

Bible Commentary – Romans – Chapter 1

There are many deep and mysterious sayings in the Bible. Without spiritual numbers how can we understand them? An example from the Book of Romans vis-à-vis the Sermon on the Mount:

Jesus made this extraordinary statement in the Sermon on the Mount:

"... if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell."

(Matt. 5:29)

This immediately follows the statement:

"But I say to you: whosoever looks on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart."

(Matt. 5:28)

Surely lust is a sin of the flesh. The flesh is never satisfied and thirsts and hungers continuously with an appetite for more.

In the West young women take pains with their hair, dress, perfume, and shoes to attire themselves seductively. They expose as much skin as possible: the legs, the arms, even the navel.

This past week there was even a day declared for women in the West to go into the streets topless!

A Christian man in the West who merely goes out to shop will fight fleshly desires as scantily clad tarts are everywhere on the scene.

Muslims solve this by covering up the women.

But Jesus did not teach us to cover up women with total body wraps like the Muslims. He taught us to gouge out the eye that lusts after women.

Really? Does Jesus want healthy men to gouge out their eye if sexual desires are awakened when they go outside?

Or, is Jesus simply telling Christian men to look away? Resist staring. Whatever you stare at for long will draw you in. Of course, that is what Jesus meant.

But I promised to uncover for you a deeper mystery.

Spiritual numbers will reveal this.

Matt. 5:28 (whosoever looks at a woman to lust after her has committed adultery with her in his heart) is the 118th VERSE of the New Testament.

The 118th CHAPTER of the New Testament is Romans 1, where Paul writes to the believers in Rome:

"Now I don't want you to be unaware, brethren, that I OFTEN PLANNED TO COME TO YOU BUT WAS PREVENTED until now, that I might also have some fruit among you also, just as among the other Gentiles." (v 13)

Wow. Paul had often planned to go to Rome. But he was prevented. From having fruit. Among the Gentiles.

How strange is that?

The greatest ever apostle to the Gentiles was prevented from a fruitful in ministry in Rome.

Paul was a free man. What could have possibly prevented him? Only the Holy Spirit.

Let's look deeper into Paul's motivation to go to Rome. Was it to reach Gentiles that Paul went to Rome?

What happened when Paul got to Rome? Acts 28 tells us.

The Jews welcomed him.

They said "We neither received letters from Judea concerning you, nor have any of the brethren who came reported or spoke any evil of you" (v.20)

The Jews listened to him.

They said "...we desire to hear from you what you think..." (v.21).

They came to him in large numbers: "...many came to him at his lodging" (v.22).

And Paul taught them "from morning till night" (v.23).

This was what Paul had spent his life training to do... to be a Teacher to the Jews... before Christ called him to be an apostle. It was a reversal of God's express purpose for Paul's life.

Contrast this with how the Jews in Asia treated Paul:

The Jews in Jerusalem hated Paul to death:

"And when it was day some of the Jews banded together and bound themselves with an oath saying they would

neither eat or drink till they had killed Paul." (Acts 23:12)

The Jews in Jerusalem could not abide the words out of Paul's mouth:

"...they cried out and tore off their clothes and threw dust in the air" (Acts 23: 23)

So what was the real motivation for Paul to go to Rome? To preach to the Gentiles?

Over and over again Paul witnesses and writes that God sent him to the Gentiles.

And Paul loved the churches of the Gentiles with a tender father's love:

"And I will very gladly spend and be spent for your souls" (2 Cor. 12:15a)

But he did not always find his love requited:

"...though the more abundantly I love you the less I am loved." (2 Cor. 12:15b)

God had blessed Paul with the intimate companionship of a Gentile woman - one who believed in the LORD with all her heart.

