

Helps to the Study of the Epistle to the Romans

PART II.

(Chapters IX.—XVI.)

London

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OF THE
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PART II.
(CHAPTERS IX.—XVI.)

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“Whether there be knowledge it shall be done away; for we know in part . . . , but when that which is perfect is come that which is in part shall be done away.”

“But now abideth . . . love. Follow after love.”

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NOTE.

Circumstances rendered it impossible to complete these Studies on the Romans on quite the same plan as that on which they were commenced. But, on reflection, the writer is not sure that this has been a drawback. There are one or two considerations which render the slighter treatment of the second half of the Epistle something of an advantage.

The topics suggested for united study are to be found in the last pages.

NOVEMBER, 1899.

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY OF IX.—XI.

THESE chapters bring up questions the full and complete solution of which they do not give. These questions, in one form or another, have exercised every system of philosophy ever conceived by man ; and every such system has at a certain point confessed its inability to solve them, or else while pretending to explain them has simply re-stated the old difficulty in words of its own vocabulary. And, *in so far as it is a philosophy*, even theology has not solved them. The Bible does not even set out to do so : and if expositors of the Bible have tried, they have not succeeded.

Why is there this mysterious point beyond which our intelligence seems unable to pass, and at which (variously approached) every science and philosophy stops short? It exists in virtue of the very nature of finite thought. This limitation is inherent in that nature, and cannot be separated from it. This is an application of the principle of the Incarnation ; for it is while, and because, we are in the Body of this Humiliation—in which Christ the Lord shared—that our minds have to submit to certain inexorable limits. Were we to pass beyond them we should “be as Gods, knowing” with a knowledge that is absolute. One day we are given to hope we shall put off this body of humiliation and put on the Body of His Glory ; and in that day we are told we shall *know even as we are known*, and shall see Him *as He is*.

“There the hidden things are clear . . .”

In approaching such a subject then we need not be surprised if we find apparent contradictions, or at least irreconcilable aspects of truth : such “antinomies” (as they are called) are simply the mode in which the thought limitation alluded to above makes itself felt.

The religious aspect of this universal problem is that which appears in predestination and freedom, grace and faith. There are different schools of thought in stating and holding views upon these points : to each man a certain view appears the most reasonable and scriptural and *that which reduces the inevitable difficulty to a minimum*. Thus it is that the writer is bound to refrain from pushing his own view in the following chapters. He has thought it best therefore to state the chief hypotheses once and for all before starting the unfolding of the text.

Let us simply try with God’s help to secure that our view does not leave out anything revealed in the Word of God, in order to gain a precarious consistency.

(a) Some hold that everything connected with salvation, *including faith*, is the gift of God: God from all eternity elected out of humanity those who should certainly be saved, and brought to bear on them alone the necessary grace.

(b) Others, that everything connected with salvation is the gift of God, but that *faith*, i.e. the faculty of acceptance or at least of non-resistance, is man's. God foresaw the faith of some and thus predestined them.

(c) While the above two aim at consistency a third boldly abandons it: everything, including faith, is of God; yet His grace extends to all, and men only fail through their own resistance.

There are other views, and other variations of these views, but the above are the representative ones. Such theories are deduced by their advocates from Scripture generally; but they would also deduce them from, and apply them to the exposition of these chapters.

Though only the third of these three views acknowledges on the face of it an "antinomy," yet the other two certainly have theirs too. The difficulty of the first is obvious: the difficulty of the second lies in the very idea of foreknowledge.

Perplexing and even distressing though these things are, nothing can shake the fact that Jesus lives; and that the Infinite God is the Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ. If so, we need not suspend our life of Christian action awaiting the complete removal of all our intellectual inability.

These chapters are not, however, primarily a treatise on such subjects, although incidentally they do assume importance. The thought that moves the soul of the apostle is—"Israel! the once chosen people . . . now the rejected!" For many a year has this mysterious, this distressing fact—that as a whole Israel is rejecting the Christ, and in so doing is rejected herself—been weighing on him. And now he pours forth the thoughts that have given him rest—conceived as it were from a height with an enormous prospect both behind and before. Let us first then try to feel with him the initial difficulty.

I.

