

## LESSON ONE AN INTRODUCTORY WORD

### Scripture Reading

- Isa. 54:5     For your Maker is your Husband; Jehovah of hosts is His name.
- Jer. 3:14     Return, O apostate children, declares Jehovah, for I am a Husband to you;
- Jer. 31:32     Not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by their hand to bring them out from the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, although I was their Husband, declares Jehovah.
- Ezek. 16:8     Then I passed by you and saw you; and then was your time a time of love. And I spread My skirt over you and covered your nakedness; indeed I swore unto you and entered into a covenant with you, declares the Lord Jehovah, and you became Mine.
- Hosea 2:19     And I will betroth you to Myself forever; Indeed I will betroth you to Myself in righteousness and justice and in lovingkindness and compassions;
- Matt. 9:15     And Jesus said to them, The sons of the bridechamber cannot mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them, can they? But days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them, and then they will fast.
- John 3:29     He who has the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices with joy because of the bridegroom's voice. This joy of mine therefore is made full.
- 2 Cor. 11:2     For I am jealous over you with a jealousy of God; for I betrothed you to one husband to present you as a pure virgin to Christ.
- Eph. 5:25     Husbands, love your wives even as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her.
- Eph. 5:31-32     For this cause a man shall leave his father and mother and shall be joined to his wife, and the two shall be one flesh. This mystery is great, but I speak with regard to Christ and the church.
- Rev. 19:7     Let us rejoice and exult, and let us give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.
- Rev. 21:2     And I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

## **OUTLINE:**

### **I. The position of Romans in the Bible:**

- A. The Bible—a romance of a universal couple.
- B. This romance in the Old Testament:
  - 1. The story of a marriage.
  - 2. God as the Husband and His people as the wife.
  - 3. The full romance of Song of Songs.
- C. This romance in the New Testament:
  - 1. Christ as the Bridegroom in the Gospels.
  - 2. The husband and wife in the epistles.
  - 3. The marriage of Christ and His people in Revelation.
- D. The universal couple and the universal man.
- E. The Old Testament as a prediction:
  - 1. Prophecies of Christ.
  - 2. The church in types, figures and shadows.
- F. The New Testament, the fulfilment of the Old Testament.
  - 1. The individual Christ in the Gospels.
  - 2. The corporate Christ in Acts.
  - 3. The full definition of the corporate Christ in Romans.

### **II The sections of Romans:**

- A. Introduction—the gospel of God—Rom. 1:1-17
- B. Condemnation—the need of salvation—1:18—3:20
- C. Justification—the accomplishment of salvation—3:21—5:11
- D. Sanctification—the life-process in salvation—5:12—8:13
- E. Glorification—the purpose of salvation—8:14-39
- F. Selection—the economy of salvation—9:1—11:36
- G. Transformation—the life-practice in salvation—12:1—15:13
- H. Conclusion—the ultimate consummation of salvation—15:14—16:27

### **III The major structures of Romans:**

- A Salvation—1:1—5:11; 9:1—11:36
- B Life—5:12—8:39
- C Building—12:1—16:27

## QUESTIONS

### Section 1:

1. What is the secret of the universe according this section?
2. What do Adam and Eve typify? What does this type reveal? What verse reveals this?
3. How can see that the Bible is a romance? Use at least 3 verses in the Old Testament to show that God is spoken of as the husband and the people as His wife.

### Section 2:

1. How do you see this romance portrayed in the New Testament?
2. What is the kernel (central point) of the divine revelation in the Word of God?
3. Use 2 verses in the Epistles to show Christ and the Church are portrayed as husband and wife?
4. What is the ultimate conclusion of the whole Bible? Use at least 2 verses to show this.

### Section 3:

1. Explain in brief what the Old Testament and the New Testament is all about according to this section?
2. What is the main focus of the 4 gospel books? And what is the focus in Acts? What is the difference between the focus in the gospels and Acts?
3. What is the significance of the book of Romans' position in the Bible?

