

Romans (Eng) First Sectional Exam Review

Introduction

Gospel of God

Gospel of God, OT—Hebrew Story

1. *God and Creation*. What are the four theological datums about God and evil in the Hebrew story of God and creation? What do the stories of Adam and Noah specifically reveal about life and grace?
2. *God and Israel*. What are the two theological datums about election in the Hebrew story of God and Israel? What does the story of Abraham specifically reveal about the channel of God's grace?
3. *God and Nations*. What are the four theological datums about law and nationhood in the Hebrew story of God and the nations? What do the stories of Moses and Israel specifically reveal about law and nationhood?

Gospel of God, OT—Story Preserved

1. *Law: Israel's Code*. What are three crucial observations from Deut 30:18–19 about Israel and the promised land?
2. *Prophets: Israel's Enforcers*. What are four observations about kingship in Israel that can be derived from historical and prophetic passages such as 1 Sam 8:1–9, 2 Chron 30:15–16, and Isa 9:6–7?

Gospel of God, OT—Story Unfinished

1. *Israel and Exile*. What is the enigma left by Israel's story of exile? That is, what were the consequences of sin in Israel both nationally and spiritually?
2. *Israel and Return*. What is the enigma left by Israel's story of return? That is, what were the consequences of Ezra in Israel both positively and negatively?
3. *Israel and Messiah*. What is the enigma left by Israel's story of Messiah? That is, what were the consequences of Davidic ruler expectations in Israel both short term (fulfillment) and long term (Maccabean Revolt)?

Gospel of God, NT—Jesus Story

1. *Jesus and Gospel*. How did Jesus understand the Davidic messiah promise in terms of how he answered John the Baptist disciples in Matt 11:1–6, alluding to Isa 35:5–6, and his inaugural sermon in Lk 4:16–21, alluding to Isa 61:1?
2. How did Jesus understand his life and ministry according to Lk 1:72–73 and Matt 26:27–28?
3. *Jesus and Church*. How did Jesus understand his followers as presented in the three paradigms of cross, love, and witness in Mk 8:34, Jn 17:20–21, and Lk 24:47?
4. *Jesus and Nations*. How did Jesus understand his community throughout history in terms of the “Great Commission” in Matt 28:18–20?

Gospel of God, NT—Story Preserved

1. As one studies the early collections of the Gospels and epistles, as well as Revelation, what can be said about the pragmatics of the canonical process?

Gospel of God, NT—Story Finished

1. *Israel and Messiah*. How does Jesus' fulfillment of Isaiah's Servant figure in the Servant songs (Isa 41:8–10; 42:1–4; 49:1–6; 50:4–11; 52:13–53:12) redefine Messiah against Israel's own expectations?
2. *Israel and New Covenant*. How does Jeremiah's “new covenant” theology explain the death of Jesus and define the true Jew?
3. *Israel and Church*. How does Hosea's “not my people” and Isaiah's “remnant” affect the understanding of the profile of God's people in the end time?
4. What mysterious elements still remain for understanding Israel and the church in passages such as Rom 11:25–26, Eph 3:8–10, and Rom 8:19–22?

*Narrative of Israel*Synagogue Context and Narrative

1. When one studies the comments of Philo, the activity of Jesus, and the story in Acts, what is clear about the institution of the synagogue?
2. What should this background indicate when entering into exegesis of a difficult statement in Paul?
3. What does Dr. Stevens mean by the “synagogue narrative”? Describe the legend that is essential to this narrative. Who is the ultimate seer of God in this legend? Who is the ultimate seer of this one who sees God? How does this chain of interpretation set the trajectory for postexilic Israel? The protest of Jerusalem developments in the Hasmonean period by what famous teacher shows that neither Jesus nor Paul was the first Jew to find fault with the Pharisee vision of Israel?