But Paul was quick to say that Christ is the only legitimate husband of the Church bought by His Blood:

"For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ." (2 Cor. 11:2)

Paul was fulfilling the role of step-parent in preparing the Gentile Church for the wedding day where she would be presented to Christ:

"I will not be burdensome to you... for children do not lay up for the parents but the parents for the children." (1 Cor. 12:14)

The Gentile Church was never the 'wife' of Paul. But she was his close companion, loved him, supported him through prayers, food and shelter, and submitted to his authority - as an apostle. It was a relationship between a man - authority figure - and a woman - a body of believers - that was as close as can be without being a marriage. Paul strove in every letter to keep that distinction clear. Jesus is LORD and Savior and Master. Paul was merely the 'doulos' - the lowest house servant - to care for the Mistress until her Lord returns to take her away.

But in his lowly position, Paul became guilty of adultery. He lusted after another woman. He broke his commitment to be the servant of the Gentile church to get that woman.

Paul wanted SO BADLY for Jews to believe and follow Jesus - so he could experience Christian fellowship with them: within his own ethnic group of Hebrew speakers. He says as much in the Book of Romans:

"I have great sorrow and continual grief in my heart. For I could wish that I were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my relatives according to the flesh [i.e. the Hebrews]" (Romans 9:2-3)

(Note carefully: Paul was not suggesting he was considering reverting to Judaism. Paul was expressing his yearning for Jews to convert to Christ in the strongest - hypothetical - terms possible.)

Paul could not take his eyes off Rome. He could not look away. He stared. He lusted. For the wrong reason.

In Rome there were Jews who would believe.

"And some were persuaded by the things that were spoken..." (Acts 28:24)

Paul knew it. And God resisted Paul from fulfilling that desire for the longest time.

Paul was fleeing his calling. What happened the moment Paul got to Rome?

JESUS GOUGED HIS RIGHT EYE OUT...!

The Book of Acts ends when Paul got to Rome. No more miracles. No more Scripture written. No more churches planted. Only chains for Paul. The Book of Revelations would have to be written by John.

The LORD who had protected Paul and raised him up after being stoned and beaten so many times would no longer rescue his life.

...AND THREW IT AWAY!

Paul died in Rome. The Bible does not say how. Perhaps he died in his old age. Perhaps he was martyred (so is the tradition). It is somewhat disrespectful that his passing receives a lack of mention.

The story of Paul simply stops. It didn't matter if Paul lived or died. God was done with him as an apostle.

Does that sound harsh? **GOD TAKES ADULTERY SERIOUSLY.**

Understand the difference between Paul and Jesus.

Jesus went to the Cross. Jesus was flayed alive. Jesus was crucified.

Jesus did NOT and could NOT disobey the commandment of the Father.

Jesus did NOT and could NOT take His eyes off HIS BRIDE: the Gentiles.

Paul knew the pleasure of intimate spiritual companionship with a Gentile woman.

Surely that must have been a comfort to Paul.

He says concerning the Gentiles in Galatia (note the irony in these words!)

"...for I bear you record, that, if it had been possible, YOU WOULD HAVE PLUCKED OUT YOUR OWN EYES, and have given them to me." (Galatians 3:1)

In contrast, Jesus never knew the pleasure of intimate companionship with a believing Gentile woman.

Jesus went to the Cross to die for that privilege.

Paul knew the suffering of an apostle. Yet in compensation Paul also knew the pleasure of intimate companionship with a believing Gentile woman. But all these blessings were not enough for Paul. He wanted the pleasure of intimate companionship with a believing Jewish woman... so badly... he resisted the Holy Spirit to get his wish.

This is the root of the sin of lust. A saint has food to eat and water to drink from the hand of God. But he wants to taste from a dish forbidden to partake.

This was the downfall of Paul. Now you know the mystery.

A mystery is revealed. All because we followed the trail of spiritual numbers!

Blessings dear brothers and sisters.

Jesus died for you. Never ever doubt his love for you.

Jesus will never find a temptation strong enough to shake his love for you.

He is coming again. To take you into his loving arms forever!

Hallelujah.

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