### Section 4:

1. What are the 8 sections of Romans? What does each section reveal to us?
2. What does justification depend on? What is the issue (result) of justification?
3. What does it mean to be sanctified? Use the illustration of tea to explain.

### Section 5:

1. What does glorification reveal and why do we need glorification?
2. What is the ultimate conclusion of God's salvation?
3. What are the major structures of the book of Romans? Cite the chapters in each structure.

## [Section 1]

### **I. THE POSITION OF ROMANS IN THE BIBLE**

Firstly, we need to know the position of the book of Romans in the Bible. In order to know this, we need to consider the Bible as a whole.

#### **A. The Bible—A Romance of a Universal Couple**

h He is a divine Person, He desires to be the male of this universal couple. This very God, after a long process, has resulted in Christ as the Bridegroom.

The female of this couple is a corporate human being, God's redeemed people, including all the saints of the Old Testament and the New Testament. After a long process this corporate person results in the New Jerusalem as the Bride.

#### **B. This Romance in the Old Testament**

This holy romance is repeatedly revealed throughout the Old Testament.

##### **1. The Story of a Marriage**

Immediately after the record of God's creation, we find the story of a marriage (Gen. 2:21-25). In this marriage Adam is the type of Christ as the husband, and Eve is the type of the church as the wife. In Ephesians 5 we see the couple typified by Adam and Eve—Christ and the church. The type of Adam and Eve reveals that the persons of this universal couple must be of the same source. God created one person, Adam, and out from this person a wife came. Eve was not created separately by God; she came out of Adam. Eve was made out of a rib, a piece of bone, that came from Adam, indicating that both Adam and Eve proceeded out of the same source. In this universal couple the wife must come out of the husband. Likewise, the church must come out of Christ. The two persons of this couple must be of the same source. They also must be of one nature. Furthermore they must share one common life. Adam's nature and life were also Eve's. Eve had the same nature and life as Adam. The two persons of this couple were of one source, of one nature, and had the same one life. Without doubt, they also had one living. They lived together. Eve lived by Adam and with Adam, and Adam lived by Eve and with Eve.

This couple is the secret of the universe. The secret of the whole universe is that God and His chosen ones are to be one couple. Hallelujah! We, God's chosen ones, and God are of one source, of one nature, and have one life. Now we also need to have one living. We are not living by ourselves or for ourselves; we are living with God and for

The Bible is a romance. Have you ever heard this before? It may sound secular and unreligious. However, if you have entered into the deep thought of the Bible, you will realize that the Bible is a romance, in the most pure and the most holy sense, of a universal couple.

The male of this couple is God Himself. Although

God, and God is living with us and for us. Hallelujah!

#### **2. God as the Husband and His People as the Wife**

Several times in the Old Testament God referred to Himself as the Husband and to His people as His wife (Isa. 54:5; 62:5; Jer. 2:2; 3:1, 14; 31:32; Ezek. 16:8; 23:5; Hosea 2:7, 19). God was desirous of being a husband and of having His people as His wife. Many times the prophets spoke of God as the Husband and of His people as His wife. Humanly speaking, we always think of God in a religious way as the Almighty, feeling compelled to worship Him...Suppose your wife thought of you as a big body, as a giant, approaching you adoringly, bowing herself, and kneeling down to worship you. What would you say? You would say, "Silly wife, I don't need such a worshipper. I need a dear wife to embrace me and kiss me. If you will simply give me a little kiss, I will soar in the air." Our God certainly is the Almighty God, and, as His creatures, we must worship Him. Many verses speak about worshipping God in this way. However, have you never read in Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Hosea that God desires to be a husband? In ancient times God's people built the temple and established a system of worship complete with priesthood and sacrifices. One day God intervened and spoke through Isaiah saying, "I am tired of this. I am weary with your sacrifices. I want you to love Me. I am your Husband, and you must be My wife. I want to have a marriage life. I am lonely. I need you. I need you, My chosen people, to be My wife."

