



World Christian Fellowship

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Romans 10

Gospel by God's Prophets

Romans 1:2, which He promised before through His prophets in the Holy Scriptures,

Apostle Paul never visited Rome, so in his introduction he gives these 3 statements.

1. Paul a bond slave of Jesus Christ.
2. Called to be an Apostle.
3. Set apart for the Gospel of God.

He writes these statements in order so that the readers will know who Paul is and what authority he must write a theological letter to them.

Last week we have seen detail about the Gospel God from the human perspective and also how it was accomplished by the Triune God.

There is a difference between the Tamil and English Bible. According to original transcript Gospel of God is been expounded before to whom it was written.

Tamil Bible is not wrong but then the order has been little reversed, but we are going o look at in terms of the original version.

Paul is going to unfold the good news in 16 chapters in Romans, but he cannot wait. So, he sums it up in seven verses.

This first seven verses are in seed what flowers in the rest of the epistle. The incredible, infinite mind of God, who is able in a few words to distill and condense the infinite truth of the gospel.

How hard it is to do that?

The infinite mind of God can say vast, infinite things in few words.

In English, 297 words are in the Ten Commandments and they sum up all of God's moral law. God set His whole moral law in 297 words, and then He distilled it even more and put it in one verse.

Luke 10:27, *'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind,' and 'your neighbour as yourself.'* "

What precision!

Apostle Paul had one thing clear in his mind when he preached that the gospel is new in a sense historically, but it was always was told by God in the past.

Christianity is not new, but it is the continuation from the Old Testament and something new has happened.

Paul preaching in Antioch, Pisidia. He went to synagogue as his custom and they recognized there are some new people and asked them to speak.

Acts 13:23, *From this man's seed, according to the promise, God raised up for Israel a Saviour—Jesus—*

Three Sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures, opening and alleging that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead. This Jesus whom I preach to you is Christ!

Now what I am anxious to emphasize is that his custom was not only to go in unto them in the synagogues, but for three days he reasoned with them out of the Scriptures.

The significant thing is that this is what Paul always did.

To the Christians in Rome, when he is writing to this church that was pre-dominantly Gentile, and which he had never seen, in introducing the gospel.

Paul has good news to tell.

This good news that had been prophesied,

This good news had been promised.

God had spoken many times before the centuries to His people.

We cannot now go through the whole of the detailed argument of the Apostle, but we must realize that we as Christian should to know about it.

The letter to Romans and other letters is not but a brief synopsis of what Apostle Paul preached. We can realize and understand when we read about the Acts of the Apostles that Paul had preached long sermons, but they have recorded only few lines.

Can we imagine the amount of material Paul would have spoken in the **Acts chapter 20?**

He preached the whole evening and one person fall and dead and he raised him up and continued his sermon.

It is like important points for a sermon note like only we had got it.

What we should not think is that the Apostles spoke only few sentences or few headlines in their preaching.

Paul preached sermon every day for two full years, 24 months, in Ephesus!

Acts 19:8-10, *And he went into the synagogue and spoke boldly for three months, reasoning and persuading concerning the things of the kingdom of God. ⁹But when some were hardened and did not believe, but spoke evil of the Way before the multitude, he departed from them and withdrew the disciples, reasoning daily in the school of Tyrannus. ¹⁰And this continued for two years, so that all who dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks.*

Can you imagine how the church would have benefited and how deep he would have expounded the scriptures of the old Testament?

So, I very firmly believe that Paul would have spent enough hours on this verse alone. We will also!

Paul considered essential for the churches, that they should understand how this gospel was directly related to the Old Testament Scriptures.

Are you excited that we also should know how Paul would have argued?

What are these promises Paul refers here?

Paul says all this has been '*promised before*'.

Where are these promises to be found?

Almost everywhere in the Old Testament.

The wealth of scriptures which the Apostle had to work on.

God Himself, in the garden of Eden, made the statement, in the presence of Adam and Eve, addressing the serpent.

Genesis 3:15, *And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel."*

The first promise!

