

# KINGDOM SPIRIT

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**“SEEK YE FIRST THE KINGDOM OF GOD”**

Matthew 6:33



Issue 1105

## EXODUS 4-8

A point that we did not emphasize sufficiently in our last lesson is in Ex. 3:12. As a token to Moses that God was sending him to deliver the Israelites out of Egypt, God told Moses that when he brought the Israelites out of Egypt they would worship God in the mountain where Moses was. This mountain is Mount Horeb also known as Mount Sinai. It is located in Midian which was located in Arabia, not in the Egyptian Sinai Peninsula as is commonly taught, i.e. what is usually considered Mt. Sinai today is not the same as the Mt. Sinai of Moses time.

As we left Exodus 3 in our last lesson, God was giving Moses a brief outline of how he was going to deliver the children of Israel out of Egypt. However, Moses was busy trying to think up reasons why he wasn't qualified to be the one through whom God was going to deliver the Israelites. He continues to make excuses in chapter 4.

(Read Ex. 4:1-5) Moses argues that the elders of the children of Israel won't believe him. God then gives him three signs by which He says the elders will believe him. The first of these was when Moses casts his walking rod to the ground, it became a serpent, obviously a poisonous serpent as Moses fled from it at first. But when Moses caught it by the tail, it became a rod again.

(Read Ex. 4:6-9) If they would not believe Moses based on the first sign, the next two signs God gave Moses was that when Moses put his hand in his bosom and pulled it out it was ob-

viously very leprous, but would return to natural skin when he again put his hand in his bosom and pulled it out. The third sign was that when he took water from the river and poured it on the dry ground, it became blood.

Moses then came up with a new reason that he wasn't qualified. (Read Ex. 4:10-17) Moses argues that he is not a good public speaker. He says he never has been a good speaker, nor has it seemed to improve while he is now talking to God. God's answer is to remember who the Creator is. God tells Moses to go and leave it up to God to be Moses' mouth and to teach him what to say. Moses is still skeptical. The Ferrar Fenton Translation make verse 13 a little clearer, **“But he answered; “Indeed, my LORD, send I pray You by some other hand!”** At this point God becomes angry with Moses and tells him his brother Aaron is coming to meet him. He tells Moses to tell Aaron what to say and God will teach Moses what to tell Aaron, Aaron will be Moses' spokesman. Moses finally understands that God has chosen him and there will be no other.

(Read Ex. 4:18-23) Moses then goes to his father-in-law and asks permission from him to return to Egypt and Jethro grants permission. Moses has two sons by this time. He took his wife and sons and begins his return to Egypt.

Strangely, God tells Moses to go to the Pharaoh and to show him the miracles that God has just shown Moses, but then God tells Moses that He will harden Pharaoh's heart so that he will not let the Israelites go. It is important that we understand this story of Moses' encounters with the Pharaoh and God's hardening the heart of

Pharaoh as this teaches us of God's sovereignty. Finally, He tells Moses to tell Pharaoh that Israel is His first born son and if the Pharaoh will not let Israel go, He will slay the Pharaoh's first born son. This is ultimately what happened, but keep in mind that God said He would harden Pharaoh's heart to cause this. Once we have completed our study of the plagues, we will discuss the sovereignty of God further as this is a very important concept that we need to understand.

(Read Ex. 4:24-26) This story appears to be unrelated to what was going on and we aren't given a reason for it. The book of Jasher says that Moses did not circumcise his first born son, Gershom, because his father-in-law commanded that it not be done. We aren't told why, but there is inference that it might have been because Zipporah did not want to do it. However, when their second son was born, Moses did circumcise him. If we go back to Gen. 17 where God commanded Abraham to keep the covenant of circumcision, we read in verse 14, **"And the uncircumcised man child whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken my covenant."** This was something that had to be corrected before Moses could take on the job God had planned for him. I am not sure whether the "him" in verse 24 that God was seeking to kill was Moses or Gershom. With the above information, it could well have been Gershom. Zipporah realized the error that had been made and did the circumcision herself. Though the book of Jasher indicates that Zipporah was a very righteous woman, on the level of Sarah, Rebekkah, and Rachel, the tone of the story as it appears in the King James indicates that she objected to this ritual of blood.

(Read Ex. 4:27, 28) We read earlier that God told Moses that Aaron was coming to meet him. Here we see that God told Aaron to go meet Moses which he did and they met in the wilderness as Moses was returning to Egypt.

