

Closing Remarks 6:11-19

- Some believe that Paul now takes the pen from the amanuensis and writes some personal remarks to the Galatians.
- Others believe Paul wrote the whole letter to the Galatians manifesting his deep love for this very troubled church.
- Paul used an amanuensis in writing his letters. He wrote the salutation with his own hand. (Rom. 16:22; 1 Cor. 16:21; Col. 4:18; 2 Thess. 3:17).

ROM 16:22 I, Tertius, who write this letter [epistole], greet [aspazomai] you in the Lord. See Rom. 1:1

Tertius was the secretary who wrote the letter as Paul dictated it to him.

Lit. "the one who wrote" - See NIV "who wrote down this letter"

1CO 16:21 The greeting [aspasmos] is in my own hand-- Paul.

COL 4:18 I, Paul, write this greeting [aspasmos] with my own hand. Remember my imprisonment. Grace be with you.
"write" is in italics.

2TH 3:17 I, Paul, write this greeting [aspasmos] with my own hand, and this is a distinguishing mark in every letter [epistole]; this is the way I write.

The words "I write" are present tense and refer to what follows. Gr. "grapho" - I write

- The Galatian letter may be an exception to Paul normal practice. There is evidence, not conclusive, that he wrote the whole letter with his own hand rather than dictating most of the letter.

GAL 6:11 See [notice] with what large letters I am writing [wrote or I have written] to you with my own hand.

See RSV. NIV "see what large letters I use as I write to you with my own hand."

Marshall "Ye see in how large letter I wrote to you with my hand."

1. The words "I am writing" are literally "I wrote." The words can also be translated "I have written." McCord.

- The Amplified has "I am writing" as well as the NASB.
- The NIV has "I write."
 - a. Lit. "I wrote" or "I have written" (egrapsa). This is an epistolary aorist.
 - b. The epistolary aorist looks at something from the viewpoint of the reader.

1) The writing would be a past action when they received it.

2) Some understand the epistolary aorist here to be the equivalent of “I write” and refers only to his closing remarks.

2. The KJV has “ye see how large a letter”

- Lit. “letters”
- It is the plural of “gramma”.
 - a. This translation leaves the impression that this was a large letter or epistle.
 - b. It is not short, but it is not nearly as long as Romans, or the two Corinthian letters.
 - c. Paul used the instrumental case, not the accusative case.
 - d. He is not likely referring to the length of this letter.
 - e. He is more likely referring to the large letters he is using.
 - f. Paul used “letter” (epistole) when referring to the letters or books he penned. (2 Thess. 3:17).

3. There are many reasons why Paul might have used large letters.

Note:

- He may have written in the inch high uncial letters which were formed singly and with no connection with others words.
- This is probably true whether he wrote the whole letter or just the closing remarks with his own hand.
 - a. Defective eyesight
 - 1) Some believe he had poor eyesight. See Notes on Gal. 4:15.
 - 2) It is believed that Paul contacted ophthalmia which gave one a repulsive appearance and made one nearly totally blind.
 - b. Nervousness or some injury such as a missing finger.
 - c. It could have been a rheumatic condition that caused a stiffening of his fingers.
 - d. Poor handwriting especially as contrasted to the neat and skilled handwriting of a professional scribe.
 - e. For emphasis - To show his deep love for the brethren at Galatia.
 - f. **The reason is not given, and we cannot know for sure if any of these theories is the correct one.**

4. The epistolary aorist “egrapsa” can be used to refer to a previous portion of a letter. (Rom. 15:15; 1 Cor. 9:15; Phile. 19, 21; 1 Pet. 5:12).

ROM 15:15 But **I have written** very boldly to you on some points, so as to remind you again, because of the grace that was given me from God,

1CO 9:15 But I have used none of these things. And **I am not writing** these things that it may be done so in my case; for it would be better for me to die than have any man make my boast an empty one.

PHM 1:21 Having confidence in your obedience, **I write** to you, since I know that you will do even more than what I say.

PHM 1:19 “I, Paul, am writing (wrote) this with my own hand.”

1 Pet. 5:12 “ I have written to you briefly.”

- a. Some believe Paul is looking back upon the letter which is just being closed.
- b. Some argue the epistolary aorist is never used, at least in the New Testament, to refer to something which the writer is about to write.
- c. It is argued Paul used the present tense for something he was about to write. (2 Thess. 3:17).

Impure Motives Of False Teachers

GAL 6:12 Those [Jews or Gentiles who desire to make a good showing in the flesh try to compel [force] you to be circumcised, simply [lit. only] that they may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ.