God promises to Abraham.

Genesis 17:1-7, *When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared to Abram and said to him, "I am Almighty God; walk before Me and be blameless. ²And I will make My covenant between Me and you, and will multiply you exceedingly."³ Then Abram fell on his face, and God talked with him, saying: ⁴"As for Me, behold, My covenant is with you, and you shall be a father of many nations. ⁵No longer shall your name be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you a father of many nations. ⁶I will make you*

exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you. ⁷ And I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and your descendants after you.

God repeated the promise to Jacob.

Genesis 49:10, *The scepter shall not depart from Judah, Nor a lawgiver from between his feet, Until Shiloh comes; And to Him shall be the obedience of the people.*

God sed even Balaam to make this promise.

Numbers 24:17, *“I see Him, but not now; I behold Him, but not near; A Star shall come out of Jacob; A Scepter shall rise out of Israel, And batter the brow of Moab, And destroy all the sons of tumult.*

Again, there is a very wonderful promise given to David in **2 Samuel 7**.

A most vital chapter.

Malachi 3:1, *“Behold, I send My messenger, And he will prepare the way before Me. And the Lord, whom you seek, Will suddenly come to His temple, Even the Messenger of the covenant, In whom you delight. Behold, He is coming,” Says the Lord of hosts.*

The forerunner, John the Baptist, foretold and predicted and the details are quite astonishing.

Daniel's prophecy in chapter 9, predicted the exact time when the Son of God would come into this world. Work out those figures there, and you will find that it fixes the time in terms of the destruction and restoration of the city of Jerusalem.

It was prophesied from which tribe of Israel our Lord was to come. We are told He is to come out of the tribe of Judah.

Jeremiah 23:5-6, *“Behold, the days are coming,” says the Lord, “That I will raise to David a Branch of righteousness; A King shall reign and prosper, And execute judgment and righteousness in the earth. ⁶In His days Judah will be saved, And Israel will dwell safely; Now this is His name by which He will be called: THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.*

Lord Jesus virgin birth was foretold by Prophet Isaiah.

Isaiah 7:14, *Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel.*

The place in which Jesus was to be born is prophesied in Micah.

Micah 5:2, *“But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Though you are little among the thousands of Judah, Yet out of you shall come*

forth to Me The One to be Ruler in Israel, Whose goings forth are from of old, From everlasting.”

Remember the significance of that when the event took place.

Then we are also given certain general statements about the Son of God in the Old Testament.

Lord Jesus will be a prophet.

Deuteronomy 18:15, *The Lord your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren. Him you shall hear,*

Deuteronomy 18:18, *I will raise up for them a Prophet like you from among their brethren, and will put My words in His mouth, and He shall speak to them all that I command Him.*

Lord Jesus will be a priest.

it is the great message of Isaiah 53.

Lord Jesus will be King.

Daniel 9:24, *“Seventy weeks are determined For your people and for your holy city, To finish the transgression, To make an end of sins, To make reconciliation for iniquity, To bring in everlasting righteousness, To seal up vision and prophecy, And to anoint the Most Holy.*

Daniel, in the second chapter of his prophecy, in his interpretation of the king's dream, says that a stone will appear and grow into a great mountain that will fill the whole earth and destroy all other kingdoms.

That is a direct prophecy of the kingship and the glory of the reign of the Lord Jesus Christ.

We find the same thing in the Psalm 2. And, in Isaiah 9.

Jesus is then - prophet, priest, and king, all predicted and prophesied in the Old Testament.

We are told also that He is to be a light to the Gentiles.

Isaiah, chapters 42, 49 and 50.

Lord Jesus is to be a great king and to set up an empire and a kingdom that can never be destroyed.

In Isaiah chapter 53 that He is to be 'despised and rejected of men'. We are told there that He is going to die vicariously for the sins of others. He is to be beaten with stripes that really belong to somebody else.

