

**Parson to Person**  
**ROMANS 15 PART 9C**

*“And so I have made it my aim to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build on another man’s foundation, but as it is written: ‘To whom He was not announced, they shall see; and those who have not heard shall understand.’ For this reason, I also have been much hindered from coming to you. But now no longer having a place in these parts, and having a great desire these many years to come to you, whenever I journey to Spain, I shall come to you. For I hope to see you on my journey, and to be helped on my way there by you, if first I may enjoy your company for a while. But now I am going to Jerusalem to minister to the saints. For it pleased those from Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor among the saints who are in Jerusalem. It pleased them indeed, and they are their debtors. For if the Gentiles have been partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister to them in material things. Therefore, when I have performed this and have sealed to them this fruit, I shall go by way of you to Spain. But I know that when I come to you, I shall come in the fullness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ.*

*Now I beg you, brethren, through the Lord Jesus Christ, and through the love of the Spirit, that you strive*

*together with me in prayers to God for me, that I may be delivered from those in Judea who do not believe, and that my service for Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints, that I may come to you with joy by the will of God, and may be refreshed together with you” (Romans 15:22–32 NKJV).*

As mentioned last week, the concluding remarks of Paul’s letter to the Romans included a reminder that they (and we) are indebted to the Jews. Paul was mindful of the “*saints*” in Jerusalem throughout his ministry years. He longed to see his “*brethren.*” However, Jerusalem was not friendly toward Paul, and even the Jewish believers were suspicious of him for a time after his conversion. In addition, they were uneasy about the Gentiles coming to the faith and had mixed feelings about how they were to worship together. Early Jewish history (under the Law) contributed to the aversion.

As we know, Paul had been serving the Gentiles and was now preparing to go to Rome. However, he first wanted to make his way to Jerusalem in order to provide the saints (believing Jews) a love offering (financial help) from some of the Gentiles he had served. I suspect Paul thought this may assist the Jewish believers to further accept the Gentiles.

The valuable lesson every Gentile should learn here is that Paul correctly believed *“the Gentiles [were] partakers of the spiritual things [earlier reserved primarily for the Jews, and therefore it was] their duty to minister to them in material things”* for *“salvation is of the Jews”* (John 4:22). For this reason, he explained that the believers from *“Macedonia and Achaia”* had made a *“certain contribution for the poor among the saints who [were] in Jerusalem”* and that *“[it] pleased them indeed, [for] they [were] their debtors.”*

The principle of giving to those who labor in ministry is sprinkled throughout the Scriptures. A first reference is found in the Old Covenant Law as described in Numbers 18:21, *“Behold, I have given the children of Levi all the tithes in Israel as an inheritance in return for the work which they perform, the work of the tabernacle of meeting.”*

In the Church Age (carried over from the Old Covenant) we read, *“For it is written in the law of Moses, ‘You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain.’ Is it oxen God is concerned about? Or does He say it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt, this is written, that he who plows should plow in hope, and he who threshes in hope should be partaker of his hope. If we*

*have sown spiritual things for you, is it a great thing if we reap your material things?” (1 Corinthians 9:9–11).*

There is no doubt that this applies to those in ministry today! However, Paul’s application here in the text has to do with the Gentiles supporting the saints in Israel. Personally, I love this! I believe we should and therefore do support missions, missionaries, and the Church in Israel. Moreover, we also take groups (when possible) in order to educate believers about God’s work and His-story in Israel. In this way we support the Gospel message to those living in the land.

Lastly, we see that Paul had planned to visit the Romans and then receive support from them as he continued his journey—and work. However, as we know from history, Paul did indeed make his way to Rome but not as expected—he arrived there in chains. His request for prayer—*“Now I beg you, brethren, through the Lord Jesus Christ, and through the love of the Spirit, that you strive together with me in prayers to God for me, that I may be delivered from those in Judea who do not believe, and that my service for Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints, that I may come to you with joy by the will of God, and may be refreshed together with you”*—was answered. However, as is true for us when we pray, we submit our requests to God, trusting Him for the outcome!

When things don't go as we planned—we trust Him nonetheless.

I love you all,  
Pastor Paul