Acts 28 – The Great N.T. dispensational divide

Romans – is promise, prophecy, the imminent earthy kingdom
Romans – is the Law, not a dispensational foundation for The Mystery.

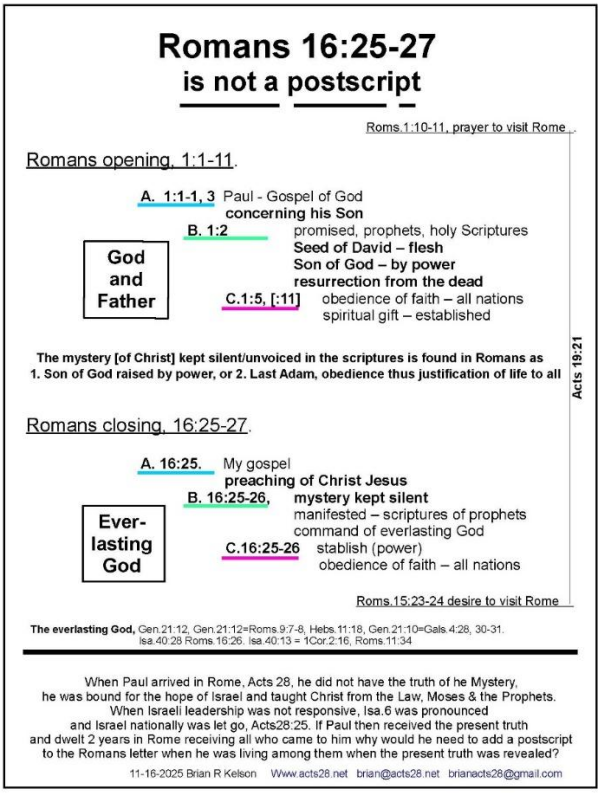
Romans, its dispensational setting. 03

We are considering that Paul's letter to the Romans does not contain any dispensational foundation for his post Acts 28 letters of Ephesians and Colossians.

The dispensational truths of Romans are purely promise and prophesy, and even the redemptive truths of Romans are embedded in the O.T. scriptures, consider Roms.3:21, & 4:1-7, [1Cor.15:3-4]. The blood, forgiveness and righteousness reckoned are continuing truths that through Paul were explained more fully after the cross had accomplished its work, but this does not mean a new calling had been introduced. Grace in reckoned righteousness is not the foundation of the Mystery.

The closing segment of Romans, commonly called the postscript, Roms.16:25-27, has no connection to the Mystery of Ephesians and Colossians since it is structurally joined to the opening with repeated words and phrases. Here is a chart to help see these unbreakable ties. The everlasting God is Jehovah and is featured in Gen.21:33 and Isa.40:28, and Isa.40 features in the doxology of Roms.11:34.

Would Paul add a postscript to a letter written to believers in the very location he was later to pronounce Isa.6 against Israel and receive the present dispensational truths? It is likely he was in Rome when the dispensation of the grace of God was revealed through him.



Romans clearly sits in the Acts period prior to the revelation of the Mystery. Paul's gospel and the hope he preached, the imminent return of Christ at the Feast of Trumpets, were all promise and prophesy. Paul testifies that the Old Testament program was the basis of his faith and gospel, unchanged from his conversion to the close of Acts.

And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God. Act 9:20
And we preach the gospel to you, the promise made to the fathers, Act 13:32. MKJV
But I confess this to you, that after the Way which they call heresy, so I ***worship*** *the God of my fathers,* ***believing*** *all things that are written in the* ***Law and in the Prophets***. Act 24:14.
And now I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made to our fathers by God, to which promise our twelve tribes hope to attain, serving God fervently night and day. For the sake of this hope, king Agrippa, I am accused by the Jews. Act 26:6-7
For this cause, then, I called for you, to see and to speak with you. For I have this chain around me for the hope of Israel. Act 28:20
For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, so that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope. Rom 15:4.

