

In-Depth Romans Study
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Handout 5 - Romans Redux

Just some things I thought you'd want to remember as we move forward.

The four main sections of the letter.

1. **1:18-4:25**
2. **5:1-8:39**
3. **9:1-11:36**
4. **12:1-15:13**

Extra goodies and things to consider.

Verse 1

- **Paul or Saul?** It might be worth considering that the Hebrew name Shaul sound very much like the Greek word **sauros** which means conceited referring to “a haughty gate.” In view of this it just may be that Saul used the Greek form of his name is avoid wise cracks and to not give fuel for criticism.
- **Rabbi?** There is no biblical justification for thinking that Paul was a Rabbi in the official since. As a matter of fact 2 Cor. 3 indicates that he was not in that his “qualifications” came into question. 2Co 3:1 Do we begin again to commend ourselves? Or do we, as some, need commendatory letters to you, or commendatory ones from you?
- **Servant?** (Greek=δουλος doulou) In the Tanach LXX this term is often used to translate the Hebrew “*eved*”. T is used of a, servant of G-d. the word-group is most often applied in the sense of worship and service to G-d.
- **Set apart for the Gospel of God?** “Set apart” (Greek= ἀπὸ ζω aphorismenos/aphorizo) brings to mind one of the generally accepted derivations of the word Pharisee (Hebrew= p’rashim) meaning “to separate. We can see it in Ezek 45:4 (LXX).

Verse 2

Promise? The word promise (Greek= προεπαγγέλλομαι proepaggellomai) is a **key term** in Paul’s writings. It most often refers to the “unilateral nature of the covenant made with Abraham.” See: Acts 13:32-33; 26:6-7; Rom. 4:13-21; 9:8-9; Gal 3:16-22; 3:29; Eph 2:11=12

- Note also that {Paul refers to the Holy Scriptures. See; Luke 24:44 and 2 Tim. 3:16-17 – these would be the Tanach.

Verse 3

- **Messiah – suffering or victorious?** “The Talmud speaks of Messiah be Ephraim (or Joseph) [b.Sukkah 52a; cf. Beit HaMidrash 5:187-88; b.Sanhedrin 98b; Mid. Rab. Gen. 95; Mid. Rab. Canticles ii.33] and Messiah ben David [b.Sukkot 52b; b. Stola 48b]. Messiah ben Joseph was to be slain, while Messiah ben David would win victory over Israel’s enemies and bring in everlasting peace.” Tim Hegg

Verse 5

- **Obedience of faith?** There are several views of this phrase. In my opinion the two best are:
 - Obedience which faith requires
 - The obedience which consists in faith
 - Mark Nanos interprets the phrase to regard the requirements of *halachah* upon Gentiles who, because of their acceptance of Yeshua the Messiah, had joined themselves (or been joined) with the Jews who had also believed in Him. As equals in the Body they (Gentiles) were expected to accept the righteous *halachah* as laid out by the Council in Jerusalem. These Gentiles were worshiping in fellowship with the Jewish community and NOT as a separate entity. For this to be possible and efficacious it would have been **necessary** for them to submit.

The Jerusalem Council decided that believing Gentiles would be admitted to the congregation (synagogue) as equals without undergoing ritual conversion. **But** they were admitted as righteous Gentiles, **not** as pagans. As such they were expected to leave paganism and its life style and **take up the halachah of the faithful fellowship of Israel**. This was and is a matter concerning community/fellowship with G-d and His people.

How one walked (and walks today) – how one conducts his or her life, is a direct statement of one's love for G-d. **"To neglect halachah was to equally deny one's allegiance and submission to the Creator."** Tim Hegg

Hegg also states that, "while halachah, rules of living (*for purity*), may seem at first blush to comprise only a fraction of Paul's calling and emphasis, it does, from a Jewish perspective, comprise the whole, for righteous halachah is the inevitable requirement for consistent worship of G-d. The impure remain at a distance, the pure are allowed in." Tim Hegg

Verse 6 & 7

- **Called?** The Greek word is κλητός *kletos* which translates the Hebrew *kodesh*, holy convocation, the required gathering of the community on Sabbath and the Appointed Times [Ex. 12:16; Lev. 23:2ff; Num.28:25] The called are those who have responded to G-d's summons.
- **Called as saints?** Saints is simply the word "holy" Greek *agios* which carries the idea of being marked off, separate, and withdrawn from common use.

Verse 8

- **Your faith is being proclaimed throughout the whole world?** This would simply be their dedication to Yeshua. The fact that they lived in Rome would make this a big deal – Jew and Gentile worshiping the One True G-d in the middle of the Imperial Capital.

Verse 9

- **For G-d is my witness?** Paul makes an oath? But what about Matthew 5:33-37 and James 5:12

We need to understand that in the 1st century the “teachers” had woven a complex web of conditions by which one could swear an oath and then not follow it through. Whether a vow or oath was binding depended upon a complex series of conditions depending upon what the oath had been attached to. Vows were made “by the Temple,” “by the house of. . .” all things of now real power or ability to bind. Here Paul calls G-d as his witness.