Let us then trace, historically, St. Paul's dealings with his fellow-countrymen, that we may be able to enter into his feelings on this matter at the time of writing this Epistle—nearly twenty years after his conversion.

1. His eager witness to them at the very outset, Acts ix. 19-22 : the painfully disappointing result, vers. 23-25. And again, vers. 28-30.

2. His first thought in his first missionary journey is for them : xiii. 14, etc. See the pathos, the affectionate sternness of the sermon. Result, ver. 43 : but, ver. 45. Then the significant words of ver. 46.

3. Then a monotony of the same sad sequence : xiv. 1, 2-6, 19. And, in the second journey, xvii. 1 ("as his custom was") -3 ; the result, ver. 4 ; but, ver. 5, etc. Again, vers. 10-13. And again, xviii. 4-6 (the significant words again).

II.

Yesterday brought us down to the time of the writing of the Romans. But the subsequent events also will throw light on these chapters.

1. The words of xx. 18-20.

2. Let us glance through ch. xxi. ; Paul's eagerness not to cause offence. The result. The pathos of the address in ch. xxii. The result. Paul's words in xxvi. 20, 21.

3. The last scene : xxviii. 17-24. The significant words, 25-28.

4. Do you notice any development in Paul's conviction that the Jews as a whole would not hear ?

5. But is there the smallest cessation of earnest effort ? see, e.g., xxviii. 23.

III.

ROMANS ix. 1—5.

We see thus a life-long effort, a life-long desire, a life-long disillusionment, a life-long pain. Is not this borne out in the opening words?

1. **vers. 1-5.** The pain. Its depth. Its keenness aggravated by Israel's privileges.

2. **ver. 5.** Is this one of the most profound assertions of the Godhood of Christ Jesus?

IV.

ROMANS ix. 6—13.

But is the mere fact of a rejection of a part, however large, of a class once accepted, the sign of Divine failure? Look at the past.

1. **ver. 7.** There was rejection as early as this. **vers. 8, 9**—the principle of this rejection.

2. **ver. 10.** Later on, an even clearer case.

[N.B.—**ver. 13.** Where is this quoted from? The prophet was looking back on history. **hated**—Lk. xiv. 26.]

V.

ROMANS ix. 14—29.

We now come to the very core of the mystery—and the difficulty.

One thing is plain: Paul is striving to make us see that no one has *claims on God*: no one is God's creditor: no one can grumble at God's dispensation.

Here are two thoughts: (a) God has His reasons, whether we know them or not. If we don't know them, must we believe that He has them . . . or not? Think of a father and a very little child. Now God is revealed to be the Father of Jesus Christ.

(b) Suppose a worthless fellow, whom some kind-hearted person had persistently benefited: as time goes on this man begins to think these benefits are *due to him* . . . begins to claim them, and feel injured if he is told they may cease. What sort of conduct is this? What does it deserve?

VI.

ROMANS ix. 14—21.

With these thoughts let us examine the passage a little more in detail.

1. **ver. 16.** Looked at like this (see yesterday), who can deny this verse?

2. **ver. 17.** N.B. nothing is said about the antecedent passages between Jehovah and Pharaoh. **raise up** = 'give thee high earthly position.' Looking at the instruction received by Israel and all succeeding people, has Pharaoh's colossal failure been without a blessing to the race?

3. **vers. 19-21.** The *Maker* knows best: the *Thinker* is the thoughtful one.

VII.

ROMANS ix. 22—29.

1. **vers. 22-24.** As with Pharaoh, a rejection may bring good to mankind at large. (We shall hear more of this later) The antecedent reasons for rejection are another matter.

2. **vers. 25-29.** This principle was fully realized by the prophets.

VIII.

We may pause at this point and note the various ways in which the three views mentioned in the Introduction would tend to interpret this ninth chapter. See *Introd.* p. 2.

(*a*) God simply chose certain men, and rejected others. Isaac; Jacob; the remnant: Ishmael, Esau, Pharaoh. He gave both the faith and the resistance.

(*b*) Those who fulfilled the condition of faith were chosen; those who did not fulfil it, or who having once fulfilled it fell to thinking God's grace their own merit, were rejected. The spontaneous resistance might be divinely aggravated for salutary reasons.

