

PLACE OF WRITING: CORINTH; as evident from the greetings of **Gaius**, who lived at Corinth (16:23; 1Co 1:14), and of Erastus, who had settled down there (16:23; 2Ti 4:20). Also, Phoebe, who apparently accompanied the epistle (16:1-2), was from the church at Cenchrea, a "suburb" of Corinth.

TIME OF WRITING: 57-58 A.D.; while on his third journey (Ac 20:1-3), just prior to his arrival to Jerusalem with the collection for the needy saints (15:25-26; Ac 20:16; 24:17).

BACKGROUND OF THE CHURCH AT ROME: It is probable that Jewish visitors to Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost when the Spirit came were among the 3000 baptized and later took the gospel with them back home (Ac 2:10). It could also be that among those dispersed following Stephen's death were some that went to Rome and preached the gospel there (Ac 8:1-4). The first we read of disciples of Rome is possibly that of Aquila and Priscilla, who along with all Jews were expelled from Rome by Claudius and were found by Paul at Corinth during his second journey (Ac 18:1-2). We find them back at Rome and hosting a church in their house in this letter (16:3-5). It appears that there were several congregations in Rome meeting in various homes (16:5,14,15). The names of individuals would suggest that the Christians were primarily Gentiles, with a number of believing Jews. The reputation of the Christians in Rome was widespread; both their faith (1:8) and obedience (16:19). For this reason Paul had longed to see them (15:23), with the goal of sharing in their mutual edification (1:11-12) and to be assisted on his way to Spain (15:22-24).

PURPOSE OF WRITING: Paul expresses in this epistle that he had for some time planned to preach the gospel at Rome (1:13-15) and from there go on to Spain (15:22-24). Though he still had these intentions (15:28-29), the spreading cancer of the "Judaizing teachers" which had disrupted churches in Antioch, Corinth and Galatia was likely to make its way to Rome. To prevent this, and to assure that his visit to Rome would be a pleasant one (15:30-33), Paul writes:

A. The Gospel - God's Power Unto SALVATION (Rescue)

1. Mankind was handed over by God into universal depravity (1:18-2:16)
2. This depraved condition includes the Jews as well as the non-Jew (2:17-3:8)
3. The universal need for Salvation (3:9-20)

B. JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH - THE "PROVISION" MADE FOR SALVATION

1. God's Righteousness Through Faith (3:21-31)
2. Abraham As An Example (4:1-25)

C. FREEDOM - THE "RESULT" OF SALVATION

1. Freedom from corruption and reconciliation of sinners (5:1-21)
2. Freedom from sin to resurrection living - the new bond slaves (6:1-23)
3. The former (bondage) life under the Law (7:1-25)

^{RSV} Romans 6:23 The wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 6:23 τὰ γὰρ ὀψώνια τῆς ἀμαρτίας θάνατος, τὸ δὲ χάρισμα τοῦ θεοῦ ζωὴ αἰώνιος ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ τῷ κυρίῳ ἡμῶν.

^{NET} Romans 6:23 For the payoff of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.