## [Section 2]

### **3. The Full Romance in Song of Songs**

Among the 39 books in the Old Testament, there is one book called the Song of Songs. Song of Songs is more than a romance; it is a fantastic romance. Have you ever read a romance like the Song of Songs?...In Song of Songs we find a woman falling in love with a man saying, "Oh, that he might kiss me with the kisses of his mouth. I am thirsty for this." Immediately, her beloved is at hand, and the pronoun changes from

“he” to “you” (S. S. 1:2-3). “Your name is sweet, and your love is better than wine. Draw me, my beloved...I need you to draw me. Draw me, we will run after you.” What a romance!

In the case of Adam and Eve we saw that the couple had one source, one nature, one life, and one living. In Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Hosea we saw that God desires to have a wife who will live together with Him. God longs to have a marriage life, to have divinity live together with humanity. But His people failed Him. In Song of Songs, however, we see the genuine marriage life. What is the secret of such a romance? The secret is that the wife must take her husband not only as her life and her living, but as her person.

### **C. This Romance in the New Testament**

Now we need to consider this romance as it is portrayed in the New Testament.

#### **1. Christ as the Bridegroom in the Gospels**

There is no doubt that the gospels give us a full record of Christ as our Savior. However, have you noticed that the four gospels also tell us that Christ has come as the Bridegroom (Matt. 9:15; Mark 2:19; Luke 5:34; John 3:29)? He has come for His bride. When the disciples of John the Baptist saw many people forsaking John to follow the Lord Jesus, John told them not to be troubled, that Christ is the Bridegroom, and that all the increase belongs to Him (John 3:30). The Bridegroom has come for the bride. What is the bride? The bride is the increase of Christ. Each of the four gospels presents Christ as the Bridegroom coming for the bride.

#### **2. The Husband and Wife in the Epistles**

In the epistles Christ and the church are portrayed as husband and wife (Eph. 5:25-32; 2 Cor. 11:2). The epistles clearly liken Christ and the church to husband and wife. If we know what is unfolded in the epistles, we will see that Christ is revealed in them as our Husband and that the believers are revealed as His counterpart, as His wife. We must be one with Him in source, in nature, in life, and in daily living.

#### **3. The Marriage of Christ and His People in Revelation**

In the book of Revelation Christ is unveiled as having a wedding (Rev. 19:7) and the New Jerusalem is presented as His wife (Rev. 21:2, 9). In chapter 19 of Revelation we see that Christ will enjoy a wedding feast, and in chapter 21 we see that the New Jerusalem will be His wife. In Revelation 21 and 22, the last two chapters of the Bible, we see that the ultimate consummation of

the whole Bible is this universal couple—the husband and the wife.

### **D. The Universal Couple and the Universal Man**

Furthermore, the Bible tells us that this couple with the two persons are one flesh (Gen. 2:24; Eph. 5:31). Adam and Eve were one flesh. Since they were one flesh, they were also one man. Christ and His chosen people are one, universal, corporate man with Christ, the Husband, as the Head (Eph. 4:15) and with the church, the wife, as the Body (Eph. 1:22-23). Eventually, these two become one, all-inclusive, universal, corporate man. In Ephesians 5 the church is presented as a wife, and in Ephesians 1 the church is presented as the Body of Christ. She is Christ's wife and Christ's body. Christ is her Husband and her Head. So, Christ and the church are a universal, corporate man. This is the kernel of the divine revelation in the Word of God. The kernel is simply a couple and a man: a couple with the Triune God as the Husband and His chosen people as the wife, and a man with Christ as the Head and with His chosen people as the Body. This is the central revelation of the whole Bible. In the couple the main aspect is love, and in the man the main aspect is life. Christ and the church, as a couple, are a matter of love, and Christ and the church, as a man, are a matter of life.