(Read Ex. 4:29-31) After Moses told Aaron all that God had told and shown him at Mt. Sinai, Aaron was in apparent agreement with Moses and when they had gathered the elders of the children of Israel together, Aaron spake all the

words which the LORD had spoken to Moses and did the signs in the sight of the people. As God had told Moses, the people believed Moses and Aaron and they bowed their heads and worshipped.

(Read Ex. 5:1-9) This first encounter of Moses and Aaron with the Pharaoh went as God had told Moses it would in that the Pharaoh refused to let the people go. However, not only did he refuse to let them go, he increased the labor output that the Israelites were expected to produce each day. Recall that we said that the Israelites built some of Egypt's treasure cities, thus the need to make brick. Straw was a major component in these bricks for the same reason that fiberglass fibers are used in many concrete projects today, to help strengthen the integrity of the concrete. Up to this point, the Pharaoh was furnishing the straw, now the people had to gather their own in addition to maintaining the same tally of bricks each day.

(Read Ex. 5:10-19) When the tally of bricks each day dropped by reason of the Israelites having to gather their own straw, the Israelite men whom the Egyptians had appointed as foremen were beaten and the demand was again made that they not diminish the tally. These officers of the people then went before the Pharaoh to plead their case, but the Pharaoh was even more insistent that they maintain their assigned tallies.

(Read Ex. 5:20-23) The people blamed Moses then for the impossible position that they were now in. Moses went before God and asked Him why He had, instead of delivering the people out of the hand of the Pharaoh, actually increased their burden. Moses seemed to feel the problem was at least partly due to his own ineffectiveness and asked God why He had sent him for this job.

(Read Ex. 6:1-8) God, in effect, told Moses, "you haven't seen anything yet, just wait." He again tells Moses that while He was known as God Almighty to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, He was not known by the name JEHOVAH until now. Recall from our last issue that JEHOVAH signifies God as a covenant keeping God with the people He has created. This is emphasized here as God reiterates to Moses that He made a covenant

with the children of Israel to give them the land of Canaan and that He has heard the groaning of the people. In very strong language, He tells Moses to tell the people that He is JEHOVAH, or YHWH, (keep in mind that when you see “LORD” in the King James translation, it should be translated JEHOVAH) that He is going to bring them out from under the hand of the Egyptians, and will redeem them with an outstretched arm, but He is going to do so with great judgments. Store this information in your mind until we discuss the sovereignty of God as it is important to our understanding. At times, things might appear to not be fair until we understand the whole picture. God had used Egypt here for a special purpose, but now because they had acted in accordance with that purpose, God is going to bring great judgments upon them.

God assures Moses that in keeping with the promises that He made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, He will be God to Israel and they are going to know it by what He is going to do to the Egyptians. But He is going to keep those promises and bring the people into the land of Canaan and give it to them for a heritage.

(Read Ex. 6:9-13) The Moses that we will see at the end of the Exodus is going to be a very different man from the man we are seeing here as he attempts to get the Pharaoh to let the people go. Here he is still trying to get out of the job as he feels that he simply is not the man for the job. He tells God that the children of Israel won't listen to him, and asks, how does He expect the Pharaoh to listen to him? Moses has not yet learned that it is not who he is or what his capabilities are, it is God that is in charge and is working His plan.

(Read Ex. 6:14-27) I often hear people complain that genealogies are boring so they don't read them. I have to agree to a certain extent, but they do need to be read as very often we will be dealing with people later in Scripture that if we know where they come from, it is much easier to understand their importance to the story. In this genealogy, our first importance is to learn Moses and Aaron's background. We see that Levi was their great grandfather on their father's

side and their grandfather on their mother's side since their father married his father's sister. Some of the names that we are going to encounter later include Korah, another great-grandson of Levi; Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar, sons of Aaron; and Phinehas, a grandson of Aaron. If you can't remember the names, I recommend the use of a concordance, when we study an individual, that will refer one back to earlier Scriptures that tell us who that person is. It is important.

