus—as his last written message before the Pastoral Letters and as his testament to the Christian Church. It is a sacred deposit of truth which he sends to the capital for the whole empire. He wrote it for the world and—for us!

THE LETTER

Paul is on his way to Jerusalem with an offering from Macedonia and Greece, and from Jerusalem he will pass through Rome to Spain.²⁰ He is writing before the plot which is mentioned in Acts 20:3b and which completely changed his course; he is still speaking of going directly to Jerusalem (Rom. 15:25). The letter was therefore written within the time of Acts 20:3a while Paul was staying in Corinth from December to February, A. D. 55/56 (another system of chronology says 57/58).

Just now the stormy career of Paul has come to a lull, the troubles in Corinth have subsided, and Paul's victory seems complete. While he supervises the Corinthian church, letting his helpers do most of the work, he withdraws to write to the Romans. Gaius, whom he baptized during his first stay in Corinth (1 Cor. 1:14), has offered him his comfortable home with its conveniences (Rom. 16:23); Tertius, apparently a professional scribe, may be a private secretary loaned to Paul by Gaius. Paul praises him as his host and as the host of the whole church at Corinth. In his home he meets with his selected assistants (Acts 20:4), always ready to be sent wherever they may be needed. On a cold winter evening these friends may gather around a brazier with sweet-smelling spices—a seminar of young theologians—and listen to Paul as he reads a section of the letter which he has written during the day, perhaps Luke now and then nodding his approval.

The secretary says in a postscript (16:22): "I, Tertius, who wrote this letter, greet you in the Lord." During the hours of dictation Tertius

may be the only one in the room. He may sit in the light of the window, with a reed pen or quill in his hand and strips of parchment before him. He waits until Paul is ready to speak again, and then, as the pen dipped into the inkhorn moves along skillfully, he writes as fast as he can make it fly when the torrent from the heart of Paul bursts upon him.

The lamp may burn until morning while Paul dictates to Tertius at his feet. Paul's face shows the storms of life and the tension of mental labor as he reaches for the thoughts which the Lord gives him with the words. He may sit for an interval in a corner with his head in his hands, or pace up and down, or look out of the window and see on the streets of Corinth evidence of the vices about which he is writing. But as his heart pours out the glowing words, his inward eye is fixed on the needs and troubles of the Christians at Rome.

It is a lively letter even though it is less personal than the other letters. It does not have much local color. It does not have the irony of 2 Corinthians 10—13 or the vehemence of the Letter to the Galatians. He gets directly polemical only in 16:17-20.

Reading this letter, we are aware of a superlative: Here is a majestic and heroic soul coming to us on the wings of truth; his innermost being expresses itself in every word and lends to his writing a unique and solemn charm. Yet there is Another speaking. Put your ear to the text, and you hear the heart of Christ throbbing with love for His people. It is this Christ in Paul who makes him a real man with red blood running in his veins and with a holy fire in his thoughts. Even where his heavy sentences are a little hard to understand we sense a heavenly passion as the eternal truth rushes stormily from his mind.

He offers to the Roman Christians an intimate fellowship as he loves them and prays for them.²⁴ He visualizes what is in their hearts, how they struggle with sin and error, how they must think clearly over against righteousness by works and a superficial paganism, and how they face Jewish prejudices and Roman scorn — and he means to help them solve their problems in the light of Christian truth.

His language is incisive. Yet it flows with an energy that rises spontaneously to eloquence. Dramatically he lets an imaginary opponent rise before him to accuse him: You are making the Law an instigator of sin (3:31; 7:7); you encourage people to do evil that good may come of it (3:8); a Christian can sin all he likes (6:1,15); you are a traitor to the Jews (9—11). In the sharp give and take of the polemic dialog we see the gleaming rapier of his intellect. And this is the tent-maker who was quick to quiet a bloodthirsty mob, to outargue a cele-

brated lawyer, to outface little-minded Roman officials, to calm a panicky crew in a shipwreck and give them food, and to carry armfuls of branches to a fire. So the style is "the most living, the most nervously sensitive which the world has ever known" (Farrar).

The writing is finished. The roll is placed in a cover and tied with a cord and sealed. The address is written on it.

Sometimes merchants would take such a letter. Paul says:

I recommend to you Phoebe, our fellow Christian, who is a worker in the church in Cenchreae. Welcome her as holy people should welcome one another, and help her in anything for which she may need you, because she has been a protector of many—of myself also. (16:1, 2.)

Cenchreae was the eastern seaport of Corinth. Phoebe probably left from Lechaemum, the western port of Corinth. She may have had other business in Rome. She may have carried messages from friend to friend, perhaps also to Aquila and Priscilla. But the most precious thing in her hands was this letter, which she brought safely over the sea to Rome.

St. Louis, Mo.