Pauline Experience and Narrative

1. Clear in Acts and Paul is that the Damascus Road experience is crucial to Paul. Describe what ways this vision had inherent Pharisaic appeal to Paul and so “made sense” to him.
2. Explain crucial ways the vision redirected Paul’s hermeneutic in terms of the Great Assembly, the synagogue, prophetic authority, Mosaic tradition, and the Abrahamic promise.
3. Paul’s own narrative of Israel clearly followed the “gospel of God” pattern. What specific ideas related to individuals in this metanarrative of Israel who turned the plot does Paul have? (Cf. Adam, Abraham, Moses, David, Isaiah, Ezra).
4. Identify three ways the “gospel of God” is good news in Pauline reflection.

*Paul*Life

1. *Jewish background.* What can we say of Paul’s family, language, and training learned through Acts and his epistles? What specifically would we learn about his scriptural knowledge, style of argumentation, beliefs, attitude to gentiles, and zeal if indeed he were a Pharisee of the Hillel persuasion?
2. *Greco-Roman background.* What would Roman origins tell us about Paul’s experiences in general? If Roman citizenship in Acts 22:28 were verified, what might we deduce from this possession of Roman citizenship in Paul’s family?
3. What two major elements of Paul’s life reveal Paul’s thorough absorption of Hellenistic culture? Give a few examples of Stoic patterns of thought in particular.
4. *Damascus Road.* What activity reveals Paul’s persecution of the early church prior to the Damascus Road experience?
5. What three major terms does Paul himself use to refer to the Damascus Road? What are the implications of this type of terminology for understanding the Damascus Road as a “conversion” experience? In what two ways in Paul’s own thoughts does he understand and explain the significance of the Damascus Road?

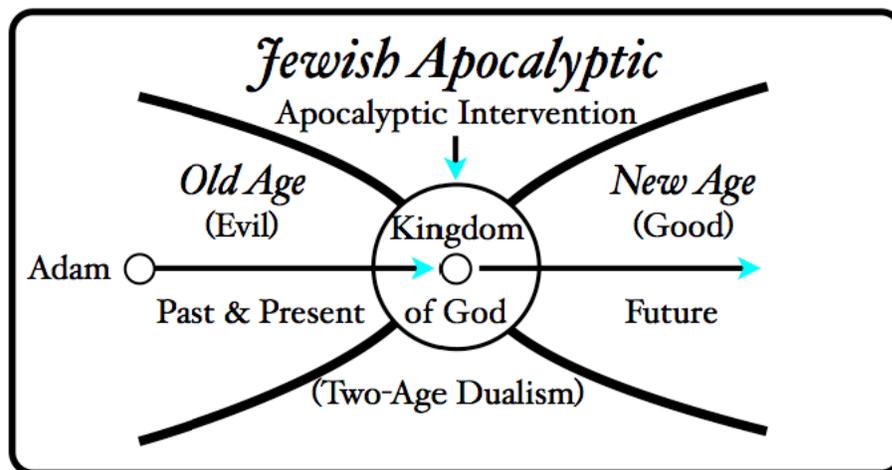
Mission

1. *Preparation.* How did Paul’s experience immediately after the Damascus Road in Arabia, in the synagogues, and in Antioch prepare him for his eventual gentile mission?
2. *Journeys.* What are three significant outcomes of the first missionary journey that will reveal permanent patterns in the mission work of Paul?
3. What disturbed conservative Jewish believers in Jerusalem that precipitated the Jerusalem conference? What were the two major decisions of this conference as summarized by James that freed Paul for his following missions?
4. What two significant elements from the second missionary journey set the stage in the life of Paul and in the life of the church at Rome that becomes background to the letter to the Romans? (Hint 1: From where did Paul write Romans? Hint 2: What emperor’s action at this time affected not only Paul’s 2MJ companions, but the church of Rome itself?)

- Detail Paul's third missionary journey, his two *major* companions, the length of time, the number of years, and the major city of this work; the significance of the establishment of satellite churches for mission strategy; the major correspondence written at this time and the two crises this correspondence reveals (church and collection); what brings the ministry to catastrophic collapse and why this mission-base collapse is crucial to understanding the context of Romans; and where Paul eventually winds up to winter for three months and probably write Romans.

