

The Word of God is Christ centered. From its creation opening to its climax closing, our Lord and His redemptive work can be seen, sometimes clearly and sometimes pictured in action or prophetic utterance.

While the Word of God is Christ centered it also reveals God's different plans for the redeemed, plans for the earth and for heaven. Each plan is completed and headed up by Christ. Proclaiming our Lord Christ and His redemptive work is one aspect of the gospel, but we must also carefully proclaim Him in His relationships with the different companies of the redeemed. This is the dispensational aspect of the gospel.

The Christian community is phenomenally fragmented and these divisions are excused with the lame explanation that every faithful servant from Adam is one in Christ with us. It is true there is only Savior, but God has placed the redeemed into different companies and lumping all into one company because all are saved by the One Savior is poor handling of the Word. We must be diligent to understand our calling else we find ourselves unapproved in that day;

Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: 2Pe 1:10

Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. 2Ti 2:15

It is true we are united in our belief that Christ died to save us, but He died to save Abraham, Moses, King David and others who were justified by faith, but who do not belong to the same calling as we do.

Today we belong to the church which is His body; we have been called to this company and in Christ we have been redeemed, forgiven, blessed and made heirs;

Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God; Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, 2Ti 1:8-9.

.being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. Tit 3:7

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Eph 1:3-4

In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will: Eph 1:11

And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all. Eph 1:22-23

But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. Eph 2:4-7

If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Col 3:1

In Christ we have been made righteous, blessed in the heavenly places, called before the world began, raised and seated (in our inheritance) with Christ in the heavenlies and in the ages to come we shall manifest God's exceeding riches of grace in His kindness towards us.

But this heavenly calling wasn't always in view. It is wrong division to assume that every believer from Adam is heaven bound.

Back in the Acts period, before our calling was revealed to Paul, the Galatians were reassured that they were justified by faith through grace, but they were also reassured that in Christ, they were the seed of Abraham and heirs according to the promise given Abraham;

He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham. Gal 3:5-9

And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect. For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise: but God gave it to Abraham by promise. Gal 3:17-18

For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. Gal 3:26-29

Here is the promise given Abraham when he was made righteous because of his faith; And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be. And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness. And he said unto him, I am the LORD that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it. Gen 15:5-7

Abraham was made righteous by faith through grace and was given the Promised Land. The Galatians were made righteous the same way and were given the Promised Land. The redemptive truths of Galatians, written before Acts 28, are the same as ours, but the dispensational truths of Galatians are not the same as ours.

Some deal with these differences by suggesting that God spoke to Abraham about a Land but this was only a picture of His real purpose which was always heaven. This changing the plain statement of God to something we think He meant is called spiritualization. Many assume that they can explain differences using this method and so another movement within our ranks begins. Spiritualization mixes things differing, it does not distinguish them.

Before and after Acts 28, the wonderful truth of justification by faith can be found. However, prior to Acts 28, the hope and the inheritance where the blessings were to be enjoyed were all earthly. After Israel was placed to one side, then God introduced through Paul alone, a new hope, inheritance and place of blessing. Justification by faith is a continuing truth, one that can be found throughout Scripture, but The Father has purposes; a purpose for the heavenly places and a purpose for the earth. We are not to miss the point of Paul's letters to the Ephesians and Colossians where he states the fact that Christ will head up both, the things on earth and the things in heaven; having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself, for an administration of the fullness of times, to head up all things in Christ, both the things in Heaven, and the things on earth, even in Him, in whom also we have been chosen to an inheritance, Eph 1:9-11

For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom every family in Heaven and on earth is named, Eph 3:14-15 LITV

And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. Col 1:20

Paul's letter to the Romans was written prior to Acts 28 and contains incredible expositions regarding justification by faith through grace. This fact does not make it dispensationally compatible with our post Acts letters for, like Galatians, the hope and inheritance presented in it are all earthly in scope. We begin another survey of this letter but this time looking at the location of the hope presented in it; Zion. This survey will leave us in no doubt that Romans is associated with God's purpose for the earth, not heaven.

Romans remains that balanced gospel of the Kingdom. It contains continuing truths of justification, but very focused good news concerning the inheritance for Paul and those justified with him at that time. Their hope and inheritance was the earth.

Paul's letter to the Romans was written late in the Acts period. He had a desire to visit there as these passages show;

After these things were ended, Paul purposed in the spirit, when he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, to go to Jerusalem, saying, After I have been there, I must also see Rome. Act 19:21

I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise. So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also. For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. Rom 1:14-16

Through Acts 20-21 we read of Paul's final return journey to Jerusalem where he was arrested and finally taken to Rome as a prisoner. Many feel Romans was written during that journey. But why would Paul want to preach the gospel to those saints and beloved of God in Rome? Because an enemy was at work. Look at the last rhetorical question in the close of chapter 3;

Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law. Is he the God of the Jews only? is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also: Seeing it is one God, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith. Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law. Rom 3:28-31

Two things are emphasized as being established by The Law. Firstly, justification without the deeds of the Law and secondly that justification without the deeds of the Law was equally available for the Nations or Gentiles. His question, "Do we make void the Law" is asked in a context of widespread animosity against Paul accused of just that.