NOTES

1. Antiochus once was a hostage of the Romans and later was driven out of Egypt by them. Since he was considered an enemy of Rome, the Jewish wars of liberation against Antiochus served the purposes of Rome. The treaty with Judas was renewed by Jonathan in 144, by Simon in 141—139, and by John Hyrcanus in 129 B. C. (1 Macc. 8; 12:1-4; 14:24.)
2. One inscription suggests a population of 4,100,000; see *American Journal of Archeology*, 1941, p. 438.
3. Since Rome was tied to the rest of the world by a lively network of trade, travel, and communication, there was a natural drifting of Jews, as of other people, from Jerusalem and other cities of the Mediterranean to Rome. The normal migration of Jews was increased by the imperial edicts which banished and recalled the Roman Jews and created a special ebb and flow from and to the capital.
Herod the Great, a descendant of Esau, had five sons educated in Rome. Herod Agrippa I, a grandson of Herod the Great, was one year older than Claudius (born A. D. 10) and was educated with Claudius in Rome. In A. D. 2 a deputation came from Judea to Augustus to complain of the misrule of Archelaus (who had been raised in Rome), and no fewer than eight thousand Jews in Rome attached themselves to the deputation; but the appeal failed.
4. Nero himself paid his respects to the Syrian goddess Astarte and drew on the eastern world for men in philosophy, for actors and flute players.
5. Acts 2:5, 10. Jewish slaves who were set free and returned to live in Jerusalem formed a special Synagog of the Freedmen at Jerusalem (Acts 6:9).
6. Acts 2:41; 4:4.
7. *Annals* 15:44.
8. Rom. 2:17-19; 4:1; 7:1; 15:8.

9. Rom. 11:13; cp. 1:5, 6, 13-16; 15:15, 16; Gal. 2:7-9.
 10. Rom. 11:17-31.

"Salvation comes from the Jews," Jesus told the Samaritan woman, and His preaching started in the synagog (Matt. 4:23; 9:35; Mark 1:21, 39; 3:1; 6:2; Luke 4:15, 16; 13:10; John 6:59; 18:20). Paul also started in the synagog (Acts 9:20; 13:5, 14; 14:1; 17:1, 2, 10, 17; 18:4, 19, 26; 19:8) and maintained the priority of the Jew: "to the Jew first" (Rom. 1:16; 2:9, 10; cp. 3:1). In Rome, too, the original home of the Christian church was among the Jews on the west side of the Tiber.

The wedge between Jews and Christians was Christ: Jews who rejected their Messiah continued only as Jews in name (Rom. 2:28, 29); those who accepted Him were Abraham's children.

For some decades the pagan world, which saw nothing in Christ, could not tell a Jew from a Christian (Acts 16:20). It became aware of a difference when the Jews fought the Christians. Such violence flared up in Lystra, Antioch near Pisidia, and Thessalonica (Acts 13:50; 14:19; 17:5). As Suetonius tells us, Claudius in 49 "expelled the Jews from Rome due to persistent tumults over the Messiah" (we suppose *Chresto* is a misspelling of *Christo*, since "i" was often pronounced and misspelled as "e"; this imperial action is recorded in Acts 18:2); these Jews, ordered out of Rome, but not out of Italy, included Christians. Paul's clear conception of Christ and of the liberty from the Law which He had brought sharply cut Jews from Christians. Sometimes he refers to the Jews in the third person while he speaks to his readers in the second person (Rom. 11:17-31; 10:1-3); he calls the Jews "my relatives" (9:3, 4), not "our relatives." His love for the Gentiles stirred the Jews to a fury (Acts 18:4-17; 19:8, 9; Rom. 10:2, 3). The Jews insisted on widening the cleavage between them and Paul (Acts 24:5). When Paul came to Rome, he approached, not the Christians, but "the leaders of the Jews," men of high standing who seem to have contemptuously ignored the Christians (Acts 28:16, 17, 22). "Some of them were convinced by what he said, but others did not believe" (v. 24). Then, quoting their own Prophet Isaiah against them, he turns to the Gentiles, to whom he had been sent (v. 28). Now, if not before, church and synagog were separate, the synagog siding with power and security against the Christians. The Jews succeeded so well in divorcing and repudiating a growing Christianity that the persecution under Nero struck the Christians without hurting the Jews.

"Gentiles," however, does not mean natives of Rome or Italy, but people of Greek culture. For two and a half centuries Greek had been the dominant language of large sections of Rome. Among the slaves of Rome there were swarms of Greeks and Greek-speaking Orientals. While poor Jews clustered in the slums southwest of the Tiber, this area was more than a Jewish ghetto; a considerable district had been given to all kinds of foreigners with their various forms of worship. The west side of the Tiber was a Greek world of middle and lower class people, busy, adventurous, and rather intelligent (slaves often were better educated than their masters). Juvenal and Tacitus complained that the national character was undermined and the whole city had become Greek. To these "Greeks and non-Greeks" (Rom. 1:14, 16; 2:9, 10; 10:12) Paul wrote his letter in the international language of Greece. All the literature of the early Roman church was written in Greek of the fifteen names on the traditional list of Roman bishops, ten are Greek.