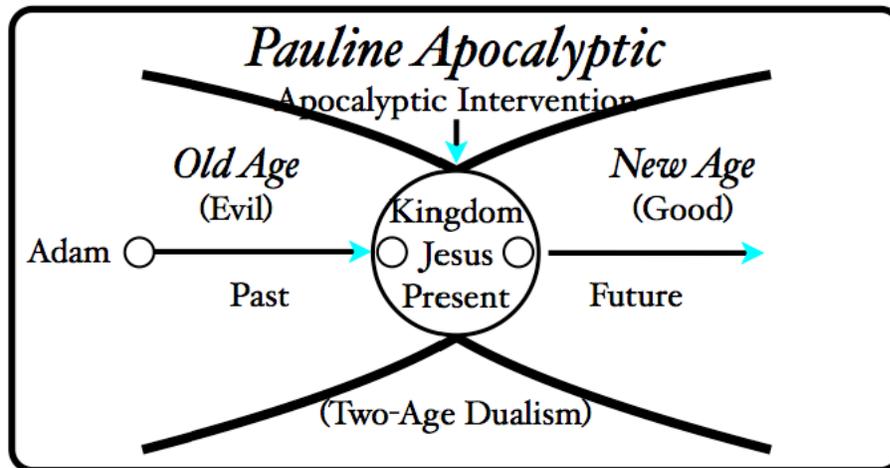
Message

- Paul and Authority.* In what way does Paul situate himself in regard to the Mosaic tradition and Pharisaic oral law? What metaphor does Paul use to describe the reading of the law in Jewish synagogues post-Messiah? What does Paul insist about the gospel in relationship to the law?
- In what way does Paul situate himself in regard to the Christian tradition and his gospel?
- How does Paul characterize his call in relation to human and divine elements? In spite of his insistence on this characterization and what this might suggest about his concord with the church, what is Paul's unswerving position in regard to gospel unity?
- Paul and Gospel.* Give a few examples—in terms of the act, consequences, and implications—of the fundamentally metaphorical nature of Paul's word of the cross. What are the common elements in all of these images? What does the metaphorical nature of the language of the word of the cross infer about what is not actually the core of Paul's theological framework?
- What is the core and central conviction that is the generative center of all Paul's theological reflection? What are the two basic convictions? What framework is best suited for the task of incorporating this theology into a coherent storyline? Why? How does this framework interpret the death of Jesus in terms of his condemnation as a lawbreaker and the opinions of his opponents?
- Paul and Eschatology.* Using the diagram below, describe the two aeon framework of Jewish eschatology in terms of the original epoch event and its consequences that started the whole problem and what the in-breaking kingdom of God would accomplish for this problem.



- Using the diagram below, describe the apostolic modification of this two-aeon eschatology in which the apostles were forced to reconfigure the in-breaking kingdom of God not as one point in history but across two epoch events related to

Christ. What does this reconfiguring mean for the strange reality of the present time situated between these two epoch events related to Christ?



8. *Paul and History*. Briefly describe history when thought of in terms of God's lordship as Paul apparently does.
9. Briefly outline the presuppositions of this lordship frame to human history and the implications for the issues of survival, destiny, ethics, and gospel.