(Read Ex. 6:28-30) This is basically a repetition of what we read in verses 11-13)

(Read Ex. 7:1-7) We see more detail in God's plan to deliver Israel out of Egypt. Moses, as inept as he thinks he is, is being made a god before Pharaoh. This does not mean that Pharaoh is going to do what Moses tells him to do, but he is going to reverence him and hear him and Aaron when they come before him. At the same time that God is making Moses a god before Pharaoh, He tells Moses that He is also hardening Pharaoh's heart so that he won't let the people go. God reveals His purpose for this. It is so **“that I may lay my hand upon Egypt, and bring forth mine armies, and my people the children of Israel, out of the land of Egypt by great judgments.”** Not only is Israel going to know that God is JEHOVAH, but Egypt is going to know this as well.

At this point, Moses is 80 years old. He spent 40 years learning the ways of a king, and 40 years learning the ways of a shepherd, two very different jobs, the former to be served and the latter to serve. Both are essential, as we will see, to complete the mission God has planned for Moses. His brother Aaron is three years older than Moses.

(Read Ex. 7:8-13) This was the first action that began to make Moses look like a god to the Pharaoh. Although the king's magicians were able to duplicate the casting of their rods to the ground and them becoming serpents, though probably viewed as a small matter by the Pharaoh, Moses and Aaron still prevailed with the upper hand when Moses' rod turned serpent swallowed up all the magician's serpents.

Incidentally, for what it might be worth, the book of Jasher describes the Pharaoh as a very

small man who was very intelligent, but in appearance, very ugly.

(Read Ex. 7:14-25) This is the first of the ten plagues that God would ultimately bring on Egypt. It is hard to imagine what this plague would have been like. Apparently, the Egyptians were able to dig wells that had good water, but with all other water sources turning to blood, one can only imagine the smell.

(Read Ex. 8:1-7) A few years ago, for some unknown reason, several places in our area suddenly had a very large influx of a small worm. Almost before people realized what was happening these worms were everywhere in their houses, in their clothes, in their food, literally everywhere. There were places on the highway where they crossed where it looked like a huge grease spot. We talked at the time of how this compared to the plague of the frogs in Egypt. Though people were soon able to control the worms with sprays and poisoned bait, there was no such control of the frogs, plus the frogs were not just in some areas, but over all of the populated area of Egypt. Remember that nearly all of the populated area in Egypt was in the Nile River basin.

(Read Ex. 8:8-15) This plague got the attention of the Pharaoh and he asked Moses to take the plague from them, promising that if they did so, he would let the Israelites go. Moses asked when he wanted them to do this and the Pharaoh told them tomorrow. Moses agreed and entreated God on the morrow to rid the land of the frogs. Sure enough all of the frogs on dry land died the next day. One problem—what to do with millions of dead frogs. The Egyptians gathered them together into huge piles and then these piles began to stink. When the Pharaoh saw this, he did an about face and refused to let the people go. So it was with plague number two.

(Read Ex. 8:16-19) In the first two plagues, like with the rod turning into a serpent, the magicians were able to duplicate what Moses and Aaron did. However, with this plague of lice, they were unable to duplicate this plague. I'm sure that there was a certain level of arrogance among these magicians and the Pharaoh himself. With this plague, the magicians began to realize

who they were dealing with, and told the Pharaoh what their thoughts were. However, the ego of the Pharaoh caused him to still not let the people go.

(Read Ex. 8:20-32) Apparently the children of Israel were affected by the first three plagues along with the Egyptians. However, with this fourth plague, the plague of the flies, God told Moses to tell the Pharaoh that He would put a division between the land of Goshen where the Israelites were and the rest of Egypt and the land of Goshen would not be affected.

Moses had been asking that the Pharaoh would let the people go three days into the wilderness to sacrifice unto God. This time, the Pharaoh told Moses to take the people and sacrifice in the land of Egypt. Moses objected to this saying in effect, that if the Israelites sacrificed in the presence of the Egyptians after all that God had done to the Egyptians, the Egyptians would stone the Israelites. Finally the Pharaoh agreed to let them go into the wilderness, but when Moses intreated God to remove the flies and God did so, the Pharaoh changed his mind again and refused to let them go.

We will start with chapter 9 in our next issue. JRL

## **PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS**

(Read Romans 14:1-3) To understand fully what Paul is dealing with here, we need to remind ourselves of the background that Paul has laid out in preparation for this chapter. (Read Romans 13:8-10) The law is often looked at by many people as something burdensome, something that is against them. But Paul is pointing out that the law is really a law of love. There is no-one we love more than ourselves, so if we love our neighbor as ourselves, we are exhibiting a strong love toward them. The five commandments that he lists here are really love commandments in that if we adhere to them, we are exhibiting our love toward others, thus love is fulfilling the law. The commandment, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." should be sufficient in itself.