His ministry to the Gentiles needs to be defined according to Scripture and this will give us insights into these two Roman themes of righteousness and Gentile inclusion. It seems Paul needed to defend and emphasize his ministry among the Gentiles on several occasions;

Nevertheless, brethren, I have written the more boldly unto you in some sort, as putting you in mind, because of the grace that is given to me of God, That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost. I have therefore whereof I may glory through Jesus Christ in those things which pertain to God. For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ hath not wrought by me, to make the Gentiles obedient, by word and deed, Through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God; so that from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ. Rom 15:15-19, see also Acts 14:27, 15:12 and Gals.1 particularly v20.

When Paul writes of his ministry among the Gentiles, we know from the records of Acts that this means primarily his ministry to the Israelis dispersed among them and when Israel rejected the message, then he turned to the Nations, Acts 13:42, 45-47, 14:27 and 19:8-9. Paul preached to Gentiles outside of the Jewish synagogues on only a few occasions; it was Jew first all the way to Acts 28. The assemblies fathered by Paul during the Acts would have reflected this mixed content of Jews and some Gentiles. Those Gentiles were justified by faith through grace but were grafted into Israel, Roms. 11:17 and were partakers of Israel's spiritual things;

But now I go unto Jerusalem to minister unto the saints. For it hath pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem. It hath pleased them verily; and their debtors they are. For if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister unto them in carnal things. When therefore I have performed this, and have sealed to them this fruit, I will come by you into Spain. Rom 15:25-28, see also Gals. 3:7-9

It seems that from the beginning, the inclusion of the Gentiles was not easily embraced by many of the Jews. If Peter needed a threefold vision to preach to a Gentile, then how much more difficult was it for other believing Jews to recognize this new area of witness, see Acts 10:45 and 11:1-18. There is a lot of Peter's own astonishment in this statement;

[And the Spirit bade me go with them, nothing doubting. Moreover these six brethren accompanied me, and we entered into the man's house: Act 11:12 \(10:28-29\)](#)
[Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as he did unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ; what was I, that I could withstand God? Act 11:17](#)

The Spirit told Peter to go without discrimination otherwise he might have withstood God and so the Spirit confirmed the lesson in the sheet and the unclean animals therein. However, it didn't take much for Peter, Barnabas and other Jewish believers to separate themselves from the Gentiles at the tables in the church at Antioch as recorded in Gals.2. Peter, who was taught not to call common or unclean that which God had cleansed, feared them of the circumcision who apparently held to the separation of Israelis from the Nations as required in the Law;

[But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed. For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision. Gal 2:11-12, cp Lev.20:22-26.](#)

The circumcision here cannot refer to all Israeli believers but rather a small inner group, perhaps those demanding the Gentiles be circumcised to be saved, or possible these "false brethren";

[And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage: Gal 2:4 \(cp 5:1-7\).](#)

The bondage and liberty in the context of Galatians refers to the bondage of the works of the Law as opposed to Paul's gospel of the liberty of righteousness by faith. Paul argued vigorously in Galatians and Romans that circumcision and other works of the Law profited nothing in the matter of the righteousness of God. This righteousness reckoned was established by the very Law these false brethren were trying to use against him.

So, what was to be done regarding the Gentile believers? Surely, they just can't be associated with the Jews and do nothing? Can we see the early cries against "easy believism"? To settle the matter, a council meeting was called, see Acts15:1-21.

The Gentiles were called to observe "four necessary things" which were directly from The Law, see Acts15:23-29. These ordinances were still in force right through Acts until their abolition at the revelation of our new calling today after Acts 28 (Eph.2:14-16). We find these ordinances affirmed as still in force by James in Acts 21:25 where the animosity against Paul came to a head. Here are the allegations against him;

[And when he had saluted them, he declared particularly what things God had wrought among the Gentiles by his ministry. And when they heard it, they glorified the Lord, and said unto him, Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe; and they are all zealous of the law: And they are informed of thee, that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs. Act 21:19-21](#)

Being zealous sometimes means we are wide open to accept false accusations against the thing held dear, and the "circumcision or false brethren" group had been busy sowing seeds of falsehood against Paul. To accuse him of forsaking Moses was a very emotive trigger and they pulled it. Here are the charges against Paul;

[And they are informed of thee, that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to](#)

forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs...Acts 21:21

We know these accusations to be false but it seems it was an easy step for Paul's detractors to take the message of righteousness without the deeds of the Law and twist it to a total throwing away of the Law. And once it was heard that the Gentile believers were not obliged to observe the entire Law this they could have stretched with smoke and mirrors to include the Israeli believers as well.

Romans was written with these falsehoods in the background.

When Paul wrote to the Romans we know that one of the issues circulating in the background was the fact that gentiles were now included by faith into the earthly purposes of God and this did not sit comfortably with many of the Israeli believers.