Romans

Historical Background

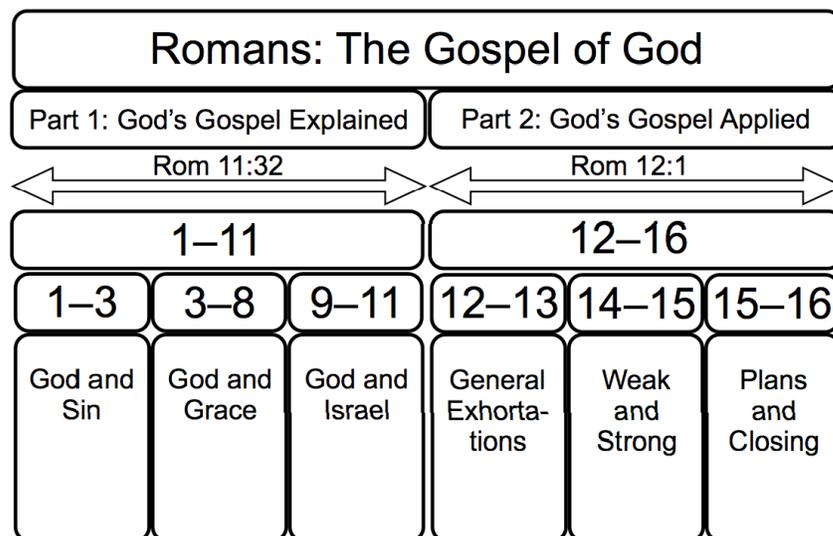
1. *Authorship*. Authorship is not questioned. However, what is the potential level of involvement of an ancient secretary? What level of involvement is generally thought that Tertius had? Why?
2. *Date and Place*. How can the situation of the collection and the details of the greetings in Rom 16 help determine the date and place of composition of Romans? What is the likely date and place then?
3. *Destination*. What is the likely historical beginning of a Jewish diaspora in Rome? What is the likely beginning of the church in Rome?
4. *Paul's Life Setting*. What are the three recent crises in Paul's life at the time of writing Romans? What potential loss is involved with each problem?
5. What are the three destinations in Paul's itinerary at the time of writing Romans? How does each destination impact Paul's plans?
6. *Rome's Life Setting*. Explain the development of the "Age of Augustus," that is, who was Octavian, and what did he accomplish? Describe how the ancient city of Aphrodisias and the *Ara Pacis* monument illustrates what Dr. Stevens calls "the Roman gospel."
7. When was the Edict of Claudius, and what probable impact did this edict have on the ethnic composition of the church in Rome and the location of weekly worship?
8. Describe the two stages of Nero's political career and how this contextualizes what Paul will say about government in Rom 13.
9. What surprising revelation did Dr. Stevens present that comes from a study of the Julio-Claudian line of imperial succession?
10. *Church's Life Setting*. How does the non-apostolic and early origin of the Roman church impact that church's relationship to Paul and the gospel he preaches in terms of leadership and traditions?
11. *Jerusalem's Life Setting*. What two postexilic Jewish dynasties impacted the history of Israel? To whom were these dynasties always subject as client kingdoms the

entire time? Describe the impact of increasing Jewish nationalism on events in Judea and on the early church in Jerusalem.

12. *Slavery and Housing*. Describe the elements of the institution of slavery. Explain the idea of “slavery as society.”
13. Describe the differences between “house churches” and “tenement housing” and how these differences would impact the social setting of churches in Rome.

Literary Background

1. *Purpose*. What is the unusual connecting frame of the letter? How does this “frame” work in relation to the body of the letter?
2. What are the unusual literary characteristics of the letter in terms of length, rhetoric, and audience?
3. If the general idea of the purpose of the letter is to “gain support,” how does this relate to Paul’s apologetic, pastoral, and missionary aims?
4. If the specific idea of the purpose of Romans is “collection participation,” how does this work in Paul’s thinking at the symbolic and financial levels? Expand these two levels into a more complete statement of the purpose of Romans.
5. *Question of Spain*. What ideas have been suggested for why Paul would want to go to Spain? None of these have been persuasive, so what Dr. Stevens suggest as to why Paul wants to go to Spain?
6. *Literary Integrity*. What is the problem with the address of Romans in 1:7, 15? What is the generally accepted opinion explaining why this feature developed?
7. What is the problem of the doxology of Rom 16:25–27 in our Greek manuscripts? What does this problem suggest about the early circulation of Romans? What is the “Marcion hypothesis”? What is the “Manson Hypothesis”? What is the crucial flaw in the Manson Hypothesis? What is the “Gamble Hypothesis”?
8. What is the authenticity problem of the doxology? What features seem to infer this problem? What would explain the presence of the doxology if not original?
9. What is the question about Romans 16 in terms of its nature and purpose?
10. What is the problem of the benediction in Rom 16:20? What is the suggested scribal explanation for those manuscripts that have a “double benediction” (16:20, 24)? What is a suggested explanation for the “double benediction” related to Paul?
11. *Outline: Organizing Verse*. What is the organizing verse of Romans 1–11 according to Dr. Stevens? How does this verse reveal a tripartite structure to Romans 1–11? How does Rom 12:1 build on the main thought?
12. Be able to reproduce the graphic below related to an outline of Romans.