Isaiah 61:1, *"The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me, Because the Lord has anointed Me To preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty*

to the captives, And the opening of the prison to those who are bound; ²To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord,

Luke 4:18-19, *“The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; ¹⁹To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.”*

Reference to His miracles - miracles that will characterize His ministry- in Isaiah chapter 35.

Zechariah 9:9 that it is prophesied that He will enter into the city of Jerusalem 'riding upon a donkey and colt.

Zechariah also prophesied that He will be sold for 'thirty pieces of silver'.

Psalms 22 predicted that His garments were to be taken by the casting of lots as He is crucified.

Psalms 22 Jesus uttered upon the cross: *'My God, my God, why have you forsaken Me?'*

Indeed, the Psalm is a description of death by crucifixion, given in most extraordinary detail.

Zechariah 12:10 we learn that He is to be pierced - that His side is to be pierced.

He will make His grave with the wicked and with the rich- again in **Isaiah 53**.

His resurrection is prophesied in Psalm 22, in Psalm 16 and hinted at in other places.

His glory is prophesied, His final kingdom - the eternal state, and all the glory that will attend Him. It is all predicted and prophesied in various places in the Old Testament.

Now those are direct prophecies.

But there are others what we may call indirect prophecies,

- in types,
- in shadows.

The Paschal Lamb, pre-figures the 'Lamb of God' which shall take away the sin of the whole world.

The burnt offerings and sacrifices, even the very furniture of the tabernacle and the temple, all these things in different ways are pointing forward to Him.

What the Apostle says here is hut a summary of that which He *'had promised before'*.

Review of some of the examples and illustrations great importance in his preaching and in establishing people who were already in the Christian faith.

Apostle Paul is not content merely with saying that God had promised the gospel before, but he goes out of his way to tell us how God had promised it before.

Paul says, *which He promised before through His prophets in the Holy Scriptures,*

We must be careful with this term '**prophet**'.

We normally use the term to refer to the various persons who wrote the books of the prophets in our Old Testament, which we call 'prophetical.'

But it is important to remember that the term 'prophet' in the Scripture, and especially as used in a place like this, has a much bigger and wider reference than that.

It refers to all the books in the Old Testament in which there is any sort of prophecy of the coming of the Son of God. So that it means here not only the books of the prophets as such the Books of Moses and the Book of Psalms.

The term 'prophets' here can be regarded as covering all the Old Testament writings.

V 2, which He promised before through His prophets in the Holy Scriptures,

The men who had made these prophecies and predictions were men who were specially chosen by God to do this very work.

- They were not clever men,
- They were not very intelligent men,
- They were not philosophical persons,
- They were not statesmen.

Their identity is that they were men selected by God. God chose them to speak on behalf of Him.

Go specifically chose them to do this special work for Him. This is a very important claim, and one which obviously must affect the whole of our doctrine.

What then was their work?

What is the work of a prophet?

Modern religion and its shallow focus on comfort and prosperity have severely distorted the proper application of God's true Word.

Prophecy, and its proper function have suffered from tremendous distortion. Rather than exhorting and bringing comfort to people from the revelation of God's will. Many claiming to be prophets have degraded the gift to materialistic fortune telling.

Much prophecy of today has become nothing more than repackaged psychic readings, focused on the casual predictions of temporary pleasures.

Many bearing true prophetic gifts may fail to recognize the gift that they possess, because their expectations are based on an over exposure to false prophecy.

It is imperative to understand that the nature of prophets and prophecy has changed since the Old Covenant dispensation. The prophets of old, spearheaded the advancement of God's people and operated with a different mantle than today's prophets.

In those days, much of God's will for His people had not yet been disclosed or revealed at all, therefore the faith of His people was founded on the word of prophecy. The role of the early church prophets was to reveal and reprove the law and foretell of the coming of the Lord with clarity, so that New Covenant believers could trust in the promises to come. The gift

of prophecy, which still exists today, serves a slightly different, but distinct purpose as well.

Prophecy does two different things.

1. Foretell.
2. Forth-tell.

Foretelling is the declaration of future events as revealed from the Lord, pertaining especially to the kingdom of God.

