

Romans 15:1-6

Actively strengthening the weak

This passage is an exposition on the commandment to love our neighbor as ourselves.

- Paul does not mean “endure” but rather actively bear one another's burdens.
- Messiah came to serve, not be served, and we should emulate that attitude

- The Tanakh was written for our instruction, not meant to be disregarded.
- It perhaps is an admonishment to those who think they are strong, to not disregard Scriptural prohibitions in order to show off “freedom”

- The goal is to encourage, help each other to persevere.
- This will help us to glorify Hashem. Acceptance of one another is a goal.

Romans 15:7-12

- Messiah was a servant to Jews (the circumcision), so that they could become a servant to the Nations.
- The Nations will Glorify G-d.
- This is kind of a bookend. It reminds us of the theme that Paul was focused on in Romans.

Summary and Review of Romans.

At the end of Chapter 15, Paul wraps up with some personal notes.

He commends the Roman believers that they are full of goodness and truth.

- At the same time, he is reminding his audience that even so they need diligence in serving one another. Thus the “weak and strong” and the focus on grace, rather than biological origins, or even just doing good as an entrance into the Kingdom.
- He reminds them that he is especially authorized to instruct them as he was appointed to be sent (meaning of apostle) to non-Jews, (the word Gentile is from *ethnos* meaning **nations**). He is sent not just to Israel, but to the nations.
- Paul's boasting is only in what he has through the Messiah. That result is **obedience** of the nations, both by word, and by deed.
- Paul mentions that he wants to go where Messiah is not known, or at least acknowledged. This does not necessarily imply that he wanted to go away from any Jewish presence, but as we have seen, he would speak of Yeshua to the nations, but in a Jewish context. This was his pattern as we have seen in Acts, and remains a focus of the rest of his writings.

Summary and Review of the theme of Romans

Paul is writing to a community that is learning how to reintegrate Jew and Gentile, consistent with the picture of Jewish life in Rome at that time. He is intent upon explaining the relationship of Jews to Gentiles in the Kingdom, and how that fits with a common salvation. Consistent with his directive from Jerusalem.

The central issue between Israel and the Nations

Acts 15:1 Some men came down from Judea and began teaching the brethren, “Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved.”

The Cure:

Acts 15:13 After they had stopped speaking, James answered, saying, “Brethren, listen to me.

(Ac 15:19-29) Therefore it is my judgment that we do not trouble those who are turning to God from among the Gentiles, but that we write to them that they abstain from things contaminated by idols and from fornication and from what is strangled and from blood. For Moses from ancient generations has in every city those who preach him, since he is read in the synagogues every Sabbath. Then it seemed good to the apostles and the elders, with the whole church, to choose men from among them to send to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas--Judas called Barsabbas, and Silas, leading men among the brethren, and they sent this letter by them, “The apostles and the brethren who are elders, to the brethren in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia who are from the Gentiles, greetings. Since we have heard that some of our number to whom we gave no instruction have disturbed you with their words, unsettling your souls, it seemed good to us, having become of one mind, to select men to send to you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, men who have risked their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore we have sent Judas and Silas, who themselves will also report the same things by word of mouth. For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us to lay upon you no greater burden than these essentials: that you abstain from things sacrificed to idols and from blood and from things strangled and from fornication; if you keep yourselves free from such things, you will do well. Farewell.”

Review Outline of Romans

Preamble: Romans 1:1-17. Introductions

A. Romans 1:18-5:21 No Favoritism, in Sin and in Salvation In “being Righteoused,” and in our sinful standing before G-d there is no favoritism towards Jews on the one hand, and no special sinfulness inherent in the Gentiles.

B. Romans 6:1 – 8:39 **Salvation is apart from Law.** No Jewish favoritism. Jews do not have a “Get into heaven free card” (or get out of jail free card)
Law does not have the function of providing salvation, but has other functions

C. 9:1 – 11:36 ***The Focus of Law, Israel and Salvation.*** *The reason for being a believer in Messiah is to identify with the calling of Israel, to do the work of being a light to the nations. That calling has not been revoked, but now can be accomplished in power, by all children of Abraham, but only in the context of and association with Israel..*

B’ 12:1 – 13:14 **No favoritism or division in our purpose.** All who are in Messiah and united to the calling of Israel live do their work in community. Living a G-dly life accomplishes the purpose of Israel.

A’ 14:1 – 16:27 **No favoritism in our personal interactions.** Whether we be, Jew or Gentile, with perhaps different tasks, we each have tasks to carry out the purpose of Israel.