However, the five commandments listed gives us a better idea of what loving our neighbor really means. Here in Romans 14, Paul goes into further detail, so that there can be no mistake as to what loving our neighbor really means.

(Read Romans 10:17) If faith comes by hearing, I think we can surmise that being weak in faith is being weak in hearing. I heard a discussion this last week on the radio about the theory that there are several different kinds of intelligence. While there are supposedly over 100 different kinds of intelligence, in this theory, there are at least eight that most of us can relate to, that indicate how different people learn. These include verbal-linguistic, logical-mathematical, visual-spatial, musical and others. So when we say “hearing,” it is really referring to learning and we are, for the most part, different from each other in how we hear, or how we learn. The latter part of verse 17 says, **“and hearing by the word of God.”** The thing we have to hear, or learn, to strengthen our faith, is the Word of God. We need to recognize that different ones of us learn in different manners, so Paul is saying in chapt. 14:1 that if one appears to us as weak in faith, we are to still receive him or her, but to be careful in how we deal with them so that we don’t turn them off with arguments or because of how they learn. The word “disputation” comes from a Greek word meaning “judicial estimation.” So what he is saying is “not to doubtful judging of his or her views.” He gives as an example of a “doubtful disputation,” the argument of whether to eat meat or to eat just vegetables. Even in this day and time, this can lead to a very heated argument, with many of those that wish only to eat fruit and vegetables, referring to Gen. 1:29 (read), and saying that to adhere to God’s original plan one should only eat only fruit and vegetables. Those who wish to eat flesh, or meat, refer to Gen. 9:3 (read) and say that God instructs us to eat both flesh and fruit and vegetables. But Paul is saying that God doesn’t use this as a criteria as to whether He accepts that person or not. I think we need to point out that Paul is not talking about eating unclean meat here. Paul understood that the law of clean and unclean meat was for our health and he

doesn’t violate it. He is simply talking about the difference between eating fruits and vegetables and eating meat such as beef and lamb.

The point is that if we are to love our neighbor as ourselves, this should not be something that we judge someone on as to whether we accept them as ourselves or not. One could list a fairly large number of things that are likewise points of contention. Denominations are built on these “doubtful disputations.” Some are quite silly, some are quite serious. My mother was once dismissed from teaching a primary Sunday school class because the Sunday school superintendent “caught” her reading the Bible to her class instead of the quarterly lesson. Most of the things that people judge others on in this manner are man made rules, not God made rules. So long as a person is not violating God’s law, if we think they are wrong, we need to accept them and try to teach them through love. I have to admit that I certainly have not always followed this advice, but even though I still have difficulty with it sometimes, I know that trying to understand the other person through loving them is by far the most effective way to help them. When we perceive something to be truth, we want to beat others over the head with it until they get it. Unfortunately, seldom does this work. If the theory of different intelligences is valid, then we need to understand that we need to approach different people in different ways in order for them to “hear” God’s Word. We need to understand that if we are attempting to teach a group, or even an individual, that it is not just what you say, but how you say it, your body language as to say it, your appearance as you say it, possibly what visual aids you might use, what graphics you might use, i.e. don’t expect someone else to believe what you say just because it is you that is saying it. In the same breath, we need to be careful that we don’t believe someone simply because they are good looking, have a pleasant but strong voice, are dressed in a particular manner, etc. As Paul says, hearing is by the Word of God—that is where we need to go to make our final determination on a subject.

(Read Romans 14:4) We could relate this

to denominations as well. How often have we judged a person based on what denomination he or she belonged to without ever trying to know the person themselves. Because they belong to a particular denomination, they could not possibly know the truth as we know it. In the same breath, most denominations will not tolerate one who does not fully subscribe to their particular doctrines. There is certainly nothing wrong with trying to teach someone who thinks different from you what you perceive to be the truth, but differences of opinion, if dealt with in a loving manner, can often lead to a greater understanding by both parties, because they will study to confirm their positions, something that we all should be willing to do.

(Read Romans 14:5-6) This, like the eating, has caused great division among Christians. Great effort has been made by various sides in this argument to prove the other side wrong and to disrupt the days that others consider special days and or Sabbaths. My only concern is that someone doesn't esteem one day above another for their justification. The same goes for those that regard talking in tongues, or a host of other things as something else that they can or have to do to achieve justification, or salvation. As I said we could add a whole list of things to this category. I think it might surprise us to know just what some people do, thinking that it is necessary for their salvation, that is condemned by others who likewise have something that they do that is condemned the same way by others. The principle of loving our neighbors as ourselves is completely forgotten. But this is what Paul is telling us here.