Forth-Telling is to utter forth, declare, a thing which can only be known by divine revelation; declare the divine will, to interpret the purposes of God, or to make known in any way the truth of God which is designed to influence people. It can only be uncovered and revealed through prophets.

Prophecy means forth-telling, not foretelling.

In other words, their idea of a prophet is that he is nothing more than some sort of preacher. They would have us believe, therefore, that in the prophetic writings of the Old Testament there is nothing said of the future at all-and so they have tried to explain chapters seven, nine and eleven of Isaiah in terms of some contemporary event. They referred to some king or to some notable person and had nothing to do with the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Apostle's whole point here is to say that the truth what I am preaching to you now was those prophets have prophesied and predicted a long time ago.

It was a vital part of the Apostle's whole case.

A prophet is first and foremost a man who 'fore' tells, but he is 'forth' telling as well.

In other words, as we read our prophets in the Old Testament, we will observe that they were addressing their contemporaries.

They were talking about the contemporary situation.

They were dealing with the political situation and many other things.

What really makes them prophets is that they went beyond that their circumstances and God used them as His special servants to foretell events yet to come, to proclaim this revelation concerning the great and mighty thing which was yet going to happen.

The prophets' ultimate message to the children of Israel was not merely about something that was going to happen in their day. But it was this great thing that God was going to do for Israel, the outworking of this great plan of His that He had announced even back in the garden of Eden itself.

What God did with these men, therefore, was that He gave them a revelation of the truth. He showed them what His plan was, and what He was going to do. But He also inspired and controlled them, so that they gave expression to the revelation which He had given them.

Now it is very important that we should understand this about the prophets. They are men in whom the two things took place.

1. They received revelation.
2. They also had inspiration.

People are confused about the difference between revelation and inspiration.

- Revelation means making known certain facts giving the information.
- Inspiration is that which controls the statement and the expression of those facts.

A prophet is a man who have both revelation and inspiration. A man can receive the inspiration to state facts already known then it is not revelation.

But when he reveals things that were yet not known, it is revelation as well as inspiration, and the prophets were men about whom these two things are said in the Scriptures.

Two classic statements of these truths.

Both are made by the Apostle Peter.

Peter is now an old man, giving a kind of farewell message to the Christian people to whom he wrote.

2 Peter 1:14-17, *knowing that shortly I must put off my tent, just as our Lord Jesus Christ showed me. ¹⁵ Moreover I will be careful to ensure that you always have a reminder of these things after my decease. ¹⁶ For we did not follow cunningly devised fables when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty.*

2 Peter 1:19-21, *And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts; ²⁰ knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, ²¹ for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.*

This does not refer to 'interpretation' in the present-day sense of the word. It does not mean that man cannot interpret that Scripture or put his own interpretation to it, because that is what we have to do.

Peter is saying, do not think of the prophet as a man who thought about the world situation in his day, and having done so, said 'I have thought it through and what I think is this.

This is what I prophesy to you is going to take place.

Scripture is not an individual's private ideas or interpretation about what is going to happen.

What is it then?

Scripture is not what man has decided to think or speak, but 'holy men of God spoke as they were moved! or carried along, or inspired, if you like) by the Holy Spirit'.

The Apostle Peter is there teaching quite clearly that these men were 'inspired'. The Holy Spirit carried them along and gave them the information. The Spirit of God enabled them to express it. Do not regard it as simply human effort says Peter.

Not the man's own ideas but the ideas of God.

Not the man's own expressions, but these men spoke as they were moved, carried along by the Holy Spirit Himself.

1 Peter 1:10-12, *Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched carefully, who prophesied of the grace that would come to you, ¹¹ searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ who was in them was indicating when He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would*

follow. ¹²To them it was revealed that, not to themselves, but to us they were ministering the things which now have been reported to you through those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven—things which angels desire to look into.

Apostle Peter says here that not only that the revelation was given to these prophets, not only that they were enabled to deliver it by the Holy Spirit, but they really did not fully understand it.