From beginning to the end of Romans, the Gentile inclusion is part of most of the doctrines he presents. Look at the great doctrine of justification by faith for the Jew and Gentile;

Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin. But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; Rom 3:20-23 (see also 10:9-13)

Then Abraham, Paul's biological father, is presented as the father of faith of both Jew and Gentile who believe, Roms.4.

Later in the epistle, certain dispensational aspects concerning the Gentile believers of that time are brought forth. Paul explains why the Gentiles were being included. They were included because Israel was stumbling and intended to provoke Israel to jealousy, Roms.10:19-20, 11:11-25. The Gentiles of that time were grafted into Israel enjoying the root, that is the covenant promises given to Abraham and the fatness (the blessings of Israel) of that Olive tree and were thus obliged to support Israel financially, 15:27.

In chapter 15:1-13 we have Paul specifically addressing the hope of both Jew and Gentile justified by grace through faith. In this passage, he affirms that the Lord Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God and that the Gentiles might glorify God for His mercy. The Gentiles were included with Israel in the blessings promised for her; the fatness of prophesy. The hope of Romans is all promise and prophesy and to this we turn shortly but for now, the situation of the Gentile believers of the Acts period is as follows;

1. They had four necessary things to observe as opposed to observing the entire Law, Acts 15, 21:24-25.
2. They were included because Israel nationally was stumbling at that stumbling stone, and as a wild Olive branch they were intended to stimulate that failing Olive tree; Israel.
3. Their inclusion was design to provoke Israel to repentance and belief.
4. They were warned not to boast but to continue in the goodness of God or be cut off like the faithless Israelis, 11:18-22
5. They enjoyed the "root and fatness" of Israel, were to be blessed with the father of faith, Abraham, Roms.11:17 & Gals.3.
6. They were obliged to financially support Israel, Roms.15:27.
7. Their hope was the hope of promise and prophesy. The Lord Christ returning to the

earth and avenging (Roms.12:19) the blood of his servants and being merciful unto His Land and to His people, Roms.15:10 and Deut.32:43.

The Gentiles of the Acts period were obliged to observe “four necessary things”, not so today. The Gentiles of the Acts period were included because Israel tumbled and were used to provoke her, not so today. The Gentiles of the Acts period were eagerly awaiting the God of Peace to bruise Satan under their feet shortly, Roms.16:20, not so today. This hope was all earthly in expectation, this is not so today.

We must not pick one feature of the Acts period and ignore the rest. We Gentiles are not grafted in to Israel today, we are not spiritual or replacement Israel, we are part of a new creation which had not been revealed when Romans was written, Eph.2.

When Romans was written, The Gentile believers were not the church which is His body. This is dragging those believers forward into truths not yet revealed.

Sadly, modern orthodoxy will proclaim we gentile believers today are grafted into Israel, a boon for the Messianic and Torah observant movements. This is dragging believers today backwards into truths set aside.

The earthly hope of Romans is clearly proclaimed in those prophetic passages used by Paul in chapter 15 and once again they are briefly listed so that the reader will diligently compare them and carefully read the Old Testaments contexts from whence they came.

Rom 15:4 [For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.](#)

Rom 15:8 [Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers:](#)

Rom 15:9 [And that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy; as it is written, For this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy name.](#)

Therefore will I give thanks unto thee, O LORD, among the heathen, and sing praises unto thy name. Psa 18:49 (2Sam.22:50).

Rom 15:10 [And again he saith, Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people.](#)

Rejoice, O ye nations, with his people: for he will avenge the blood of his servants, and will render vengeance to his adversaries, and will be merciful unto his land, and to his people. Deu 32:43

Rom 15:11 [And again, Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles; and laud him, all ye people.](#)

O praise the LORD, all ye nations: praise him, all ye people. Psa 117:1

Rom 15:12 [And again, Esaias saith, There shall be a root of Jesse, and he that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles; in him shall the Gentiles trust.](#)

And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious. Isa 11:10

Rom 15:13 [Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.](#)

Whether certain Israeli believers were uncomfortable about the Gentile inclusion or not, this great earthly theme flows from the beginning to the end of Romans. Into this great purpose of God, the Israeli and Gentile believers were instructed by Paul in this wonderful Acts period epistle.

Chapter fifteen above is very clear about the hope of that time, but there are other Old Testament passages in Romans which, while not specifically addressing this earthly hope, also speak to it. Romans is focused on justification by faith through grace for those who were looking for the restoration of Israel;

[For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins. As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes. Rom 11:25-28](#)

The expectation for all, when Romans was written is this, The Deliverer coming out of Zion, removing ungodliness from Jacob, and all Israel saved. This is not the hope of today for our church which is His Body.

Paul's letter to the Romans is mostly remembered for its great exposition on justification by faith through grace, yet his great exposition about the inclusion of the Gentile believer and the grounds for that inclusion is equally extensive.