(*c*) God did indeed give the faith to those whom He chose. Nevertheless those others resisted God's grace and were therefore rejected.

All three agree that all was foreseen in eternity.

IX.

ROMANS ix. 30—33.

From here to **x. 21** is a fresh section. The *cause of Israel's rejection*.

1. **vers. 30, 32.** The keynote: **faith**. (What is *faith*? What is it *not*? Remember chh. i.-viii.)

2. **ver. 33.** See Mt. xxv. 27-30, Lk. xix. 26, and the whole lesson of St. John's Gospel:—if a blessing is not a blessing it must be a curse. If love does not draw it repels.

X.

ROMANS x. 1—4.

They sought it not by faith. Such is the text. St. Paul takes us on to see clearly the nature of this gospel of faith: how it may, and may not, be received.

vers. 1-4. Let us simply recall what we learned in Part I. and these four verses will be clear. They are in fact an abstract of Paul's gospel.

XI.

ROMANS x. 5—10.

The two systems—God's and man's—contrasted.

1. **vers. 5-10.** These verses prove the great assertion of ver. 4. The law is shown to be inconclusive and unsatisfactory (ver. 5): the gospel, simple and conclusive (vers. 8-10). Therefore Christ is "the end" of the law. **End** might mean to complete, to put an end to, to crown, to come as that which was pointed to. Which here? Perhaps all four?

2. **ver. 5.** Such is the principle of law, *as law*. And is it not so? [Nevertheless, grace is not confined to the New Testament.] Whence is the very quotation taken which serves to describe the reign of grace (vers. 6-8)?

XII.

ROMANS x. 5—10.

Let us examine this great passage once more.

1. **vers. 6, 7.** **that is to . . . that is to . . .** The words might mean: (a) "with the object of bringing Christ down" . . . "with the object of bringing Christ up." or (b) "for that would imply that Christ needed bringing down (i.e. that He had never been incarnated)" . . . "for that would imply that Christ needed raising up (i.e. that He had never overcome death)."

The sense is plain:—what God has already done, presume not to seek to do. Was not such in fact the very offence of the Jews?

2. **ver. 8.** **mouth . . . heart . . .** These are expanded in 9, 10. Cp. Jer. xxxi. 31-34. Every detail suggests ease, nearness, simplicity.

XIII.

ROMANS x. 11—15.

1. We had seen in Part I. that the gospel was simple and easy. What else did we see about it? See **iii. 22—all: i. 16—every one—v. 18—all**. Did the Jew like this aspect of the gospel any more than its simplicity?

2. Thus these verses bring out this *universality*. **whosoever (11), no distinction . . . all (12), whosoever (13)**.

3. **vers. 14, 15**. Such a gospel required a similar apostolate. But the Jews had objected to this also.

XIV.

ROMANS x. 16—21.

1. This gospel, simple, universal, had been definitely rejected (**16**). But had they had a fair chance? See **ver. 18**. St. Paul's own efforts (Studies I., II.) answered the question.

2. **vers. 19, 20**. Was this universalism unknown in the Old Testament? Think of the passages where Israel is described as bearing a blessing for the *world*.

3. **ver. 21**. The possibility of resistance to grace by a chosen people also realised by men of the Old Testament.

XV.

ROMANS xi. 1—12.

Israel is rejected. But is every Israelite rejected? and is Israel itself rejected for ever?

1. **vers. 1-6.** “*Si quaeris, circumspice*” (ver. 1b).
See also **ix. 27-29.**

2. **vers. 7-10.** See 2 Cor. iii. 14-16. Take a reference Bible and see how often the sad words of **7b** are quoted in the New Testament. Love, if it does not draw, repels.

3. **vers. 11, 12.** See Study VII. § 1. The ultimate purpose is love.

“ Behind a frowning providence
He hides a smiling face.”

XVI.

ROMANS xi. 13—end.

Let us read straight through. It is an expansion of **vers. 11, 12.**

“ His purposes will ripen fast,
Unfolding every hour;
The bud may have a bitter taste,
But sweet will be the flower.”

Let us think, to-day, of the preceding two chapters in the light of this conclusion.

XVII.

ROMANS xi. 13—end.

1. What does one learn from this passage,
as to the debt of the world to the Jews :
as to the duty of evangelising the Jews to-day :
as to the blessing they are infallibly going to be
to the world :
as to when that time will come ?