(Read Romans 14:7-9) If we understand that God is sovereign, and that ultimately all men will be in the kingdom, then I think we can understand what Paul is saying here. If God is sovereign, then all men are living the life that God has planned for them, whether they know it or not. If we die, what happens from that point it totally under the control of God, so Paul can say that when we live, we do so to God and when we die, we do so to God. To reinforce this, he points out that Christ lived, died and lived again, thus He has power over life and power over death—we are in

His hands.

(Read Romans 14:10-13) Why would we want to despise one another for what he or she believes, Paul is asking, when all of us have to appear before the judgment seat of Christ. Let Christ do the judging, he is saying. To support this Paul quotes from Isaiah 45:23 (read). In the context of Isaiah, God is very emphatic that all men will submit to Him. Though Paul is using this same wording, I don't get the impression that he is doing so in the same emphatic sense that it is used in Isaiah, but rather is just supporting his contention that all will appear before Christ in judgment. The point being that we should not be at odds with someone because of differences of belief that are of little or no consequence. I do not believe Paul is recommending compromise, but rather is saying that we should not let these kind of differences divide us. Compromise usually means accepting something that is not true, or not right just to get along. If we hold a particular truth that we have studied out and found to be true, we should not compromise that truth, but in love attempt to teach others. Drawing that line is sometimes difficult, but pays off in the long run. The important thing is that we don't put a stumbling block in the way of others. Again, knowing what is a stumbling block and what is not, is not always clearly evident. I had a friend, who became a very good friend, that I had said something to about a particular doctrine that I believe to be true. He disagreed with me fairly forcefully, but we continued to discuss it up into the early morning hours one night. At times I wasn't sure whether our discussion was going to come to blows or not, it was anything but a peaceful discussion, but all of sudden he saw what I was trying to tell him and from that point on, he couldn't understand why everyone else couldn't see it as well. Had I had that kind of discussion with most people, it certainly would have been a stumbling block. In other discussions, one word, though innocently spoken, has turned into a major stumbling block. So it is something that we need to always be thoughtful about and never forget God's command to love our neighbors.

(Read Romans 14:14-17) We may need to

go to verse 21 to understand here that Paul is not talking about clean and unclean meat as described in Leviticus 11. According to verse 21, what some people are considering unclean is eating flesh, i.e. meat such as beef and lamb, or drinking fermented wine. Paul is writing to Christian people whose only Bible to this point is the Old Testament, so he knows they are familiar with God's law, so he is saying that within the realm of what the law says is clean food, so far as he is concerned, there is nothing unclean, but if eating meat is unclean to someone else, then it is unclean to that person. So far as Paul is concerned, he would not eat something that another person considers unclean in the presence of that person, even though so far as he is concerned, it is clean. He tells the people at Rome to do the same thing, to not destroy a neighbor, or another Christian by eating what another considers unclean in his or her presence. This is just an example of showing love to others. He is not trying to, as the Pharisees did, establish some law to further define another law. If another person believes in a certain method of baptism from what you believe, for example, don't cast them out or disfellowship with them because of it. If a person considers a different day to be his Sabbath day from the day that you consider to be your Sabbath, Paul is saying don't let that be something that separates you. He is not saying that you have to be baptized in the same manner as the other person, or that you have to change your Sabbath day to be the same as the other person, i.e. you don't have to compromise, just don't let the difference become a problem between you. We can continue to show our love for one another without letting things like this become a problem. We can even discuss the merits of our different opinions which may sometimes win the other person over to your opinion, but may never do so. We just need to keep in mind that that person will have to answer to God for what they do just as we will have to. Let God be the judge. If we offend someone because we don't eat the same things as they do, or don't baptize by the same method, or one of the many things that divide Christians, then it is more than possible that they will consider other things,

things that are good, to be bad also. Paul says in verse 16, **“Let not then your good be evil spoken of.”**