Far from its being their own private interpretation, these prophets to whom the revelation, the message, was given, 'searched diligently'. They did not wholly understand it!

It is not essential that the prophet should understand it fully. The prophet is the mouthpiece of God. The revelation is given to him. He is guided in his expression so that he cannot make any error or fall into any pitfall.

Therefore, the Apostle Paul tells us that these prophets of God were given the truth, given the power to express it truly and without error, although they did not fully understand what they were saying.

What they did understand was that it was not for them and it was largely for those who were going to come later.

As we think of prophecy, as we think of those men who gave the message in the old dispensation, we must think of them in terms of revelation and inspiration.

V 2, *which He promised before through His prophets in the Holy Scriptures,*

The prophecies which were first delivered orally have also been written. God led these servants of His not only to deliver the message but to record it, to write it, and the Apostle feels bound to go on to say that.

We cannot listen directly to the prophets any longer, but we have got the prophetic writings, and what the Apostle is concerned to do here is to point out the character of these writings.

We must be careful to notice that 'prophets' not only refers to the people who were normally called prophets but includes other parts of the Old Testament as well.

The words of the risen Lord Jesus Christ.

Luke 24:44, *Then He said to them, "These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me."*

Here we can see the proof that the prophecies concerning our Lord, what He was and where He had come from, what He would do and how He would die and rise again, and so much more. All this is not only found in the prophets as such, the books of the prophets which we have in the Old Testament.

First five books of Moses and the law and in the prophets in the books of the prophets and in the psalms.

The Jews quite frequently in the time of our Lord and of Paul, when they used the term 'Law and the prophets', referred to the whole of the Old Testament.

John 5:39, *You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me.*

Hebrews 10:7, *Then I said, 'Behold, I have come— In the volume of the book it is written of Me— To do Your will, O God.'* ”

Jesus is the theme of the Bible, the center and heart of the book.

- ✓ He is the rose of Sharon,
- ✓ He is the lily fair. Wherever,
- ✓ He is the book's beginning,
- ✓ He is the ark of shelter bearing the brunt of the storm,
- ✓ He is the burning bush of the desert,
- ✓ He is the budding of Aaron's rod,

- ✓ He is the ram upon Mount Moriah,
- ✓ He is the ladder from earth to sky,
- ✓ He is the scarlet cord in the window,
- ✓ He is the serpent lifted high,
- ✓ He is the shepherd with staff and crook,
- ✓ He is the seed of the woman,
- ✓ He is the Son of David,
- ✓ He is of Melchizedek,
- ✓ He is the light of the golden city,
- ✓ He is the lamb without spot or flaw,
- ✓ He is the Bridegroom coming at midnight.

The Apostle Paul calls them as 'in holy scriptures'.

Why does Paul say that?

Because he wanted them to know that they are not ordinary writings.

They are not just human writings.

They are not merely men setting down ideas, nor even men setting down their memories of their experience.

Apostle says that these are holy writings.

They belong to God, and they are holy because they belong to God. They are holy because they treat of holy things, because

they have been written under the guidance and the power and the influence of God, under the control of the Holy Spirit.

It is vital that we should realize the teaching of our Lord Himself and of this Apostle and of the other Apostles with regard to the Old Testament Scriptures. The teaching is perfectly plain and simple. They regarded the Old Testament Scriptures as being the divinely inspired Word of God.

They were,

- ✓ authoritative,
- ✓ authentic,
- ✓ inerrant, and
- ✓ infallible.

Lord Jesus quotes them in that way. Now this is something you can read in many books.

Matthew 1:22, *So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying:*

It is the Lord who speaks by the prophets.

2 Timothy 3:15-17, *and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶ All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction,*

for instruction in righteousness,¹⁷ that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

Remember 'holy scriptures' the reference is to the Old Testament only. They did not have the New Testament Canon then. When Paul there speaks to Timothy about the Holy Scriptures, he is referring to our Old Testament.

This thing that God had promised. It is all there if you have got eyes to see it. Paul says to Timothy, you can learn about salvation in the Old Testament!