He writes in chapter 5 that those who had been justified enjoyed peace with God, and according to the great doxology closing of chapter 8, were inseparable from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord;

[Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Rom 8:35-39](#)

But there is another great doxology closing the dispensational section of chapters 9 through 11. In those chapters we read that Israel had provoked their Lord and, during Acts, He was using the Gentile believers as a provocation to her, Roms.10:19, Deut.32:21. The Gentiles of the Acts period were included because Israel was stumbling and to incite her to jealousy, yet despite Israel's disobedience and contradicting ways they were only hardened for a season and ultimately, ["..... all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob:"](#) Roms.11:26. This is from Isaiah 59:20 and 27:9.

Even though Israel was faithless, God was faithful to His promises made to Israel's fathers, and all Israel will be saved when The Lord comes out of Zion. Having arrived at this wonderful conclusion for Israel brought by the mercy of God, he then writes this hymn of praise to the faithful Lord;

[O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen. Rom 11:33-36](#)

While many Christians will rejoice in the doxology of chapter 8, how many appreciate the expectation; the hope affirmed in this doxology of chapter 11? The hope of Romans, is not our hope now. At that time, those who were justified were inseparable from the love of God and were waiting for Christ to come out of Zion as Isaiah had foretold. We are justified and never separated from the love of God either, but we are not waiting for the Lord to return to the earth and come out of Zion. We shall be taken to heaven to appear with Him when He appears there at the father's right, Col.3.

Here is something beautifully consistent in Romans 11. The hymn of praise in verses 33-36 quoted above, features the same prophet Isaiah just referenced in verse 25. In the same pen stroke Paul uses different passages from the same prophet but both passages focus on Zion. Zion was the immediate hope for both Jew and Gentile justified by faith through grace prior to Acts 28. Here is the Isaiah passage used in Paul's doxology closing chapter 11;

[O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain; O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God! Behold, the Lord GOD will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him: behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him. He shall feed his flock like a](#)

shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young. Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance? Who hath directed the Spirit of the LORD, or being his counsellor hath taught him? Isa 40:9-13

In the climax of his exposition regarding the election of Israel and the inclusion of the Gentile, Paul uses Isaiah twice and in both references, Zion is brought forth as the focus of hope for the Romans. Twice in a matter of a few verses is something we must not ignore.

If Zion be the center of hope in Paul's inspired letter to the Romans then we have no other option than to place Romans in the letters concerning God's purposes for the earth, through Israel.

Zion is not a euphemism for heaven, and while it is used very colorfully to describe anything wonderful, the fact remains, Zion is the site of Israel's first and second Temples and the site upon which the Lord will rule in righteousness:

The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the LORD come. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the LORD hath said, and in the remnant whom the LORD shall call. Joe 2:31-32

The sun and the moon shall be darkened, and the stars shall withdraw their shining. The LORD also shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake: but the LORD will be the hope of his people, and the strength of the children of Israel. So shall ye know that I am the LORD your God dwelling in Zion, my holy mountain: then shall Jerusalem be holy, and there shall no strangers pass through her any more. Joe 3:15-17

Even so come Lord Jesus, this world is sliding into perilous times.

Zion appears constantly in Romans. Not only through direct reference, but also as a feature in the lives of the central characters he mentions and through his use of prophesy. In stark contrast, the word heaven occurs but twice in Roms.1:18 and 10:6 and not once can be seen as the hope of either Jew or any Gentile when Romans was written. There is no interchange by Paul in his use of Zion and heaven. This inflexible and indelible use of Zion by Paul refutes completely the modern concept that Zion is a spiritual equivalent to heaven. These differences are critical to our understanding of Paul and the New Testament.

Paul must be rightly divided and Paul and the Romans held an earthly hope prior to Acts 28.

Oh yes, we believers today are blessed with every spiritual blessing in the above heavens, Eph.1:3 but our truths had not been revealed when Romans was written. The divide between The Old and New Covenant purpose, and the above heavenly purpose is not between Malachi and Matthew but rather between those things prior to Acts 28 and those revelations after it.

Paul's direct references to Zion (Sion KJV) are found in 9:33 and 11:26, two powerful verses focusing on the hope at that time. While we have seen Zion in 11:26 and that context, 9:33 is a quote from Isaiah and also very compelling;

As it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and rock of offence: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. Rom 9:33

Notice Zion is the center of the stumbling and offence for Israel. This is consistent with the purposes centered in our Lord Christ prior to Acts 28. His earthly ministry was to Israel, and the ministry direction after His death burial and resurrection was primarily to Israel. In other words, from Matthew through Romans to Acts 28, our Lord was

proclaimed to Israel and, for the most part, Gentiles associated with her. Here are some passages to show the location of purpose at that time;

These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Mat 10:5-6

But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Mat 15:24
O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Mat 23:37

Peter in his proclamation to Israel declares that had they repented Christ would have been sent back to them;

Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: Act 3:19-20

But one of the most emphatic statements concerning the spiritual center of God's purposes up until Acts 28 is found in Paul's Acts period gospel;

Of this man's seed hath God according to his promise raised unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus: Act 13:23

And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee. (Ps.2:7) Act 13:32-33.

Here is Paul's Psalm 2 quote in its original context;

Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Psa 2:6-8

Paul preaches that Christ was raised a savior to Israel and to sit upon David's throne and this setting which began way back in Israel's history and prophesy does not change in Malachi, Matthew and Romans. Romans is promise and prophesy as is all recorded Scripture up until the close of Acts when Israel was set aside for a time.

