

**AN ESSAY TOWARDS A NEW
TRANSLATION OF THE EPISTLE OF
ST. PAUL TO THE ROMANS, WITH
BRIEF EXPLANATORY NOTES**

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An essay towards a new translation of the Epistle of St. Paul to the Romans, with brief explanatory notes by Basil H. Cooper

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BASIL H. COOPER

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BRIEF EXPLANATORY NOTES**

AN ESSAY
TOWARDS
A NEW TRANSLATION
OF THE
EPISTLE OF ST. PAUL
TO THE
ROMANS,

ON THE BASIS OF THE AUTHORISED VERSION;

WITH
BRIEF EXPLANATORY NOTES.

BY
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THE EPISTLE

OF

ST. PAUL TO THE ROMANS.

§ 1.

ARGUMENT.

I, Paul the Apostle, avowing at once that the field of my labours is the world, address you, the Christians at Rome, whether circumcised or not, as saints and beloved of God.

TRANSLATION.

¹ Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, a chosen apostle, set apart unto the gospel of God, ²which He made known afore by His prophets in the Holy Scriptures, ³concerning His Son, the begotten of the seed of David after the flesh, ⁴the predestinate Son of God in authority, after the Spirit of holiness upon the resurrection of the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, ⁵of whom we received grace and apostleship, in order to the obedience of conviction, for his name's sake, among all the nations, ⁶among whom are ye also, ye chosen of Jesus Christ, ⁷to all the beloved of God that be in Rome, chosen saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

§ 2.

ARGUMENT.

In your spiritual welfare I take a deep interest, and, in order to promote it, am desirous to visit you, being the more willing to preach to your mixed church at Rome, because especially bound to proclaim the truth to men of all nations and creeds.

TRANSLATION.

⁸First, I bless my God, on behalf of you all, through Jesus Christ, that your faith is speaking of in all the world. ⁹For God is my witness, Whom I worship in my spirit in the gospel of His Son, that I still bring to mind, as regards you, always, during my devotions, ¹⁰to beseech that by some means one time at length, I may have a prosperous journey in the will of God to come unto you. ¹¹For I am longing to see you, that I may afford you of any spiritual gift that may be for your establishment— (¹² that is, albeit, that of one mind, exhortation may be made therewithal in your midst, through the confidence in one another, on your part, so as also on mine); ¹³ nor would I have you unaware, brethren, that I oft-times purpose to come to you, and before now have been forbidden, to the end I may have some fruit; and that among you, as among the other nations, ¹⁴to Greeks so as also to barbarians, to learned so as also to unlearned, I am bound, ¹⁵so is the cheerfulness on my part, to you also that are in Rome, to preach the Gospel.

§ 3.

ARGUMENT.

My labours embrace the world, because the gospel does so. For to every believer, whether Jew or Gentile, the gospel imparts that righteousness whereof God is the author, and which bringeth salvation.

of God by faith to Faith-ward; as it is written,

“The righteous by faith shall live.” *

TRANSLATION.

¹⁶For I am not *ashamed* of the gospel of Christ. For it is the power of God unto salvation in behalf of every one that believeth, of the Jew, first, so as also of the Greek. ¹⁷For in him reveal-
eth itself the righteousness

NOTES.

V. 17. “Faith-ward.” The abstract, “faith” is here put for the concrete, “Faithful One,” i. e. God, but with much more strength and liveliness; just as it is much more forcible to say, “God is love,” than to say that He exercises love. The Romans had a divinity called “Fides,” or Faith, so that the application of this term to the Divine Being would be anything but strange to those whom the apostle addressed.

§ 4.

ARGUMENT.

This impartation of righteousness by the gospel plainly substantiates its claim to be considered as God's exclusive instrument in men's salvation. For, apart from the possession of righteousness, no man can be saved, because all unrighte-

TRANSLATION.

¹⁸For the wrath of God is *revealing* itself Heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of mankind, who, in their unrighteousness, are keeping out of sight the truth thereof: ¹⁹Because that which betokens God is

(*) Heb. ii. 4.

ARGUMENT.

ousness will, doubtless, meet with its reward. No excuse of ignorance is available, because that ignorance is itself guilt, the means of divine knowledge being lavishly afforded by God. On this supposition alone can the present abandoned state of mankind at large be explained; as, indeed, they themselves practically acknowledge, by their admission in the general, that their vices, the result of their ignorance of God, deserve punishment, which yet they fancy they shall escape.

TRANSLATION.

plain in their midst: For God makes it plain for them. ²⁰ For those invisible things of His, His everlasting power, so as also his Godhead, are seen, in the reflection from universal creation, bringing themselves in mind by means of their workmanship; so that they are without excuse; ²¹ because that, though they know God, they glorify Him not as God; neither are thankful, but become vain in their imaginations, and their gross heart is darkened. ²² Professing to be wise, they practise folly, ²³ and change the glory of the incorruptible God for a counterfeit in the shape of corruptible man, and of birds, and of four-footed beasts, and of creeping things. ²⁴ For but which reason does God give them over, in the lusts of their own hearts, to the filthiness of yielding their own bodies to dishonour amongst themselves. ²⁵ As men that reverse the truth of God in the lie, and stand in awe of, and worship, the creature instead of the Creator (Who is blessed for ever! Amen!) ²⁶ God for this reason gives them over to dishonouring passions. For their women reverse the natural usage into that against nature; ²⁷ so as likewise also the men, leaving the natural

TRANSLATION.

usage of the woman, burn in their lust one towards another, as men among men, working themselves disgrace, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their own wandering which was inevitable. ²⁸Also, like as they eschew having God among their knowledge, God gives them over to a mind worthy eschewing, to yield its unseemly results, ²⁹filled as they are become with all unrighteousness, whoredom, malignity, grasping, spite; glutted with envy, bloodshed, strife, craft, treachery; whisperers, ³⁰backbiters, reprobates, overbearing, proud, boasters, inventors of evils, disobedient to parents, gross, covenant breakers, without natural affection, unappeasable, merciless; ³¹who, whilst adjudging the sentence of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but also are full of complacency as to their doers.

§ 5.

ARGUMENT.

Therefore there is no plea of natural justice on which men can hope for escape. Each man's general acknowledgment of sin's ill desert applies to his own individual case. For that cannot be true in the general which is false in the particular instance. Every man's

TRANSLATION.

¹Wherefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest (!) For wherein thou judgest the other, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things. ²But we are sure that the judgment of God is *in earnest* against