2. What sort of a comment is this passage on the average treatment of them by Christians : what sort of a comment has the attitude of Christians been on **vers. 18-21** ?

3. The passage has grown familiar to us ; but just reflect on the extraordinary, unhesitating firmness with which St. Paul utters these amazing predictions—for so they are. Not all is yet fulfilled. But is not this one thing enough, that the Jews are this day a visible, intact people ? Surely the rest is easy after that ! “What is the proof of Christianity ?” asked Frederick the Great. “The Jews, Sir,” said Frederick’s chaplain.

XVIII.

ROMANS xii. 1, 2.

From **xii. 1** to **xiii. 10** we have the lessons as to conduct that are drawn from the entire preceding sweep of revealed truth. **xiii. 11-14**—A sort of lyrical appendix—as it were the epilogue, the final appeal.

1. **ver. 1.** *therefore*—*What* premisses have gone to give this conclusion ! **present**, etc. See **vi. 19**.

2. **ver. 2.** *fashioned*—The Greek word denotes the outward accidental guise : **transformed**—the Greek word denotes the inward essential form.

3. **ver. 2.** *that*, etc.—Master the meaning of the clause. It gives the object of our yielding wholly to God. “Thy will for me be done” is the root-prayer : but how shall we divine that will ?

XIX.

ROMANS xii. 3—5.

1. **vers. 3, 4.** **For . . . For**—We should try to trace the thought-connection here.

Take it backwards:

“We are many members in one body” (vers. 4, 5):

“*therefore* think of thyself as simply having one of many functions in this complex body; perhaps a lowly function”: (ver. 3)

“*therefore* find out *what* function the will of God has for thee”: (ver. 26)

“*therefore* live close to God.” (ver. 2a, 1)

2. This is in fact the key of the chapter. The rest is a description of the inner workings of this complex membership, the Church.

XX.

ROMANS xii. 6—21.

1. **vers. 6-8.** Descriptive of the different functions and the one spirit that should characterise their exercise.

2. **vers. 9-21.** Various precepts: the first word of the section strikes the true chord.

The difficulties of exegesis are mostly over. There is simply need for prolonged meditation. Notice what a crowd of precepts! But are these mere detached precepts? See Gal, v. 22, 23.

XXI.

ROMANS xiii. 1--7.

But the Christian is not merely a member of the Christian organism. He is a member of the political organism. What duties has he there: what is **the good, acceptable, and perfect will of God** for him there?

1. See I Pet. ii. 13-17, I Tim. ii. 1, 2. Let us reflect on the use made by St. Paul of the civil power . . . of the facilities furnished by the Empire for the spread of the Gospel. . . .

2. Many have thought "the world" and all its institutions to be simply of the devil. How does such a view arise? What is its error? How can it be met?

3. Eight years later, the highest "power" was going to persecute Christians. Would that make any difference to the principles here laid down? Let us meditate carefully on Jn. xix. 10, 11.

XXII.

ROMANS xiii. 8-10.

1. The summing up. The return to the key-note (ver. 10, cp. xii. 9a).

2. Where else, in Epistles or Gospels, is LOVE thus singled out as fulfilling all law?

XXIII.

ROMANS xiii. 11—14.

The note passes into one of poetry. The section is a *coda* to the whole of the section **xii. 1—xiii. 10.**

1. **And this**—what? . . . If it only refers to vers. **8-10**, or **1-10**, the connection is a little obscure. But see above. It is the awful sanction to Christian Holiness—*The Lord is at hand!*

2. **Salvation.** See Part I. Salvation is of three kinds. Which is this? Evidently that alluded to in **v. 9b.**

3. **vers. 12-14.** The ring of these words is mysteriously solemn. It was the chance sight of the last verse that finally decided the surrender of passion-tossed St. Augustine.

4. **Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ.** What other Biblical passages, what other figures, justify this most striking figure?

XXIV.

ROMANS xiv. 1—6.

From here to **xv. 13** is the last section in this Epistle that contains Apostolic *teaching*. What occasioned it? Read 1 Cor. viii. rapidly.