### **[Section 3]**

### **E. The Old Testament as a Prediction**

#### **1. Prophecies of Christ**

The Old Testament is a prediction of Christ by prophecies in plain words, types, figures, and shadows. If you read the Old Testament carefully, you will discover many kinds of clear and evident prophecies of Christ. The Old Testament tells us of whom Christ was to be born, where He was to be born, and about many of the events in His life. A great many verses are concerned with such prophecies of Christ. Besides these prophecies, there are types, figures, and shadows revealing and portraying Christ in a detailed way. So, the Old Testament is considered as a revelation of Christ (Luke 24:27, 44; John 5:39).

#### **2. The Church in Types, Figures, and Shadows**

The Old Testament is also a prediction of the church, not in plain words, but only in types, figures, and shadows. As far as plain words are concerned, the church was never mentioned in the Old Testament. In the Old Testament the church was a hidden mystery (Eph. 3:3-6). Nevertheless, it was predicted by numerous types, figures, and shadows. The types and shadows of

the church are mainly of two categories. The first category is composed of the wives of the men who typified Christ. Eve was a type of the church (Eph. 5:31-32). Rebecca, the wife of Isaac, was also a type of the church (Gen. 24). Ruth typified the church (Ruth 4) and so did the Shulamite in the Song of Songs (S. S. 6:13). In the Hebrew language, Shulamite is the feminine gender of Solomon. Both Solomon and Shulamite are of one name, the one being a male Solomon and the other a female Solomon. This Shulamite was also a type of the church. The second category includes the tabernacle and the temple, both of which were types of the church. Although the church was not mentioned in the Old Testament in clear and evident words, it was nonetheless typified in a full way.

### **F. The New Testament, the Fulfillment of the Old Testament**

What about the New Testament? The New Testament is the fulfillment of the Old Testament. Whatever the Old Testament predicted regarding Christ and the church has been completely fulfilled in the New Testament.

#### **1. The Individual Christ in the Gospels**

The four gospels are a living biography of a wonderful Person. The four gospels reveal a wonderful Person, the individual Christ, Who came to fulfill the Old Testament. Perhaps you have read the gospels frequently without recognizing the many aspects of Christ revealed in them. In the gospels of Matthew and John more than 60 aspects of Christ are presented...In chapter 1 of Matthew we see that Christ is Jesus, Jehovah the Savior, and also Emmanuel, God with us. In chapter 4 He is revealed as the great light. In the following chapters we see Him as the greater David, the greater temple, the greater Solomon, the greater Jonah, the living Moses with the up-to-date regulations, and the living Elijah who fulfills the prophecies. If we read the book of Matthew carefully, we will find at least 30 more items concerning Christ...Christ is the real David, the real Moses, the real Solomon, and the real temple. Christ is everything. In the Gospel of John we find 20 or 30 items more. Christ is the light, the air, the water, the food, the Shepherd, the door, and the pasture. Christ is all-inclusive. He is everything. Have you seen this Christ? Although He is our Savior, He is much more than that. He is everything. He is a most wonderful Person.

You simply cannot say who Christ is. If you say He is God, I will say He is man. If you say He is man, I will say He is God. If you say He is the Son of God, I will say He is God the Father. If

you say He is God the Father, I will say He is God the Spirit. If you say He is the Creator, I will say He is the Redeemer. Christ is everything!

#### **2. The Corporate Christ in Acts**

The book of Acts follows the gospels. What is the Acts? The Acts is the spreading, the increase, and the enlargement of this wonderful Person. This wonderful Person was limited and confined in the little man Jesus, but in Acts He has been reproduced, increased, and enlarged. He has increased by spreading into Peter, John, James, Stephen, and even Saul of Tarsus. He has spread into tens of thousands, even hundreds of thousands of His believers, making all of them a part of Him. Collectively speaking, all of these believers along with Himself become the corporate Christ. Therefore, in the four gospels we have the individual Christ; in Acts we have the corporate Christ. By the end of Acts we see the individual Christ as well as the corporate Christ. However, we do not know how the individual Christ can become the corporate Christ. How can we, the vast multitude of believers, become a part of Christ?