1. These false teachers, either Jews or Gentiles, wanted to remain in good standing with the Jewish community.
2. Both Jews and Gentiles could do this by pointing to Gentile converts whom they had persuaded to be circumcised.
3. It is not clear what value or importance the Judaizing teachers put on Christ and the cross.
4. It would appear they believed Christ died on the cross for the sins of men.
5. It is clear they believed that faith in Jesus was not sufficient for salvation, but salvation required obedience to circumcision and other requirements of the law.
6. It is possible 1 Corinthians 1:23 may have described the true feelings of some in the church as well as outside of the church.
 - a. The cross was a stumbling-block to most Jews.
 - b. Some Christians may have been ashamed of it.

GAL 6:13 For those who are circumcised [Jews or Gentiles] do not even keep the [Mosaic] Law themselves, but they desire to have you circumcised, that they may boast in your flesh [your subjection to external rites].

1. It is sad that those who were so zealous for the Law did not keep it themselves. **See Matt. 23:2.**

2. There were two motives for binding circumcision on the Gentiles.

- a. Avoid persecution from the Jews. (Gal. 6:12).
- b. Glory over the circumcision of converts (Gal. 6:13b).

Paul Boasts Only In The Cross Of Jesus Christ

GAL 6:14 But may it never be that I should boast [in anything or anyone] , except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which [the cross] the world has been crucified [put to death] to me, and I to the world.

KJV “God forbid that I should boast” Lit. “me genoito” (let it not be)” “May I not boast” - McCord

1. Paul had died to self and the world. (Gal. 1:10; 2:20).
2. He was living for Christ. (Phil. 1:21).

Note:

- The cross was a stumbling-block or scandal to the Jews and foolishness to the Gentiles. (1 Cor. 1:23).
- In contrast, it was everything to Paul.
- Jesus must be our everything, our all.

Circumcision Had No Spiritual Value

GAL 6:15 For neither is circumcision anything [spiritually], nor uncircumcision, but a new creation [creature].

1. Outward circumcision meant nothing spiritually. (Gal. 5:6; 2 Cor. 7:19; Rom. 2:28, 29).
2. The important thing is being “a new creature” in Christ Jesus.

a. Paul wrote.

2CO 5:17 Therefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come. Greek has “a new creation or creature.” (kaine ktisis).

b. Lit. “A new creation” (kainos ktisis); NIV has “a new creature.” McCord “a new creation.”

3. Jesus required the new birth. (Jn. 3:3, 5).

“Those Who Walk By This Rule”

GAL 6:16 And those who will walk [live] by this rule [standard, principle of glorying only in the cross of Jesus and becoming a new creature), peace and mercy be upon them, and [even, that is] upon the [true] Israel of God.

- The Greek “kai” means “and, even, also.” NIV has “even to the Israel of God” McCord and KJV “and upon the Israel of God.”

- The Israel of God is not another group of people, but it refers to the church for which Christ died. (Acts 20:28; Eph. 5:25).
- It is those who were living “by this rule”.

Note:

- If “the Israel of God” does refer to physical Israel the idea is he wishes that those of fleshy Israel would come to Christ and be blessed. See Rom. 9:3
- They too would have “to walk by this rule” if they were to be saved.
- Paul did use this term most of the time to refer to physical Israel.
- See exception under 2. below.

1. “Those who walk by this rule”

- a. Christians are to live by this rule or standard.
- b. “Rule” (kanon) refers back to vs. 14 and 15.

2. Christians are the “Israel of God” (spiritual Israel). **See Rom. 9:6; Phil 3:3; Gal. 3:9, 29.**

ROM 9:6 But it is not as though the word of God has failed. For they are not all Israel who are descended from Israel; Israel was those who trusted in Christ.

PHI 3:3 for we are the true circumcision, who worship in the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh,

GAL 3:9 So then those who are of faith are blessed with Abraham, the believer.

GAL 3:29 And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise.

3. Some N.T. references to “Israel.”

ROM 9:4 **who are Israelites**, to whom belongs the adoption as sons and the glory and the covenants and the giving of the Law and the temple service and the promises,

ROM 9:27 And Isaiah cries out concerning Israel, "Though the number of the sons of Israel be as the sand of the sea, it is the remnant that will be saved;

ROM 9:31 but Israel, pursuing a law of righteousness, did not arrive at that law.

ROM 10:19 But I say, surely Israel did not know, did they? At the first Moses says, "I will make you jealous by that which is not a nation, By a nation without understanding will I anger you."

ROM 10:21 **But as for Israel He says**, "All the day long I have stretched out My hands to a disobedient and obstinate people." Used of physical Israel.