Some think that the existence of a Jewish minority in the Roman church is alluded to; or the existence of some Gentiles who had adopted the Jewish faith previously; or of some Pythagorean or other ascetic philosophers. No matter. What is the essential point?

1. How should you say the subject of this section follows on **xii., xiii.**? Cp. **xii. 3, 10**, for example, with **xiv. 19.**

2. **vers. 2, 5.** The case stated:—two concrete difficulties.

3. **vers. 3, 4, 6.** The case met:—the great principle.

XXV.

ROMANS xiv. 7—12.

ver. 7. Compare 2 Cor. v. 14, 15. We are all related to each other—*but it is through Christ* (8, 9). If we criticise then, we put ourselves in Christ's position—on the throne instead of at the footstool (10-12: see a remarkable commentary in James iv. 11, 12: also 1 Cor. iv. 3-5).

XXVI.

ROMANS xiv. 13—23.

There is another principle higher than criticism. We have heard of it already. See too James ii. 12, 13.

1. **ver. 14.** See 1 Cor. x. 26; 1 Tim. iv. 3-5.

2. **ver. 15.** See 1 Cor. viii. 7-13. In fact every verse of this section can be paralleled from 1 Cor. viii., x. 23-33.

3. **vers. 17, 20a.** One of those lightning touches will simply paralyse the opposition. In the life of Gilmour of Mongolia there is a good example of an application of these chapters.

XXVII.

ROMANS xv. 1—4.

But now the whole matter is carried up to a higher plane: this matter of "meats" is only one of many instances: this all-solving "love" owes its existence to the eternal tragedy.

1. **ver. 1.** Cp. Gal. vi. 1, 2.

2. **ver. 2.** Did Paul practise what he preached? See I Cor. ix. 19-22.

3. **ver. 3.** Here is at once the ground, the explanation, and means of fulfilment, of the command to self-sacrifice. **For . . .** There are worlds of meaning in that word. Cp. 2 Cor. v. 13, 14-16; Phil. ii. 4, 5-8; Jn. xv. 12, 13; I Jn. iv. 10, 11.

4. **ver. 4.** **For**—Let us try to become very clear as to the thought connection.

XXVIII.

ROMANS xv. 5—13.

1. **ver. 5.** **patience . . . comfort . . .** Connect with the last verse.

2. **of the same mind (5). one accord (6).** So this is the upshot of all these latter sections. See **xii. 3** seqq. Also Phil. iii. 15-17, iv. 2, 3; Eph. iv. 1-3.

3. **ver. 8. you**—Is he speaking to Gentiles especially or Jews as well? See the context.

It was much more of a mystery to St. Paul and the early church that the Gentiles should be brought in, than it is to us who regard Christianity rather as our peculiar right. See **xi. 11**, and the awe and amazement of Eph. iii. 4, 5, 6.

4. **ver. 13.** The conclusion of the teaching of the Epistle,

XXIX.

A PARADOX.

Here is a question worth considering. The answering of it tests our appreciation of the principles that actuated the writer of these epistles:—

Why, in dealing with questions very similar to those mentioned in Rom. xiv., viz. meats and drinks and holy days and ritual generally, did St. Paul once appear to do quite the reverse of “receiving” the “weak in faith”? The allusion is to the Epistle to the Galatians (e.g. iv. 10, 11; v. 2-4). Moreover he “judged” on that occasion, and to some purpose (see too 1 Cor. v. 3, 13). There is judging and judging. What is the difference?

XXX.

A BIBLE STUDY.

ROM. xii., EPH. iv.

By some four or five crowded years were these two passages separated from each other.

Eph. iv.			Rom. xii.
vers. 1, 2, 3 ...	...	...	ver. 3
vers. 4, 5, 6 ...	...	...	vers. 4, 5
vers. 7, 8, 11, etc. ...	...	...	vers. 6-8
vers. 17-19 ...	...	...	ver. 1
vers. 20-24 ...	...	...	ver. 2
vers. 25-end ...	...	...	vers. 9-end.

The apparent dislocation of two of the parallels is due to the fact that you may either work *from* or *to* your conclusion.

Does not all this show that infinite practical results flow from the realisation of the doctrine of The Body? Are we realising it, and its practical results?

XXXI.

ROMANS xv. 14—21.