13. *Intertextuality*. Be able to describe Paul’s use of Scripture, law, and Israel that require a heavy dose of understanding of the issues of intertextuality in a study of Romans.
14. *Greco-Roman Letters*. What are the formal elements of a Greco-Roman letter? What three Pauline distinctives provide exegetical insight into analysis of his letters? How do these distinctives aid analysis of both the beginning and ending of Romans, as well as revealing key thoughts that will loom large later in the letter?

Exegesis

Romans 1:1–17

Letter Opening (1:1–7)

1. *Writer (1:1–6)*. Show the importance of the word “gospel” to the introductory verses of Romans 1:1–17. As the controlling thought of the introduction, how does this word relate to God, Paul, and the Romans?
2. Be able to reproduce the following graphic.

Key Analysis: Letter Genre

Greco-Roman Letters	Pauline Expansions	Exegetical Significance
 Writer (1:1–6)	intriguing omission: no co-senders	letter content exclusively Paul’s
	use of Roman creedal tradition	attempt to establish shared faith
Recipient (1:7a)	use of Jewish covenant language	redefining “Israel,” anticipating 9–11
Greeting (1:7b)	combining Greek and Hebrew ideas	alluding to gospel universality
Thanksgiving (1:8–15)	personal emphasis, Paul’s work, plans	alludes to the purpose of Romans

3. What is the significance of Paul calling himself a “slave” of Jesus Christ, and what key idea does this introduce that Paul will build upon in Rom 6?
4. What is the significance of Paul calling himself an “apostle” of Jesus Christ, and what key experience and understanding does this allude to that Paul will build upon in terms of why he writes Romans?
5. What is the surface meaning of “gospel of God”? What is the hidden dual meaning?
6. When Paul asserts that the gospel is “promised beforehand,” what suddenly is his hermeneutical burden in Romans, and what characteristic feature of Romans does this generate?
7. When Paul describes the gospel as “concerning his Son,” what does this reveal about his concord with Christian tradition but also his hermeneutical burden in the church, such as revealed in the Jerusalem Conference in Acts 15?
8. Why would Paul quote a Roman creed in Rom 1:3–4? What characteristic Jewish emphasis does this creed have that Paul normally hardly pays attention to in his writings?
9. How does Paul turn the Roman creed’s standard use of “flesh” terminology into a moment of “double entendre” that he will capitalize on for his own purposes in the only other two references to David in Romans in Rom 4:6 and 11:9?

10. What event “designated” Jesus as “Son of God” for Paul? In what way is this event a turning point in Jesus’ career and human history from an eschatological perspective?
11. How does the translation “Messiah” rather than “Christ” better tie into the literary and historical context of the use of the term here?
12. What is the significance of the use of the plural, “our Lord”?
13. What Targum traditions are the tip of the iceberg for the unique phrase “obedience of the gentiles” in Rom 1:5?
14. How does the expression “for the sake of his Name” contribute to an understanding of the gospel as good news for God?
15. What are the two ways to read the expression, “the obedience of faith”? Which reading is favored by the context?
16. What is the significance of “all” in the expression “among all the gentiles”? What is Paul doing by using this phrase in terms of his apostleship with regard to the Romans?
17. *Recipient (1:7a)*. What is the significance of the use of covenant language such as “beloved” (cf. Hos 3:1; Rom 9:25) and “called” (cf. Deut 28:9; Rom 15:16) to refer to the Roman congregations?
18. *Greeting (1:7b)*. What is Paul’s play on words with his “grace” greeting? What is Paul’s unique pairing with the concept of “peace”? How might the word of “peace” be heard in the context of Roman imperial propaganda?
19. Once again, what is the significance of the plural terminology in “our Father”? What is the implicit meaning of the use of “Lord” in this context related to Jesus? What about the gospel does this greeting terminology such as “our” and “Lord” reveal?