#### **3. The Full Definition of the Corporate Christ in Romans**

This brings us to the book of Romans. Romans explains how the individual Christ can become the corporate Christ and how all of us who were once sinners and enemies of God can become parts of Christ and form His one Body. The book of Romans offers us a full definition of this, unfolding both the Christian life and the church life in detail...Romans provides a sketch of them both. Now we know the position of the book of Romans in the Bible.

#### **[Section 4]**

### **II. THE SECTIONS OF ROMANS**

At this point we need to consider the sections of the book of Romans. The Lord has given us eight words to denote the eight sections of this book: introduction, condemnation, justification, sanctification, glorification, selection, transformation, and conclusion. We all need to remember these eight words...We must pay close attention to the content of these eight sections.

#### **A. Introduction—the Gospel of God**

The introduction (1:1-17) delineates the theme of the book of Romans, which is the gospel of God. This is the content of the introduction. In the next message we will see what is the gospel of God.

#### **B. Condemnation—the Need of Salvation**

Following the introduction, we have the section on condemnation (1:18—3:20) that unveils to us

the need of God's salvation. We all are hopeless and helpless cases and are under God's condemnation. We need God's salvation.

### **C. Justification—The Accomplishment of Salvation**

The third section, justification (3:21—5:11), reveals the accomplishment of God's salvation. Related to this matter of justification we have three other items—propitiation, redemption, and reconciliation. We will cover these terms when we come to chapter 3...God's justification depends upon the redemption of Christ. Without the redemption of Christ, God has no way to justify sinners. Therefore, justification depends upon redemption, and redemption has one major aspect—propitiation. Propitiation is the major structure of redemption. Propitiation is the major part of the redemption of Christ because, as sinners, we owed God a great deal. We were held by God to pay this debt, and this caused a tremendous problem. That problem has been resolved by Christ as our propitiatory sacrifice. Since this propitiation has solved our problems with God, we have been redeemed. Based upon the redemption of Christ, God can easily and lawfully justify us. Thus, justification depends upon redemption, and the major part of redemption is propitiation. What, then, is reconciliation? Reconciliation is the issue of justification. God's justification issues in reconciliation. All of this has been accomplished. Hallelujah! Although you may not be clear about all of these words at present, you can say to the Lord, "Lord, I don't understand all these terms, but I praise You that everything has been accomplished."

Justification brings us to God. In fact, it not only brings us to God, but also into God. Therefore, we may have the full enjoyment of God. The King James Version says, "We joy in God" (Rom. 5:11). We not only joy in God; we enjoy God. God is our enjoyment. This is justification.

### **D. Sanctification—the Life-process in Salvation**

Following this, we have sanctification (5:12—8:13). How good it is to be in God and to enjoy God! However, do not look at yourself...After being justified, we need to be sanctified.

What does it mean to be sanctified? Once again we may use the illustration of tea. If we put tea into a glass of plain water, the water will be "teaified." At best, we are plain water, although we are actually not plain, but dirty. Even if we are plain water, we lack the tea flavor, the tea essence, and the tea color. We need the tea to

come into our very being. Christ Himself is the heavenly tea. Christ is in us. Hallelujah!

Our God is progressively revealed throughout the book of Romans. In chapter 1 He is God in creation, in chapter 3 God in redemption, in chapter 4 God in justification, in chapter 5 God in reconciliation, and in chapter 6 God in identification. As we come to chapter 8, we see that our God is now within us. Christ is in us (Rom. 8:10)! He is no longer merely in creation, redemption, justification, reconciliation, and identification, but He is now within us, in our spirit. Christ is in us doing a transforming and sanctifying work, just as the tea, when put into the water, works the element of tea into it. Eventually, the water will be wholly "teaified." It will have the appearance, the flavor, and the taste of real tea. If I serve you some of this beverage, I will be serving you tea, not plain water.

If I were to ask you whether or not you have been justified, you would all reply, "Hallelujah! We have been justified because Christ has accomplished redemption. God has reconciled us and we are now enjoying Him." This is wonderful. However, what about sanctification? Have you been sanctified?...I am not talking about being improved, but being sanctified—that is to have Christ wrought into our very being, just as the essence, flavor, and color of the tea are wrought into the water. This is sanctification.