After the setting aside of Israel, the resurrection of our Lord to the Father's right in heavenly places is as Head of the church which is His body and He is not preached to Israel first but is now the hope of glory for all nations among which he is now presented;

Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church: Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil (complete) the word of God; Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you (among you Gentiles), the hope of glory: Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus: Col 1:24-28

In Romans, before Acts 28, it was Zion and Christ raised to the church Israel; promise and prophesy. After Acts 28 it is heavenly places, Christ raised as the Head of the church which is His Body and is presented to all nations.

Right division means to separate or divide and for the most part, this means the dispensational features found in God's Word. Dispensational truths are truths unique to a time or phase of God's dealings with people and must not be swapped back and forth. However, there are truths which are common to all phases and are found in all dispensations. But as well as rightly dividing truths, we must also rightly divide Bible characters.

Certain Bible personalities belong in certain settings and only those settings, and we must learn from these individuals. In Romans, Paul features our Lord, King David, Abraham, Adam, Moses and the Prophets and each of these provide evidence that Romans has an earthly direction, with Zion as the center.

His opening focus is Christ Jesus, the seed of David and the Son of God and while our Lord is "... the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" and is the only savior, He has specific offices relating to specific companies of the redeemed. He will eventually head up both the things in heaven and the things on earth, Eph.1:10 and we must divide these different roles of our Lord in both these spheres. In Romans He is associated with King David, and just as David conquered and ruled from Zion, so his Son will do likewise;

Nevertheless David took the strong hold of Zion: the same is the city of David. 2Sa 5:7

I have found David my servant; with my holy oil have I anointed him: Psa 89:20

I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant, Thy seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy throne to all generations. Selah. Psa 89:3-4

...my faithfulness and my mercy shall be with him: and in my name shall his horn be exalted.

Psa 89:24

And I will make Him My first-born, higher than the kings of the earth. Psa 89:27

His seed also will I make to endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven. Psa 89:29

Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King. Psa 48:2

In Romans, our Lord is the Savior; the Son of God, but He is that promised seed of King David and He will reign in Zion and His reign is the Kingdom of heaven on Earth. Interesting to note here that the Lord's glory is on resurrection ground, Roms.1:4, and this is the time of our glorification as well.

Abraham is brought forward by Paul in Romans as an example of one made righteous because of his faith, Roms.4:1-5. Righteousness reckoned by grace through faith is a redemptive truth essential for Abraham as for us today, but Abraham was promised a land and the world, not heaven;

And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness. And he said unto him, I am the LORD that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it. Gen 15:6-7

For the promise was not through Law to Abraham, or to his seed, for him to be the heir of the world, but through a righteousness of faith. Rom 4:13

When Abraham was told to offer his Son, it was to be on a mountain in the land of Moriah, Gen.22:1-2. Later Solomon built the Temple there, 2Chron..3:1, and the Lord was crucified on those mountains. Abraham was made righteous, but when we see his name, we associate him with the earth and the mountains on which Zion is located.

After the substitute ram was offered instead of Isaac, the Lord spoke these words to him;

And the angel of the LORD called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time, And said, By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice. Gen 22:15-18.

To possess the gates of your enemy is to dominate them where gate may mean the rule, the power and judgment. Isaac was a picture of the suffering of Christ, but at the moment of that suffering, a promise was made that the Seed would rule over his enemies; possess their gates. Nations would be subjected to Abraham's seed and this was also predicted of David's greater Son;

Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set

themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed...., Psa 2:1-2

Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. Psa 2:6-9

The Lord is Abraham's promised seed and the Son promised King David, He is Israel's High Priest King and just as his fathers Abraham and David were associated with Zion, so his offering and His rule will be from that very same place.

When studying Romans according to the Bible study rules, we must observe the characters featured in it. As soon as we read of The Lord linked with Abraham and King David, then we know the setting is the earth, not heaven, consider Matthew 1:1. It is not a co-incidence that in Paul's letters written after Acts 28, King David is only mentioned once to identify Christ Jesus as the Messiah in 2Tim.2:8 and Abraham is not mentioned at all. These Bible characters are associated with the earth, not heavenly places.

Hurricane Irma passed right over the top of our house as it swept up Florida, but thankfully, had weakened to a tropical storm by the time it hit us. We have suffered little compared to many and for this we are thankful. I can now resume this series on the geographical center of Hope in Paul's letter to the Romans. That center of Romans is Zion, not heavenly places.

Bible characters are keynotes to the Father's purposes and we have seen how the Lord, King David and Abraham are ultimately glorified in the Land of Promise. Not only so, but these three characters are associated with the inner portion of the Promised Land, Zion, the city of the Great King. The Land of Promise is not to be understood as heaven, but in its spiritual center, Zion, the location of a world rule which brings peace:

Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in the mountain of his holiness. Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King. God is known in her palaces for a refuge. Psa 48:1-3.