Thanksgiving (1:8–15 and 15:14–33)

1. *Thanksgiving and Ending*. Illustrate the “literary echoes” between Rom 1:8–15 and 15:14–33. Specify how the wording moves from ambiguous to clear, from general to specific in between these two units in terms of “hindered,” “come,” and “evangelize.” What Pauline itinerary becomes clear in this linkage? That is, what three cities can summarize his movement after Corinth? What is the significance of this itinerary occurring within a Pauline thanksgiving section of a Pauline letter?
2. *Opening Enigmas*. What are the two enigmas immediately raised in 1:8, 13 with “your faith is proclaimed” and “some harvest”?
3. What is structurally interesting about Paul’s prayer for Rome in 1:9 compared to the prayer mentioned in 15:30?
4. What is the meaning of the rhetorical shift to non-Jewish categories of humankind (Greeks/barbarians, wise/foolish) in 1:14? Why would Paul be eager to preach in Rome?
5. *Paul’s Mission (15:14–24)*. What is Paul’s preaching strategy in terms of laying a foundation? What does he feel about his work in the east?
6. What does Paul mean by “sent on by you” in terms of missionary support? Does this “request” have anything to do with the collection for Jerusalem?
7. *Paul’s Collection (15:25–29)*. How does Paul interpret the significance of the collection for his gentile churches? For Jerusalem?
8. *Paul’s Request (15:30–32)*. What is Paul’s two-fold concern in these verses? If Roman prayers for Paul are answered, what will Paul at last get to do? How does this come full circle back to the opening thanksgiving section of Romans? What is the literary term for this feature? What type of “bonds” does this feature create between Paul and the Roman house churches? If he is successful in establishing these bonds, what two things does Paul secure?
9. *Peace Benediction (15:33)*. What is the nature of this benediction when analyzed according to the standard features of the ancient Greco-Roman letter? What does this benediction show about the letter body and about Rom 16?

Letter Theme (1:16–17)

1. Show how the literary ties of the conjunction “for” and the keyword “gospel” indicate the pivot between Paul’s plans in the letter thanksgiving and the Romans theme. What does this literary context of thanksgiving and theme show about Paul’s plans and the Romans theme? In what way is this “pivot” function also working from letter theme to letter body?
2. Expand on the terminology of this section: “not ashamed,” “power,” “salvation,” “believes,” “to the Jew first,” “righteousness of God.”
3. What is the OT background to the idea of the “righteousness of God”? In what way can this righteousness of God idea in the Old Testament meta-narrative be described as “Israel’s odyssey through theodicy”?
4. Why can “is being revealed” be described as an “apocalypse,” and what is the significance of the verb being present tense?
5. What are the options for interpreting “from faith to faith”?
6. What is the original historical context of the Hab 2:4 quote? Why would this context be important to interpreting the significance of Paul’s use of this text here in Romans? What is the odd feature about the personal pronoun in the translational variants of the Masoretic text and the Septuagint? Which option does Paul choose in his quotation?
7. What is the significance of “shall live” in the context of the OT’s meta-narrative of creation theology?

*Romans 1:18–3:20*Creator Disobedience (1:18–32)

1. *Outline.* Show how this unit of God and Sin (1:18–32) divides into three parts based on the idea of disobedience.
2. What does Dr. Stevens mean by labeling this unit, “The Apocalypse of God’s Wrath”? Give a brief rundown of wrath language in the New Testament. Why does Paul use present tense for “is revealed”?
3. What is the hidden boomerang in the little adjective “all” in “all ungodliness and unrighteousness of humankind”? What is the significance of Paul choosing to use a generic descriptor in the term “humankind”?
4. Discuss the “God gave them up” triad in 1:24, 26, 28 in terms of the three human exchanges and the three divine responses. What is the grammar of tense that Paul uses to express the complete maturation of this wrath process?
5. In what way can some of this terminology used to describe the “God gave them up” triad supposedly describing the gentile world specifically apply directly to the early history of Israel?
6. What is the significance of the use of the terminology of “death” in this context of God’s wrath being combined with the idea of present revelation, according to Dr. Stevens?