11. Acts 11:20; cp. 13:1.
 12. Rom. 15:20; cp. 2 Cor. 10:15, 16.

13. Rom. 15:14; cp. 1:8, 12; 16:19; Acts 28:15.
14. Rom. 16:3-5. Luke regularly uses the diminutive "Priscilla" (Acts 18:2, 18, 26), perhaps coined by her affectionate husband, while Paul, who also may have used the diminutive in daily conversation, always respectfully uses the name "Prisca" in his sacred Letters (Rom. 16:3; 1 Cor. 16:19; 2 Tim. 4:19).
15. Acts 18:11, 18, 19, 26; 20:31.
16. Acts 18:3; 1 Cor. 16:19; Rom. 16:5.
17. Rom. 16:3-5. When Paul wrote his Second Letter to Timothy, Aquila and Priscilla were again in Ephesus (2 Tim. 4:19).
18. His missionary vision seems to have grown larger and his plan more definite as he continued his work. At first he didn't know where he would go from Corinth (1 Cor. 16:3-6), but then he decided to go from Corinth to Jerusalem (Acts 19:21). Meanwhile he plans to go to countries beyond Corinth (2 Cor. 10:15, 16). He tells the Romans, "While I have been kept from coming to you, I often planned to come" (Rom. 1:13; cp. 15:22). In 49 the edict of Claudius would have kept him away. In 55 he finds more work to do in Asia (Acts 19:21, 22). Now in 56 Nero is the Emperor (A. D. 54-68), and the first best years of his rule are a period of peace. He faces enemies in Jerusalem (Rom. 15:30, 31) and is ready to die there (Acts 21:13). He leaves Corinth at the opening of the shipping season in March. He is prepared for the worst on this journey by having seven men with him to deliver the collection (Acts 20:4), and yet the plot to murder him on the high seas comes as a surprise. He changes his course (Acts 20:3), goes north by land again, is in Philippi for the Passover in the middle of April (v. 6), and after traveling through Macedonia to Miletus (v. 16) still hopes to reach Jerusalem by Pentecost. In all this, Paul is guided by the Spirit (Acts 16:6, 9). And the Lord tells him, "You must tell it in Rome" (Acts 23:11).
19. Rom. 1:11, 15; 15:24, 28, 29. While Paul's first goal was Rome, his purpose reached beyond Rome to the "new world," which was Spain. Spain was rather familiar territory for the Romans. Some bridges, built there under Augustus, still stand, as solid and serviceable as ever. Medieval Spaniards called the great aqueducts "miracles"; they still fill the traveler with wonder. When Paul was writing, men in Spain and Africa were beginning to write Latin books. First among these Spanish writers was Seneca, Nero's tutor, a contemporary of Paul. Martial, Lucan, Columella, Pomponius Mela, and also Quintilian, the authority on Latin style, were all from Spain.
20. Rom. 15:25, 26; 1 Cor. 16:1-6; 2 Cor. 8:1-9; 9:1-5; Acts 24:17.
21. Rome had exiled Aquila and Priscilla, and it finally beheaded Paul. But Paul also had seen how Rome restrained the enemies of the Gospel (2 Thess. 2:7). Imperial officials had rescued him from angry mobs. One purpose of the government was to protect Christians (Rom. 13:3, 4). Although Paul knew that Rome was a lion which could devour (2 Tim. 4:17), he believed in bearding this lion in his lair and in trying to change this lion to a lamb so that Christians, whether in Jerusalem or in Spain, might look to Rome for protection. It has been suggested that the empress Poppaea was a follower of Paul. Chrysostom relates that in his last days Paul converted a mistress of Nero, who became furious as a lion and executed him.
22. A rather comprehensive statement of Christian truth can be made on the basis of "all" passages in Romans: creation (11:36); sin (3:9, 12, 23;

1:18); its punishment (2:9; 5:12; 8:22; 14:10, 11); God's mercy (1:16; 11:32; 16:26); Christ (9:5; 8:32; 10:4; 5:18); invitation to all (10:18; 12:3; 10:11-13); His help (8:28, 37-39); right living (12:17, 18; 13:1, 7; 15:11).

23. Acts 19:9, 10; 20:27.

24. To win their confidence, he sends special warm greetings to his friends in Rome (Romans 16). We find no such personal greetings in the letters to the Galatians, Thessalonians, Philippians, Corinthians, because the special recognition of any individuals would arouse the envy of the others. Since the Christians at Colossae also did not know Paul personally (Col. 1:7; 2:1), Paul also gives a special recognition to individuals in his Letter to the Colossians (4:9, 15, 17), and to Philemon in Colossae he sends a special letter. When he writes to Colossae or to Rome, where most of the Christians do not know him, he holds high the ties that bind the readers to him in order to suggest what a fine friendship he would cultivate with all of them.