

“I LONG TO SEE YOU”

INTRODUCTION

- I. The great apostle Paul was a human being with enthusiasm and dedication to what he believed.
 - A. He held the coats of those who stoned Stephen to death for preaching the truth. (Acts 7:58)
 - B. He later stirred up a great wave of persecution against Christ and His church.
 1. This caused disciples to be scattered throughout the world, who preached the word of God wherever they went. Acts 8:1-4
 2. The Lord knew Saul (later called Paul) would be a great asset to His cause if converted.
 - a. Christ appeared to him on the road to Damascus, where he was going to bind believers and bring them to prison. Acts 9:1-6
 - b. He went to Damascus, where a disciple named Ananias told him what to do to be saved. Acts 22:16
 - C. When converted, he began preaching throughout the world, and was inspired to write over a dozen books of the New Testament.
 1. Among these books was the book of ROMANS.
 2. IN this book, Paul expressed his longing or desire to GO to Rome;, and be with the believers there. Rom. 1:10-11a
- II. In this lesson, we shall learn WHY Paul wanted to go to “see” the saints there, and also note His eventual VOYAGE to Rome.

DISCUSSION

I. 1st, WHY DID PAUL WANT TO GO TO ROME?

- A. Rome was the capital city of the Roman empire, which ruled the known world at that time in world history.
 1. Once there, he might be able to go to the rulers of the world and save some and slow down the persecution of Christians throughout the world.
 2. He eventually went to Rome, as we shall observe later in this lesson.
- B. Paul gives 4 reasons as to **WHY** he longed to go to Rome.
 1. 1st, he wanted to impart unto them some **“spiritual gift”**, that they might have full access to the teachings of the New Testament (which had not been written yet), and then in turn they could assist him in his mission in Rome. Rom. 1:11; cf 1 Cor. 12:8-10
 2. 2nd, Paul wanted to go to Rome to enjoy the **“comfort”** of their mutual faith. Rom. 1:12
 - a. Note that this “comfort” would come as a result of their mutual “faith.” (text)
 - b. Being with others of like precious faith is always a time of spiritual peace and comfort, to be together with brothers and sisters in Christ. Acts 20:7-12; 1 Cor. 1:3-4; Col. 2:1-2; 1 Thess. 3:7
 3. 3rd, Paul wanted to go to Rome to have **“some fruit”** there as a result of his preaching.
 - a. This would involve the fruit of souls being “saved” from sin.
 - b. This would also involve the fruit of “holiness”, or holy living, and eventually eternal life. John 6:34-38; Rom, 6:20-23
 - c. It would also give them an opportunity to bear fruit in his effort to help the “poor saints” in Jerusalem. Rom. 15:23-27
 4. Then 4th, Paul wanted to go to Rome because he was a **“debtor”** to all (and this included the Romans), to preach the gospel to the lost. Rom. 1:14-16

II. Now briefly, let’s look at PAUL’S VOYAGE TO ROME.

A. Paul LONG had a desire to GO to Rome. Acts 19:21

1. He was falsely accused by the Jews, imprisoned and sent to Rome for a hearing before Caesar. Acts 25:12
2. He was comforted by a visit from the LORD before making the voyage. Acts 23:11
3. Being shipwrecked, he was visited by an ANGEL, to assure him of his destination, as he went on "toward" Rome. Acts 27:23-25; 28:1, 11-14
4. They finally came "to" Rome, where he spent 2 years preaching and teaching to as many as would hear it. Acts 28:16, 30-31

B. Evidence tells us that he was released, but later arrested and sent back to Rome, where he was imprisoned and put to death.

CONCLUSION

I. Hopefully, all faithful Christians will rejoice to see Paul and be with him and all the redeemed, as well as the Redeemer Himself, when He returns in the sky.

II. Are you ready to make your journey into eternity?

A. If you have not made ready, you need to do so by confessing your faith in Christ as the Son of God, genuinely repent of all sins, and then be buried with Christ in baptism.

B. If you have begun your journey, but have turned aside into unfaithfulness and the old practice of sin, you need to acknowledge that sin in repentance, and let us pray to the Lord in your behalf.

Don Tarbet