Paul held the same O.T. hope as the 12 tribes, still yet, late in Acts, the very basis of the hope he worshipped the God of Israel's fathers, this is not the God of Ephesians. The O.T. hope Paul held, coming towards them in haste, was the hope of Romans. Here are some refresher passages identifying the nearness of Christ's return at that time.

And the God of peace shall bruise ***Satan under your feet shortly***. *The* ***grace*** *of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.* Rom 16:20
And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is ***at hand***. Mat 3:2
But this I say, brothers, The time is short. It remains that both those who have wives should be as not having one. 1Co 7:29.
And all these things happened to them as examples; and it is written for our warning on whom the ends of the world have come. 1Co 10:11 [1Cor.15:51].
(for then He must have suffered often since the foundation of the world), but now once in the end of the world He has appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. Hebs.9:26.
not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together [2Thess.5:1], as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching [at hand]. Heb 10:25-26.
For ***yet a little while****, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry.* Heb 10:38.
Therefore be patient, brothers, until the coming of the Lord. ….You also be patient, establish your hearts, for the coming of your Lord draws near **[at hand]**. Jas 5:7-8.
Children, it is the last hour, and just as you heard that the antichrist is coming, so now many antichrists have appeared. We know from this that it is the last hour. 1Jn 2:18 *NET*
A Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave to Him to declare to His servants things which must shortly come to pass. And He signified it by sending His angel to His servant John, Rev 1:1
Blessed is the one who reads and hears the Words of this prophecy, and the ones keeping the things written in it, for the time is near. Rev 1:3 [Day of The Lord, 1:10].
See also, Matt.16:28, Jn.21:22, 1Pet.4:7, 2Pet.3:10, 1Jn.2:18, [cp 1Jn.2:17 & 1Cor.7:31].

Romans fits in this time frame as we find here.

This also, knowing the time, that it is already time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is ***at hand****; therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. Let us walk becomingly, as in the day; not in carousings and drinking; not in co-habitation and lustful acts; not in strife and envy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not take thought beforehand for the lusts of the flesh.* Rom 13:11-14. MKJV, & 16:20 above.

Paul writes about our salvation being at hand, nearer than when we believed. Paul includes himself in that salvation with the pronouns, “our”, “we”, and “us.” It is not our salvation today in either time or event, we does not automatically mean me. The word translated “at hand” is the very word of John the Baptist, and Christ in Matt.3:2, 4:17. A link not to be ignored. The hope of Romans is the hope of John the Baptist, Christ in the Gospels and the 12 tribes. Paul is urging the Romans to observe the Law as did Christ, the similarities are not to be ignored. See Roms.13:8-10, Matt.19:18-19 and 22:37-40 & Roms.12:14 with Matt.5:44.

It is not immediately obvious that Romans is dispensationally in harmony with the Gospels, John, Peter, Revelation and whoever wrote Hebrews, but more connections are proving this harmony. We have seen the Day being near in Romans and from there we shall follow the thread.
This also, knowing the time, that it is already time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand; Roms.13:12.
But of the times and the seasons, brothers, you have no need that I write to you. For you yourselves know accurately that the day of the Lord comes like a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety! Then sudden destruction comes on them, as travail upon a woman with child. And they shall not escape. But you, brothers, are not in darkness, that the Day should overtake you like a thief. 1Th 5:1-4
For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry. Heb 10:37
The Lord is not slow concerning His promise, as some count slowness, but is long-suffering toward us, not purposing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, 2Pe 3:9-10.
Therefore watch; for you do not know what hour your Lord comes. But know this, that if the steward of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, Mat 24:42-43.
Behold, I am coming as a thief. Blessed is the one who watches and keeps his garments, Rev.3:3, 16:15.
Compare Rev.22:12 with 2Cor.5:10, Rev.22:14 with Roms.13:8-10 & Matt.24:46-47, Rev.196-9 with Matt.25.