The class is over. Teacher and pupils mingle together for conversation as between friend and friend.

1. Read once more **i. 8-15**. The transition *to* the teaching of the Epistle is the same as the transition *from* it.

St. Paul, longing to see Rome ;
(**i. 9-13a**).
based on his apostleship to the
Gentiles (**i. 13b-15**).

St. Paul's apostleship to the
Gentiles (**xv. 15-22**)
the ground of his longing to come
to Rome (**xv. 23** seqq.).

The same delicate touch, too, in **i. 8, xv 14**.

2. A highly-wrought verse—one of the few in the New Testament where thoroughly priestly terminology is used.

Query, is it *quâ* ordained minister, or *quâ* preacher and man of prayer that he claims to be "doing priest-work" (*ἰσπουροῦντα*, "ministering")? The whole subject needs closer, and calmer, thinking than it usually gets.

3. **fully preached (19)**. What was St. Paul's inspired missionary policy? This is a study in itself. Many to-day think it was the evangelisation of the *Roman Empire*, through its great centres (Antioch . . . Roman-Galatia . . . Macedonia . . . Corinth . . . Ephesus : and thus, Rome . . . Spain).

XXXII.

ROMANS xv. 22—33.

1. **vers. 22, 23**. Certainly these verses make it look as though he had no mere haphazard plan of evangelisation. A certain work must be done ere he travels westward.

2. **vers. 25-28**. All through this epoch, this collection was heavily on Paul's soul. See 1 Cor. xvi. 1-4, 2 Cor. viii., ix. : perh. Gal. vi. 10.

3. **vers. 30-33**. See how heavily it presses. There is much emotion underlying these words. Why?

(a) This charge had been solemnly laid on him. Gal. ii. 10. (N.B. "the poor" denotes a particular class : the indigent Church of Jerusalem was the standing 'social problem' of the early Church.)

(b) St. Paul was a suspect to Jewish Christians. This contribution from him and his (suspected) heretical churches would be a sort of eirenicon. *Would it be accepted (xv. 31)?* Success meant peace in the Church for ever : the thought of failure was agony.

XXXIII.

ROMANS xvi. 1—16.

The pathos of the Epistle grows with the growth of the personal element. We should try to make this little company live and move before our eyes. The "*Epistle to the Romans*" is a quaintly grandiose title when we picture this modest little society of friends.

1. **ver. 1. Phoebe** most likely carried the letter.
2. **ver. 3. Priscilla and Aquila.** How were they in Rome? Their history when followed out is very interesting.
3. **ver. 5. the church at their house.** In early times the large room of a private house formed the home of the Christians of the district.
4. How had so many of St. Paul's friends got to Rome? Well, how do so many of yours get to London? The question tends to throw light on the ethnology of the Roman church.

XXXIV.

ROMANS xvi. 17—27.

1. **vers. 17, 18.** The dark shadow that dogged all the movements of Paul is but the shadow of a shadow at Rome. To what is the allusion? See Phil. iii. 2 seqq.; Titus i. 10, 11; much of the Corinthian Epistles, and the whole of Galatians.

2. **vers. 21-23.** Most of the names mentioned here are mentioned elsewhere in the N.T. In fact, it were worth our while to take all the names in this chapter and carefully piece together all the information concerning them, e.g. what is there to make one think that Rufus (13) is identical with the Rufus spoken of in Mk. xv. 21?

3. **vers. 25-27.** A doxology of more than usual length, eloquence and sublimity closes this greatest of all Paul's letters.

The immediate (Acts xvii. 30b) evangelisation of the world (ver. 26) was the event towards which the entire history of creation had moved!

XXXV.

EPILOGUE.

With the Epistle in our minds, is it not interesting to trace the subsequent relationship of St. Paul with Rome?

Was he delivered from the disobedient in Judea (xv. 31)? Was his advent to Rome as immediate as he had hoped? How did God answer him and them better than their prayers?

In the last chapter of Acts, picture the scene in the light of what ch. **xvi.** has suggested to our imaginations.