We now come to another character used by Paul and in Romans 5 he reveals the relationship between Adam and our Lord Christ. Adam was a figure of the coming One, (5:14), and while he compares the redemptive losses under Adam and the gains through the last Adam, we must not forget that Adam also anticipated Christ's future glory as the One given dominion. Adam was given dominion in a Garden called Eden; an earthly place of abundance and beauty. Christ will have dominion and rule the world from Zion which will be, in that day, in the Land restored like Eden.

Hearken to me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the LORD: look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged. Look unto Abraham your father, and unto Sarah that bare you: for I called him alone, and blessed him, and increased him. For the LORD shall comfort Zion: he will comfort all her waste places; and he will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the LORD; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody. Isa 51:1-3

Therefore the redeemed of the LORD shall return, and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy shall be upon their head: they shall obtain gladness and joy; and sorrow and mourning shall flee away. Isa 51:11

The "redeemed of the Lord" in Isaiah are not the members of the church which is His body. There are different called out companies of the redeemed with different destinations.

Adam and our Lord Christ are also compared in 1Corinthians 15 where Paul looks to resurrection glory in that wonderfully restored Promised Land;
For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. 1Co 15:21-22
So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. 1Co 15:54

The phrase, "death is swallowed up in victory" is a direct quote from Isaiah who is also featuring Zion as the place of the Lord's glory:

He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth: for the LORD hath spoken it. Isa And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the LORD; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation. For in this mountain shall the hand of the LORD rest, Isa 25:8-10a

Isaiah has already spoken about "this mountain" and we read of it here;

And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the LORD'S house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. Isa 2:2-4

Both Romans and Corinthians, letters of Paul written before Israel was set aside at Acts 28, look to the Promised Land as the hope of the redeemed of that time. The Promised Land, made like the garden of the Lord; like Eden, has a special mountain. There, in that mountain, death will be swallowed up in victory, there, in that mountain, God will wipe away all tears, there, in that mountain, His house will be established, there in that mountain will the Law go forth, and there in that mountain will the Lord rule. However, prior to these yet future glorious events, that mountain was the place of sacrifice.

On that mountain in the Promised Land, God's only begotten Son was offered and on that same mountain Abraham had offered the son he loved. Could it be that on that same mountain an earlier sacrifice was made? If the Lord will make Israel like Eden, could it be that the Land, later known as Israel, had been Eden originally? Was the first offering for sin, which provided the covering for Adam, sacrificed on that mountain in Eden?

Paul sweeps back past King David and Zion, back past Abraham and Zion to the very beginning of Gods earthly redemptive purpose. Romans does not look onwards to the dispensational truths of Ephesians for they were yet unrevealed, but sweeps back to Adam. Adam typified the Lord's inheritance on the earth and His reign with dominion and we know His reign will be from a mountain. Is it possible that that mountain, later known as Zion, was in that garden of God and the place of the Lord's presence there?

The Bible explains itself, but the explanations are not scattered on the surface; we need to be diligent and rightly divide. As we grow in truth and apply it, the more we know and our faith increases accordingly. Paul wrote of this to the Colossians;
For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness; Col 1:9-11

We have found that Zion is the great center of hope in Romans. This is the location of the Lord's future glorious reign on the Earth when "thy kingdom" will have come. However, those mountains of Israel were also the place of offerings both typical and true, He will reign there but he also suffered there and our Lord's offering of Himself for our sin and sins was foreseen by the prophets and in the lives of O.T. saints.

Abraham offered Isaac on those same mountains, and this was a picture of God's only begotten son being offered, and when the daily sacrifices were later presented in the tabernacle and Temple set up on those same mountains, these also anticipated our Lord's death. But we can go even further back for a picture of our Lord's offering, even back to the garden of Eden and when Paul speaks of Adam in Romans, we are connected to the that first offering which was made in the Garden of Eden. There the leaves used by Adam, were replaced with coats of skin taken from the first vicarious offering; a far better covering

Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them. And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever: Therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life. Gen 3:21-24

These coverings looked forward to the greater "garments of salvation"; the "robe of righteousness" that belong to all who have believed into Him.

Was the first offering on the mountains of Israel? The Lord offered Himself on Zion, He will later rule from Zion, and in that glorious reign, Zion's wilderness will be made like Eden, see Is.51. So, we might consider, was the mountain upon which Jerusalem sits the mountain where the Lord dwelt in Eden where the first offering was made? Was the original Eden in the land of Israel?