Hebrews is very adamant that the coming of the Lord was in a little while and Hebrews, Matthew, Revelation and other Acts period writings along with Romans are inseparable in this and other dispensational features. Here is Romans, Thessalonians, OT promise and prophesy linked in one portion of Hebrews.
Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering (for He is faithful who promised), and let us consider one another to provoke to love and to good works, ***not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together,*** *as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see* ***the Day approaching***. Heb 10:23-25.

The Day is the Day of the Lord, and the assembling of ourselves together is the very word in 2Thess.2:1 translated gathering together to Him which is the meeting in the clouds of 1Thes.4.
Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, ***to meet the Lord*** *in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.* 1Th 4:17. See Day in 5:2.
Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our ***gathering together*** *unto him,* 2Th 2:1

Hebrews and Thessalonians both speak of the time being short, both speak of the Day of the Lord, both speak of the gathering together unto him commonly called “the rapture”. If the “rapture” of Hebrews could not be about us, then neither is “the rapture” of 1 Thess.4. Romans through Philemon is a dispensational disaster.

This meeting in the clouds is the fulfilment of the Feast of Trumpets [Lev.23], found in Hebs.12, 1Thess.4, Matt.24, 1Cor.15, Revelations and the historic entry into the Kingdom on earth at Jericho. The links between Hebrews, Revelations, Romans, Thessalonians, history and prophesy guide us in our understanding. These Scriptures are not about our calling today.

There is more in Hebs.10 which ties these scriptures together. Follow the dispensational trail which disallows Romans through Philemon.
*The Holy Spirit also is a witness to us; for after He had said before, "This is the **covenant** that I will make with them after those days, says the Lord; I will put My Laws into their hearts, and in their minds I will write them," also He adds, "their sins and their iniquities I will remember no more."* Heb 10:15-17 [Jer.31].
*And so all Israel shall be saved; as it is written, "There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob. For this is My **covenant** with them, when I have taken away their sins."* Rom 11:26-27.
*But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born who are written in Heaven, and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the new **covenant**, and to blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel.* Heb 12:22-24.
Hear the word of the LORD, O ye nations, and declare it in the isles afar off, and say, He that scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him, as a shepherd doth his flock. Jer 31:10.
*Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new **covenant** with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah:* Jer 31:31.

The return of the Lord was at hand, he was coming as a thief to those who were not watching. At that coming, the faithful would be assembled/gathered together and meet him in the clouds as he descended. Zion was the destination of the Lord and from where he would regather Israel and activate the wonder of the New Covenant. This coming and the events signaling this coming were the Day of the Lord, more fully revealed in Revelations. These things are Paul in Acts, the Gospels, the other Acts N.T. writings including Hebrews, this is not the church which is his body of Ephesians and Colossians written after Israel was set aside at Acts 28.

Paul in Acts and the hope of Hebrews are inseparable.

Vengeance and wrath were both elements of the second coming, and they therefore, were also at hand. When we read of them during Acts, they confirm the near return of the Lord, not the dismissal of Israel.
*For we know him that hath said, **Vengeance** belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people.* Heb 10:30.
*For yet **a little while**, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry.* Heb 10:37
*To me belongeth **vengeance**, and recompence; their foot shall slide in due time: for the day of their calamity is **at hand**, and the things that shall come upon them make haste.* Deu 32:35.
*If it is possible, as far as is in you, being in peace with all men. not avenging yourselves, beloved, but giving place to wrath; for it is written, "**Vengeance** is Mine, I will repay, says the Lord."* Rom 12:18-19.
*The night is far spent, the day is **at hand**:* Rom 13:12

Moses, Hebrews and Paul in Romans warn of vengeance, judgment and wrath. These are features of the Lord's return. Vengeance and judgment upon his enemies, judgment upon his own people, and wrath upon his enemies. The Day of the Lord includes vengeance, it is designated the day of vengeance and Isa.61 speaks of this.

The Spirit of the Lord Jehovah is on Me; because Jehovah has anointed Me to preach the Gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound;
to preach the acceptable year of Jehovah and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; to appoint to those who mourn in Zion, to give to them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the mantle of praise for the spirit of heaviness; so that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of Jehovah, that He might be glorified. Isa 61:1-3.

