

THE BOOK OF ROMANS

"Obligations"

Romans 8:12-17a

June 29, 1986

INTRODUCTION

1. The battle rages in the soul of a believer (7:7-25). The only answer is Christ (7:24, 25). It is His work at Calvary (8:3) which forms the basis for the Spirit's work in the believer (v. 4). Ours is to walk after the Spirit. God grant this always!

2. To follow after the flesh is death; to follow after the Spirit is life and peace (8:6). Flesh people cannot please God and do not subject themselves to Him (8:8). Some day the body, which at the moment is dead toward God because of the sin nature, will be raised (like Christ) because of the Holy Spirit Who lives in the believer--blessed hope and deliverance!

3. So at this present moment, what is a believer's obligation? How is it to be in the interim before the resurrection and final release from sin's opposition?

Study-

1. DEBTOR TO SPIRIT v. 12

The text has it in the negative, but it is an explicative of vv. 10, 11. In view of all that is written from 6:1 to 8:11, the conclusion is--we are debtors, but not to the flesh. Hallelujah! Admittedly the flesh is present, but we owe it nothing in the light of God's work in Christ, rather we are debtors to the Spirit--blessed be God.

2. DEBTORS TO MORTIFY v. 13

A man is "about" to die (fullest sense both physical and spiritual) if he lives after the flesh. The only hope is to put to death the practices of the body (which is the organ of the sin nature). By so doing the believer will (not "about to") live. How to live every day without being overcome by the sin nature is clear--the mortification of its deeds and the presence of the Holy Spirit.

3. DEBTORS TO GUIDANCE v. 14

This verse explains "shall live" (v. 13). By becoming conscious of the Spirit as their Guide, believers experience the normal Christian life. This divine leadership causes a believer to realize and prove His Sonship. Hence: leading --> Holy Spirit (personal relationship) --> Sons of God. Amen!

4. DEBTORS TO ADOPTION v. 15

The Spirit believers received (aorist) was not the

spirit of bondage of fear, but the spirit of adoption. Hence, there is no service fear, but rather of adoption. Adoption is a Greek term meaning placed as a Son i.e. a son come of age. A believer is so recognized. He is no longer a servant (Gal. 4:7). It will be ultimately consummated fully at the coming of Christ when the body is adopted (v. 23). This spirit of adoption is that wherein a believer cries "Abba (daddy) Father." What an endearing phrase!

5. DEBTORS TO CHILDHOOD v. 17

The "witness" of the Holy Spirit is nothing more nor less than the consciousness of being born of God, of belonging to His family in Christ. A parallel passage (Gal. 4:6) shows it is a sense of the very relation to the Father which Christ Himself has as Son. Glory to God.

6. DEBTORS TO HEIRSHIP v. 17a

Three precious terms: heirs, heirs of God, joint-heirs with Christ. Heirs, because sons (born ones). What kind of heirs--heirs of God. Why? Because we are sons of God (born ones of God, v. 16). Finally, joint-heirs with Christ, the well-beloved of the Father. Only G-R-A-C-E could write these words in the Bible.

CONCLUSION

Oh to grace, how great a debtor I am constrained to be. Not to the flesh, but to the Spirit. Amen.