### **[Section 5]**

### **E. Glorification—the Purpose of Salvation**

The next section in the book of Romans is glorification (Rom. 8:14-39), unveiling the purpose of God's salvation. Following sanctification, there is the need of glorification. Our body needs to be glorified. Although a brother may be quite saintly, his body needs to be glorified because of its physical defects and limitations. When the Lord Jesus comes, we will be glorified. Presently, I must wear thick, peculiar eyeglasses, but when the Lord comes I will be glorified. We shall not only be justified and sanctified; we shall be glorified, that is, our body shall be redeemed. Glorification is the full redemption of our body.

This glorification reveals the purpose of God's salvation. The purpose of God's salvation is to produce many brothers to Christ. Originally, Christ was the only begotten Son of God. Now the only begotten Son has become the firstborn Son. We ourselves will be processed into the many brothers of Christ and the many sons of God. Jesus has been processed and designated as the Son of God, and we also are in the same process to be designated as the many sons of God.

He is the firstborn Son, and we, the many sons, are His many brothers. This is the purpose of God's salvation.

#### **F. Selection—the Economy of Salvation**

After glorification, we come to selection which reveals the economy of salvation (Rom. 9:1—11:36). God has a purpose and an economy. His economy is for the fulfillment of His purpose. God is very wise and He arranges everything for the fulfillment of His purpose. He knows what He is doing. He knows who are His chosen people and He knows when His chosen people should be called. In relation to God, selection is for the accomplishment of His purpose; in relation to us, selection is our destiny.

#### **G. Transformation—the Life-practice in Salvation**

After this, we have the section on transformation, unfolding the life-practice in salvation (Rom. 12:1—15:13). In this section we see the life-practice of all that has been produced by the life-process. Whatever is produced in the section on sanctification is practiced in the section on transformation. Eventually, sanctification becomes transformation. In one sense, we are in sanctification; in another sense, we are also in transformation. We are in the process of life and in the practice of life that we may have the Body life with a proper private life. Every aspect of the proper Christian life and church life is included in this section on transformation. While we are being sanctified, we are also being transformed from one form into another form and from one shape into another shape. Praise the Lord! We are all under the life-process of sanctification for the life-practice of transformation.

#### **H. Conclusion—the Ultimate Consummation of Salvation**

The last section of the book of Romans is the conclusion, indicating the ultimate consummation of salvation (Rom. 15:14—16:27). The ultimate consummation of God's salvation is the churches—not just the Body, but the local churches as the expressions of the Body. Hallelujah! The book of Romans begins with the Gospel of God and concludes with the local churches. In Romans, we do not have the local church in doctrine but the local churches in practice. As we will see in later messages, many churches are mentioned in Romans chapter 16.

### **III. THE MAJOR STRUCTURES OF ROMANS**

The major structures of the book of Romans are three—salvation, life, and building.

#### **A. Salvation**

The first major structure of Romans is salvation, revealed in 1:1—5:11 and 9:1—11:36. Salvation includes propitiation, redemption, justification, reconciliation, selection, and predestination. In eternity past God predestinated us. Then He called us, redeemed us, justified us, and reconciled us to Himself. Thus, we have full salvation. We need to differentiate between redemption and salvation. Redemption is what Christ accomplished in the eyes of God. Salvation is what God has wrought upon us based upon the redemption of Christ. Redemption is objective, and salvation is subjective. When redemption becomes our experience, it becomes salvation.

#### **B. Life**

Salvation is for the life unfolded in 5:12—8:39. In this section the word life is used at least seven times and, according to chapter 8, this life is four-fold, which we will see as we come to that chapter.

#### **C. Building**

In the last part of Romans, 12:1—16:27, we have the building, the Body with all of its expressions in the local churches. Salvation is for life, and life is for building. Thus, the three major structures of Romans are salvation, life, and building.