Perhaps this isn't a far-fetched idea since the Promised Land is the place of the Lord's inheritance and future glory, and while we have seen this in prophesy, it was featured in the days of Israel's deliverance from Pharaoh when the song of praise was sung after his chariots were thrown into the sea;

Who is like unto thee, O LORD, among the gods? who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders? Exo 15:11

Thou in thy mercy hast led forth the people which thou hast redeemed: thou hast guided them in thy strength unto thy holy habitation. Exo 15:13

Thou shalt bring them in, and plant them in the mountain of thine inheritance, in the place, O LORD, which thou hast made for thee to dwell in, in the Sanctuary, O Lord, which thy hands have established. Exo 15:17

The nation of Israel was redeemed into the Lord's inheritance, His holy mountain. There the Lord dwells and perhaps there, Adam, after he disobeyed and sin entered the world, was driven out of the Garden. Later, Cain was driven even further out and this is what he cried;

Behold, thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the earth; and from thy face shall I be hid; and I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth; and it shall come to pass, that every one that findeth me shall slay me. Gen 4:14

It might seem strange that Cain was driven from the earth in which he was to be a vagabond but there are two different, original words for earth in this verse and another version has it like this;

You have forced me off this land today. I have to hide from you and become a fugitive, a wanderer on the earth. Now anyone who finds me will kill me!" Gen 4:14. GW

Adam was cast out of the Garden in which the Lord walked. And perhaps Cain was forced out from "this land" in which was situated the Garden of Eden.

Sinners are removed from the Lord's presence, and in that future earthly judgment for Israel, children of the Kingdom will be driven into outer darkness as the prophets and The Lord had warned;

Behold, I and the children whom the LORD hath given me are for signs and for wonders in Israel from the LORD of hosts, which dwelleth in mount Zion. And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep, and that mutter: should not a people seek unto their God? for the living to the dead? Isa 8:18-19
And they shall look unto the earth; and behold trouble and darkness, dimness of anguish; and they shall be driven to darkness. Isa 8:22

And in Matthew, we find a reminder of this earthly Kingdom jurisdiction when the Lord responded to the faith of the Centurion;

When Jesus heard it, he marvelled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel. And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Mat 8:10-12

Look at the different directions in His words, some of faith drawn near from afar, but faithless others sent far away into outer darkness, away from the presence of the Lord, just the wicked norther and southern Kingdoms of Israel, and just like Cain.

These matters are the purposes of God found in the remote context of Romans which is indeed the gospel of the Kingdom. We can't read of Abraham, David and Adam and think of heaven, but the Lord's presence on the earth. His future glorious earthly reign will be in Eden restored, and perhaps, from the very mountain upon which he walked in the first Eden; Zion.

Comparing spiritual things with spiritual is found in 1Cor.2:13 where Paul discards the teaching of men in preference to the teaching of the Holy Spirit. Comparing Scripture with Scripture is an effective tool in determining some of the less obvious things in God's Word.

We have considered the sacrifices, geographical centers of action in the lives of Israel's fathers, prophesy, and the future Kingly reign of the Lord on the mountains of Israel as a link connecting Israel with the original Eden. But there are other very suggestive connections as well.

In Eden a river flowed and parted into four, and it might be futile to use the present location of these rivers to locate Eden. The Euphrates is a national border of Israel, (Gen.2:14, 15:18) and these four rivers covered most of the fertile crescent down to Ethiopia. In creation we have rivers, a garden, the Lord and people on the earth and as we follow the earthly redemption purposes, these features continue to appear even when the glorious goal is reached in Revelation.

In Israel's typical redemption, Moses struck the Rock, which Rock was Christ, and rivers of water flowed, see Ex.17:1-7, Ps.78:15-6, Deut.32 and 1Cor.10:4. From Israel's Rock-Messiah, water flowed and these things figured a future provision from the same source.

When the prophets speak of the Lord's return, certain things happen. There are geographical changes when, perhaps, the middle east returns to its former, pre-flood state when, perhaps, that original river began from Zion; from the Lord's presence. One thing is clear, when He returns to reign in Zion and restores Israel, living waters will flow from beneath his feet;

And His feet shall stand in that day on the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east; and the Mount of Olives shall divide from its middle, from the east even to the west, a very

great valley. And half of the mountain shall move toward the north, and half of it toward the south. Zec 14:4

And it shall be in that day, living waters shall go out from Jerusalem, half of them shall go toward the eastern sea, and half of them toward the western sea; in summer and in winter it shall be.

Zec 14:8

See also Zech.14:10, Is.24:19-20, 40:3-4, 43:19 and Mic.1:3-4.

Joel (3:18) also speaks of these days but we have an expanded picture of this in

Ezekiel 47:1-12;

Afterward he brought me again unto the door of the house; and, behold, waters issued out from under the threshold of the house eastward: for the forefront of the house stood toward the east, and the waters came down from under from the right side of the house, at the south side of the altar. Eze 47:1

See also, Is.12:3, 58:11, & 59:21.

In the New Heavens and New earth periods, the New Jerusalem will descend and from the throne of God and The Lamb, a pure river of water of life will flow;

And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. Rev 22:1-2.

Once again, the river flows from the throne of God, from the throne of Christ in the end. Zechariah, Joel and Ezekiel saw a similar river source in the restored earth prior to the end. Israel saw rivers flow from Christ the Rock in the wilderness at the start of their redemption and in the beginning, that water parting into four rivers could have flowed from the Lord's presence, in the Garden of Eden. These comparisons are very suggestive. Was Eden a garden around Zion, within the inner portion of the Promised Land and from that very mountain that original water flowed as it will in the future? Remember, Israel, before it was called Israel, is the place where the Lord chose to dwell, Ps.78:68-69. If this be so, then it will bring Genesis and Revelation full circle but with Satan, sin and death removed.