ROM 11:2 God has not rejected His people whom He foreknew. Or do you not know what the Scripture says in the passage about Elijah, how he pleads with God against Israel?

ROM 11:7 What then? That which Israel is seeking for, it has not obtained, but those who were chosen obtained it, and the rest were hardened;

ROM 11:1 I say then, God has not rejected His people, has He? May it never be! **For I too am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin.** Used of physical Israel here.

ROM 11:25 ¶ For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery, lest you be wise in your own estimation, that a partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fulness of the Gentiles has come in;

ROM 11:26 and thus all Israel will be saved; just as it is written, "The Deliverer will come from Zion, He will remove ungodliness from Jacob." All in Israel who would be saved would be saved by faith in Christ.

1CO 10:18 Look at the nation Israel; are not those who eat the sacrifices sharers in the altar?

2CO 3:7 But if the ministry of death, in letters engraved on stones, came with glory, so that the sons of Israel could not look intently at the face of Moses because of the glory of his face, fading as it was,

2CO 3:13 and are not as Moses, who used to put a veil over his face that the sons of Israel might not look intently at the end of what was fading away.

2CO 11:22 Are they Hebrews? So am I. **Are they Israelites?** So am I. Are they descendants of Abraham? So am I. Used of physical Israel.

EPH 2:12 remember that you were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.

PHI 3:5 circumcised the eighth day, **of the nation of Israel**, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the Law, a Pharisee; Used of physical Israel.

HEB 8:8 For finding fault with them, He says, "Behold, days are coming, says the Lord, When I will effect a new covenant With the house of Israel and with the house of Judah;

HEB 8:10 "For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel After those days, says the Lord: I will put My laws into their minds, And I will write them upon their hearts. And I will be their God, And they shall be My people.

HEB 11:22 By faith Joseph, when he was dying, made mention of the exodus of the sons of Israel, and gave orders concerning his bones.

Some Had Denied Christ Apostleship And Loyalty To Christ

- Paul had defended his apostolic authority. (Gal. 1:11-2:14).
- Paul had also proven his absolute loyalty to Christ. (Gal. 6:17).

GAL 6:17 From now on [now and in the future] let no one cause trouble for me, for I bear on my body the brand-marks of Jesus.

1. Paul had suffered much for the cause of Christ.
2. The Greek "stigma" means "mark, brand."

- a. "I bear" is from "bastazo" meaning to "bear, carry, endure, declare, sustain, receive."
- b. As slaves were marked [branded] by their owners, Paul also bore the physical markings of Christ. (Acts 17:19; 2 Cor. 11:23-27). See Acts 14:19
- b. Paul had on his body the wound, scars and other outward evidences of persecutions for Christ.

Note: "trouble"

1. Some had charged that Paul preached to please men. (Gal. 1:10).
2. Some affirmed he preach a man's gospel. (Gal. 1:11, 12).
3. Some charged he was an enemy of the Christians in Galatia. (Gal. 4:16).
4. Some accused him of teaching their doctrine of circumcision. (Gal. 5:10, 11).
5. Some charged him of no longer being the servant of Christ.. (Gal. 6:17).
6. Some argued he was not an apostle. (Gal. 1:11-2:14).

Note:

- Soldiers were also at times branded.
 - There were devotees who stamped upon their bodies the names of the gods whom they worshiped.
7. He also had the spiritual marks of Christ - love, forgiveness, tolerance, faithfulness, courage, etc.

Farewell Blessing

GAL 6:18 The grace [unmerited favor and blessings] of our Lord Jesus Christ [the Messiah] be with your spirit, brethren [brothers] . Amen [so be it]. See 2 Cor. 13:14.

- "grace" is from "charis" meaning "unmerited favor."
 - "your" is plural. Gr. "humon"
1. Paul regards his readers as "brethren". (Gal. 1:11; 3:15; 4:12, 28, 3; 5:11, 13; 6:1).
 2. Paul was not their enemy. (Gal. 4:16).
 3. Paul regarded them as "brothers" and wrote some harsh statements because he loved them and wanted them to depend on the cross of Christ - not on circumcision and other human works of merit.
 4. The words "be with your spirit" are interesting and significant.
 - a. The Greek is literally "the spirit of you." "tou pneumatou humon"
 - b. The word "spirit" can denote an attitude. (Matt. 5:3).

c. These words more likely are another indication that man is more than flesh, but has an immortal “soul” or “spirit.” (Eccles. 12:9, Matt. 10:28; Jas. 1:21; 1 Thess. 5:23; Heb. 12:9, 23).

5. He ends this letter with the words “amen” [amen] meaning “so be it.”

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