The kingdom is not food and drink, or the many rituals or rules that we as men make up, but rather **“righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit.”** So our object in life should be to do those things that bring about righteousness and peace, things that build each other up. (Read Romans 14:18-23) This is serving Christ and is acceptable to God and to men. If we do not knowingly offend others by what we eat, or drink, or observe, this is the first step in edifying, or building up those around us. This we should do. If we have faith that what we do is right, then Paul says have that faith to yourself, i.e. don't condemn others just because they don't believe exactly as you do in these things that really are not that important. If we do, we end up condemning ourselves. All of this is easy said, not so easy to do. It has been my experience that many people do the things they do, eat the way they eat, etc., because they have come to believe that doing so is necessary for their salvation. When we find someone who believes this way, it is very difficult not to offend them, but if we remember our obligation to love them, it makes things easier. Unfortunately, I speak from experience. I have probably been one of the worst at trying to force feed my beliefs on other people, though I think I can say that it has not always been in a non-loving manner. I have had the habit of over-running my headlights, so to speak, and becoming too anxious to show someone something that I have become convinced is the truth.

(Read Romans 15:1-4) Sometimes we need to agree to disagree, to allow other people the right to be wrong. It is incumbent on us in our Christian walk to have the positive outlook and convey that positive attitude to others even though we might think them to be wrong in their thinking and practice. To show us how our attitude should be like Christ's, Paul quotes from the 69<sup>th</sup> Psalm. This is a Messianic psalm. In effect, Christ, through the voice of the psalmist, is saying that He is taking the reproaches that are intended for God the Father. (Read Psalms 69:7-9) We need

to be of the same mindset, not thinking of ourselves, not always trying to please ourselves, but showing love to others. (Read Romans 15:5-7) If we receive each other in spite of some minor differences (at least so far as God is concerned), it might surprise us how close to one mind we might be. I am not talking just about our group here, but among our friends and neighbors among whom we live.

(Read Romans 15:8-13) We need to go back to Romans 2:28-29 (read) to understand who Paul is referring to as the circumcision here. He is speaking of Christians. It was only to the Christians that understood that the promises that were to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were confirmed in Jesus Christ. Since the Jews in general did not accept Him as the Messiah, He confirmed nothing to them. Paul says that Christ was a minister to the circumcision so that the nations (Gentiles) might glorify God for His mercy, and quotes several Old Testament scriptures to prove this. The first is David speaking in II Samuel 22:50 which is repeated in Psalms 18:49. (read) The word "heathen" is the Hebrew "goi" which is equivalent to the Greek "ethnos" which in both cases literally means nations, and is often so translated, though often translated Gentiles. The second is from Deuteronomy 32:43 (read). He is telling the nations to rejoice with His people, i.e. God is saying that all nations will ultimately be a part of God's kingdom, a kingdom that began with Israel. The third is from Psalms 117:1 (read). In Psalms, "goi" is translated nations, but the translators changed it to Gentiles in Romans. It should be nations. The fourth scripture is from Isaiah 11 combining verses 1 and 10. (read Isa. 11:1-10)

Paul is finishing his epistle and verse 13 is kind of a benediction, but then Paul continues

with some personal information. (Read Romans 15:14-24) Remember that Paul has not been to Rome, though he is acquainted with some of the people personally and some by reputation, to whom he is writing. He recognizes these people to be different from those he has been ministering to. He first tells them that he recognizes that they are not new to the gospel and that they are quite knowledgeable of God's Word, and as such, are capable to admonishing, or teaching each other. He has been quite bold in writing to them on certain points, he says, partly to remind them, since through the grace that God has given him, he has been ordained by God to minister to the nations that they too might be offered up as acceptable to God, being sanctified by the Holy Spirit. He goes on to say that he won't speak of those things that Christ has accomplished through him by word and work, by signs and wonders by the power of the Holy Spirit, but from Jerusalem and round to Illyricum he has fully preached the gospel of Christ. He has strived to preach the gospel where Christ has not yet been mentioned, lest he should build on another man's foundation. Because his mission has been to preach to those who had not yet heard of Christ, he has been hindered from coming to Rome, because they are already well versed in the gospel. But now that his mission is complete, he wants to come to Rome to visit them, something that he has wanted to do for years he says. He tells them he is planning a trip to Spain and will plan to stop at Rome to visit.

(Read Romans 15:25-28) He explains that he must first go to Jerusalem to deliver an offering to the church (Christians) in Jerusalem from the people he has been ministering to. Remember that it is in this trip to Jerusalem that he is arrested and ultimately sent to Rome for trial. (Read Romans 15:29-33) He then completes his letter. JRL