Please read Isa.61 and notice Zion, featured in Romans and Hebrews. Read Isa.61 and notice everlasting covenant, featured in Romans and Hebrews. Please read Isa.61 and notice the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance, vengeance featured in Romans and Hebrews. Read Isa.61 and notice Israel's restoration and becoming a testimony to the world. Israel's deliverance is in Romans and Hebrews. Read Isa.61 and notice Jew first in the world because the day of vengeance does not mean Israel's loss of standing or cutting off. It is Jew first in Romans and Israel's salvation was assured at the coming of the Deliverer. Isa.61 shows that the day of vengeance does not mean Israel will be set aside and a new calling introduced.

The Lord is given this passage in his home town synagogue at Nazareth where he rightly divides Isa.61, by separating the acceptable year of the Lord with the day of vengeance. He includes wrath in the day of vengeance.
To preach the acceptable year of the Lord. And he closed the book,.... Luk 4:19-20
*For these be the days of **vengeance**, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! for there shall be great **distress in the land**, and **wrath** upon **this people**.* Luk 21:22-23. Please read Ez.20:33-44.

Wrath upon this people Israel, did not mean a change of purpose. The Lord is not warning Israel that when wrath is unleashed upon them, that they will be cast aside. Wrath is at his coming to them, to judge them and rebuild them. Please read Ez.20:33-44 again.

The acceptable year of the Lord was upon Israel during the Gospels and Acts, and Christ's return was expected in their lifetimes and this return included the day of vengeance and wrath. Look at the links from Isa.61 with these passages, Lk.4:19, 21:20-24, 1Cor.7:26, Roms.11:25-26, 12:19, Hebs.10:30 and here,
and to give rest with us to you who are troubled, at the revealing [apokalypse] *of the Lord Jesus from Heaven with the angels of His power, in flaming fire taking **vengeance** on those who do not know God and who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, ... In **that Day**.* 2Th 1:7-8, 10.

Paul ties these events together. Here is Christ's coming with angels, fire and the trumpet, this is the Day of the Lord which includes vengeance and wrath. Wrath on Israel is set in the coming of the Lord, not in the dismissal of Israel.

This day of vengeance is the same day those believers were expecting resurrection and that meeting in the clouds. This Day included rewards for service, judgment upon evil doers, vengeance and if happened after the man of sin and the abomination of desolation of 2Thess.2, Matt.24, Dan.9, & Revelations.

While that Kingdom was at hand, Israel was warned that it began with judgment and wrath. Wrath is proclaimed in the acceptable year of the Lord. Isa.40 is the restoration of Israel, follow the links.

*as it is written in the book of the Words of Isaiah the prophet, saying, "The voice of one crying in the wilderness, **prepare the way of the Lord**, make His paths straight* [Isa.40:3]. Luk 3:4
*Then he said to the crowd that came forth to be baptized by him, O generation of vipers! Who has warned you to flee from the **wrath to come**?* Luk_3:7.

Wrath is inseparable from the coming Kingdom out of heaven for both are directed to Israel. John was to prepare the way of the Lord from Isa.40 which speaks of Israel's restoration, but the way of the Lord included wrath.

Thessalonians features the day of vengeance, the Day of the Lord, the Trumpet return of Christ and wrath as we saw above. Paul writes in exactly the same dispensational setting as his Lord when he writes that wrath is upon Israel.
[the Jews] *forbidding us to speak to the nations that they might be saved, to fill up their sins always; but the **wrath** has come upon **them** to the uttermost.* 1Th 2:16.

Wrath upon Israel does not mean the introduction of something previously hidden, it means the coming of the Lord draws nigh. Look at what Paul writes in the same letter including wrath to the uttermost on Israel.
*And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the **wrath to come**.* 1Th.1:10.
*For what is our hope or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are you not even to be in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ **at His coming**?* 1Th 2:19
*Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be **saved from wrath** through him.* Rom 5:9
*This also, knowing the time, that it is already time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, **the day is at hand**;* Roms.13:12.