If we turn to Phil. i. we gain a further insight: but much in Phil. i. is only explained by this Epistle. e.g. cp. Phil. i. 15-18 with **xvi. 17-19.**

Some four years after the Epistle to Philippians the storm of Nero's persecution broke on the Roman church. Did Paul see it? We do not know:—most likely *not*. But these very men and women whose names are immortalised in ch. **xvi.**—did not some of them see that time and lay down their lives? It is curious to reflect that in Rom. xvi. the infinitely divergent orbits of Paul's writings and those of the Roman Tacitus meet for one instant.

It must have been to a dreary change that St. Paul returned when he came to Rome for the second time, after the persecution and just before his own martyrdom. Look at the closing section of 2 Tim. iv. It makes a speaking and infinitely pathetic contrast with the last chapter of Romans.

For United Study.

(N.B.—Little would be lost if those who are united by studying the Epistle deferred meeting and discussing chs. ix.-xi until the completion of the chapters in question. So much are they of one piece; so impossible is it to grasp the whole truth at the end of ix., without taking x. into consideration.)

But if this does not commend itself, let circles meet as usual and select from this lengthy study topics for united discussion. But in any case the whole section, ix.-xi., should be glanced over before each of the meetings.)

I. (ix.-xi.).

(a)

1. *Where, in chs. i.-viii., have premonitory hints of the subject of ix.-xi. been thrown out?*

2. *What circumstances rendered the unbelief and rejection of the Jewish nation a fact peculiarly painful to Paul?*

3. *What was his attitude to Jews in his missionary travels?*

4. **ix. 4, 5.** *Reflect on the history of the Jews from Abraham to Christ. Are the phenomena of unbelief and rejection absent even in the Old Testament?*

5. **ver. 5.** *Is this a peculiarly strong assertion of the Godhood of our Lord? (See specially the Greek text.)*

(Perhaps the first meeting might be confined to the above topics.)

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(b)

6. *Get clear views as to the impossibility, the folly, and the sin of thinking that man in the last analysis has CLAIMS ON GOD,*

7. *If so, how about a man who having been favoured, grows to think of the favour as his DUE?*

8. *Does the divine aggravation of human sin never have merciful results?*

9. *In the Old Testament, and in the gospels, can you exemplify the sin mentioned in §§ 6, 7 above?*

10. *It were well worth while studying unitedly x. 4-10.*

.

(c)

11. *What has been the general history of the Jews since the fall of Jerusalem? The study of the S.V.M.U. text-book, by Mr. Gidney, works in well here. Let every member of the circle contribute what he knows as to*

the places where Jews have been found since 70 A.D. : the extent to which they have kept pure their nationality :

” ” ” ” ” ” ” ” ” ” *religion :*

” ” ” ” ” ” ” ” ” ” *hope of becoming once more numbered amongst the nations.*

12. *Reflect on the MIRACLE of these facts. Assyria, Babylon, the Greek dispersion, the Latin races—are their phenomena comparable in wonder with the Jewish?*

13. *What think you then of confident prophecies of ch. xi.?*

What is fulfilled?

What remains? Is what remains harder than what is already a fact?

14. *What is our duty to the Jews as Christians?*

15. *In the light of ix., x., reverently and cautiously discuss xi, 32.*

II. (xii.-xvi.).

The divisions correspond with the logical divisions of these chapters. The topics for each united meeting must be selected according to the point reached by each circle in its private study at each time of meeting.

(a)

1. *What is the force of therefore in xii. 1?*
2. *Unfold carefully xii. 1-8.*
3. *A short New Testament study on love (xii. 9, xiii. 8-10).*

(b)

4. *How did the Roman Empire bear on Christianity in St. Paul's time? Reflect on xiii. 1-7 in the light of this.*
5. *In the era of the persecutions, how would xiii. 1-7 be interpretable?*

Ponder Jn. xix. 10, 11.

6. *Does the passage throw any light on the relations of Church and State?*
7. *What is the connection of xiii. 11-14 with what goes before?*

(c)

8. *Compare Rom. xiv., xv., with 1 Cor. viii., x. 23-33.*
9. *Why does St. Paul seem to have been so complaisant in the above two cases and so stern with the Galatians?*

(d)

10. *Run through the subsequent history of St. Paul in the light of xv. 14-33, xvi.*
11. *What light does xvi. throw on the ethnology of the Roman Church? What was the fate of those mentioned here? Account for the language of 2 Tim. iv. 9-21.*

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