Ezekiel 28:11-19 speaks of the King of Tyre and his destruction, and many feel that the King of Tyre is indeed Satan. It is said that he was in the garden of Eden and walked on the mountain of God;

Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created. Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. Eze 28:13-14

The stones for this anointed cherub that covered are similar to those anointing the High Priest's breastplate, Ex.28:17-20, and can be found in the construction of the New Jerusalem in Rev.21. Sapphire and fire are associated with the Lord's presence, as are cherubim, see Ex.24:10, 17, Ez.1, 10:1 and Rev.7:11. And from the Lord's presence, in the earthly purposes, waters flow.

Satan was in Eden as an anointed cherub, and if the setting of Ez.28 was in fact Eden, then we have a mountain within the garden and it could be the very mountains of Israel.

Genesis records Paradise lost and the entry of sin and death, but finally, as recorded in Revelation, the Lord returns to the mountain in a far more beautiful Paradise with sin and death removed and that company of redeemed enjoying bountiful provision and care;

Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any

more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes (Is.25:7-10). Rev 7:15-17

Romans has its hope firmly centered in Zion, the city of the great King. The earthly purpose underscoring this late letter of Paul is Eden restored and the greater Adam heading up all things on the earth. In Romans, our Savior is the One Adam prefigured, the son of David and the seed of Abraham.

Simply because Romans unfolds the great universal doctrine of justification by faith through grace does not alter its dispensational setting; Romans is the gospel of the Kingdom. Paul and all of its readers were members of that elect remnant of prophesy, 9:27, not the church which is his body, Eph.1:22-23.

Paul in Romans was in harmony with the prophets, both yearned for the day of peace and exaltation for Israel when this King of Kings and Lord of Lords ruled from there; Oh that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion! when the LORD bringeth back the captivity of his people, Jacob shall rejoice, and Israel shall be glad. Psa 14:7
Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King. Psa 48:2

Psalms 14 could be placed as a dispensational template from which Romans was expanded. Romans is a fuller exposition of justification, but the themes are identical.

King David, laments the fool who has said there is no God, and concludes that none seek Him for they are all become filthy and not one does good. This is used in Romans; The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good. Psa 14:1
They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one. Psa 14:3
As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. Rom 3:10-12

Paul's Acts period gospel is Psalm 14; the gospel of the Kingdom on earth.

King David goes on to write of God's presence in the generation of the righteous, for indeed Jehovah-Tsidkenu is Israel's God and Israel's righteousness; There were they in great fear: for God is in the generation of the righteous. Psa 14:5
Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. Isa 53:10-11
But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Rom 3:21-24

Psalms 14 looks forward to the great day when the fool will be silenced, evil removed and the nation of Israel, and those blessed with her, will rejoice and be glad. Psalm 14 and Romans are identical in this hope;

Oh that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion! when the LORD bringeth back the captivity of his people, Jacob shall rejoice, and Israel shall be glad. Psa 14:7
For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: Rom 11:25-26
So shall they fear the name of the LORD from the west, and his glory from the rising of the sun. When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD shall lift up a standard against him. And the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the LORD. Isa 59:19-20

Perhaps the quote from Isaiah 59 helps understand the fulness of the Gentiles as being more about Nebuchadnezzar's image rather than the number of Gentiles included to provoke Israel to jealousy. However, one thing is certain, Romans remains promise and prophesy and things kept silent in the scriptures. By comparison, the later revelation given to Paul concerning the church which is His body was hid in God, away from previous ages and generations which included the age of the Acts period.

Paul must be rightly divided and his Romans gospel is the gospel of the Kingdom.

Romans extols justification by faith, which is found in the Law and the prophets and the hope of Romans is Christ returning to Zion; Israel regathered and settled in their own land and this is also found in the law and the prophets.

To conclude this series, it is profitable to find Zion in the other Acts period writings of Paul and if we include Hebrews, then we find Zion the significant basis of much of his Acts period writings.

The inheritance for Paul and all believers in Galatians is the Land given by promise to Abraham and his seed, Gen.17:7-8. We have already seen Abraham linked with Zion. [So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham. Gal 3:9](#)
[For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise: but God gave it to Abraham by promise. Gal 3:18](#)

In Thessalonians, the hope is Christ returning to the earth and destroying the Lawless one who had exalted himself so that as God he sat in the Temple. These things are located in Zion.

In Hebrews, which also speaks of Trumpets as does Corinthians and Thessalonians, they were told that they had;

[..... come unto mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, Heb 12:22](#)

In Corinthians, the last trump is associated with resurrection of the believers during Acts, and that resurrection was to Mt Zion;

[And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth: for the LORD hath spoken it. And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the LORD; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation. Isa 25:7-9](#)

Other passages worth considering in this regard are, Matt.21:5, Roms.9:33, 1Pet.2:6 and Rev.14:1.

Romans must not be linked with the post Acts ministry of Paul. To do so is to mix things differing when right division demands we separate things differing.

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