Wrath to the uttermost upon Israel is followed by the hope of the coming of Christ to Israel, not a change in dispensation. When Paul writes, delivered and saved from wrath, he is writing about the return of the Lord and the Day of Vengeance, not hinting Israel is finished, quite the contrary Israel is about to be saved albeit with judgment. No way can wrath be interpreted as the sliding away of Israel and a new calling in view. The Day was at hand in Roms.13, and the hope was the hope for Israel in Roms.11.

The dispensational relationship between the Gospels, prophetic promises, and Paul's Acts-period writings is widely evident and we ignore it to our confusion.

The prophet Habakkuk in Romans, Hebrews and Acts provides another wonderful link. The just living by faith, is the just living as the Day of the Lord approaches. Habakkuk is the just living by faith, but that living is in the face of the coming army of vengeance and wrath. Look at the just living by faith in Paul's gospel immediately followed by the warning of wrath.
*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. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, **The just shall live by faith. For the wrath of God** is revealed* [apokalypto] *from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;* Rom 1:16-18.

Paul's gospel states the just shall live by faith but this is not an exposition of justification reckoned by grace. From faith to faith is explained by the quote from Habakkuk, the just shall live by faith. It is the ones justified who are living, it is not the sinner made alive and made righteous.

The ones justified are living as the wrath of God is pending on the ungodly.
But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself ***wrath*** *against* ***the day of wrath and revelation*** *of the righteous judgment of God;* Rom. 2:5, 2:8.
For God hath not appointed us to ***wrath****, but to* ***obtain salvation*** *by our Lord Jesus Christ,* 1Th 5:9

Hebrews uses Habakkuk like Paul in Roms.1. Paul writes the just shall live by faith but on others the wrath of God and in Hebrews speaks that the just shall live by faith, however, those drawing back brings waste and loss.
For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry. Now ***the just shall live by faith****: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. But we are not of* ***them who draw back unto perdition****; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.* Heb 10:37-39.

The saving of the soul is not initial salvation, but the deliverance from wrath, preservation during the day of Jacob's trouble. This is the same sentiment as Roms.5:9 and 1Thess.1:10.
For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but ***at the end it shall speak****, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry. Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith.* Hab 2:3-4.

Habakkuk is a prophesy about the imminent arrival of the northern army an instrument for vengeance and wrath at the end, not at some new beginning, this is the setting of the just living by faith. This is why when Paul turns to Habakkuk in his gospel in Acts 13, he is using the prophet to warn about coming vengeance and wrath. Please note in Acts 13 justification by faith in the same ink stroke as the warning from Habakkuk about the northern army bringing vengeance and wrath. One group of believing Israelites & Gentiles rejoicing in righteousness reckoned, while the unbelieving are facing vengeance and wrath. The same imminent coming of the Lord, different consequences at that coming. Paul's Jewish listeners knew exactly the warning from Habakkuk.
And by him all that believe are ***justified*** *from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.* ***Beware*** *therefore, lest that come upon you, which is spoken of in the prophets; Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and* ***perish****: for I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in* ***no wise believe****, though a man declare it unto you.* Act 13:39-41. [Hab.1:5-9].

Acts 13 warning has justification or wrath, Romans has justification and wrath, Hebrews has justification and perdition. The just living by faith or waste and wrath, but all of these in the context of the Lord's coming and the restoration of Israel.

John the Baptist warned Israel about the coming wrath in the context of the Kingdom of heaven being at Hand before the cross. Paul warned about the coming wrath up to Acts 28 with that same Kingdom out of heaven at hand. The warning of wrath is inseparable from the imminent return of Christ. The faithful were urged to live by faith, having been delivered from wrath, but they were not to turn back, since this choice brough serious consequences.

Wrath in Acts sits with the imminent return of the Lord, the restoration of Israel and the prophetic Day of the Lord. Wrath does not indicate any change of dispensation.

Wrath to the uttermost means the Day of the Lord is at hand.

We search and see.
Brian R Kelson 11-08-2026