- **Serve?** Again this word? No, a different one. The Greek here is λατρεύω *latreuo* and in the LXX is a translation for the Hebrew *avodah* which is always used of the service of the priests in the Tabernacle/Temple.
- **In my spirit?** No, not the Holy Spirit but rather, “indicating Paul’s ministry of prayer as being the inward side of his apostolic service contrasted with the outward side – his preaching, etc” Hegg

Verse 11

- **Spiritual gift?** The fruit which will be produced by the Roman believers – the calling of the Gentile believers to the obedience of faith i.e. Submitting to the decision of the Jerusalem Council. By this gift they would be “established” (Greek= στηρίζω *sterizo*) from the Greek meaning “to stand”. To stand meaning they would be made stronger in their ability to honor G-d **not only** individually but also in their corporate life.

Verse 12

- **Encouraged – by each other's faith?** Imagine, Jew and Gentile worshiping together encouraged by the same faith in the One True G-d.

Verse 13

- **Gentile?** Greek = ἔθνος *ethnos* We must always look to the context for what is meant. It is used to refer to both the pagans and to those nations outside Israel as well as a person whose lineage is outside of Jacob.

Verse 16

- **All?** This is a key to Romans. All who believe – each and everyone no matter their lineage.
 - **Jew first?** Should not G-d’s priority be ours as well? Never can the Gospel be preached without due regard for the role G-d has given Israel in accomplishing it.

Verse 17

- **Righteousness of G-d?** Greek = δικαιοσύνη θεός *dikaiousune theos*. The Greek *dika*, *dikaio* and *dikaiousune* in Classical Greek meant custom and confronting custom which came to be used for right or accepted. **But** in the LXX it is used to translate the Hebrew *tzedek* which is used to describe actions which fulfill the G-d-given obligations of the Torah or the demands of a particular relationship. Paul uses this term to refer to those whom have been saved in that they have been acquitted of guilt by G-d who has conferred a righteous status

upon them. We must note that these individuals are expected to be faithful as faithfulness is the flip side of the coin. It is the righteousness of G-d by which we are made righteous. Tim Hegg paraphrases this verse as follows: For in it (the Gospel) the manner by which G-d declares a sinner is reveals.

- **From faith to faith?** See Hab. 2:4 In the Habakkuk peshar (1QpHab, a midrash on the text) we can find, “Its prophetic meaning concerns all the doers of the Law in the house of Judah whom G-d will deliver from the house of damnation, because of their patient suffering and their steadfast faith in the Teacher of Righteousness.”
 - **“By faith”** = modifies the manner in which one is able to obtain righteousness before G-d. Hab. Stresses the same truth – the righteous of Israel will be characterized by a willingness to submit to the power of G-d.
 - **Faith?** Greek = πίστις *pistis*; Hebrew = *emunah*. Faith that saves encompasses all of life, faith and faithfulness are always intertwined.
 - Hegg says; “. . . **saving faith begins, not by mustering one’s strength to accomplish a good work, but by undergoing a death to one’s self and being made alive in messiah. Saving faith is therefore characterized by one’s own confession of utter helplessness in the face of utter guilt and condemnation.**”

Verse 18

- Paul here moves forward based upon the phrase, “from faith to faith.” He will be **exposing the heart of mankind apart from faith**. If G-d declares the sinner righteous through faith then we need to see the condition of man apart from faith.
 - It seems that in this section Paul, for the most part, has Gentiles (pagans) in mind. But interestingly he does not use the word Gentile but rather the word “men,” (Greek= ἄνθρωπος *anthropos*). You might want to compare vs. 23 with Psa. 106:20 and Jer. 2:11 – these passages from the Tanach refer to the Jewish nations. The heart of 2:1-3:30 teaches that the Jew, who considers himself entitled to judge the Gentiles, does the same things he accused the Gentiles of. What Paul is addressing here is the heart of everyone who attempts to gain their own righteousness apart from faith. We need to **always** keep in mind that no matter what the outward expressions are the heart is the same. Hegg says,
 - “Idolatry, whether projected toward a pagan god represented by statuary, or portrayed in a smug reliance upon one’s ethnic status, is still idolatry, and flows from a heart bound up in the darkness of sin.”
 - The verse begins with the Greek word γάρ *gar* meaning “for.” This shows us that righteousness **must** come from outside the sinner because on his or her own, he or she will **always grow in unrighteousness**.

Note from Michael: As I reflect on this I wonder at G-d’s grace in giving us Torah. It is in Torah that we find the “instructions” for growing – not only in living out His righteousness **but** His means for us to grow in faith. Here’s my take. Keeping Kosher, wearing a Kippah, wearing tzitzi and even using tephillim (something I am still mulling over) not to mention living by the Ten Instructions is really dumb if one does not do it trusting Him. It is His comfort and strength that

will protect us when we are ridiculed and harassed for observing Torah. It would be insane to live lives so at odds with our warped culture if there was no compelling reason for doing so. We know that demons believe in Him – we are called not only to believe in Him but to believe Him when He instructs us in righteous living. It is only through learning to live Torah in the face of a world that opposes it that we really learn to trust Him. While others preach and teach about trusting Him for finances, health, etc. (and we should) - we must never forget that we are His servants and the most important things we need to **trust** (have faith in) Him for is our redemption/salvation **and** living by His instructions. Yeshua said:

Mat 11:30 For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light.

You know. He was telling the truth. Keeping Torah isn't hard. What is hard is the way the world reacts to it. Family, friends, other believers, not to mention unbelievers, will all make it as hard as possible. That's why living Torah without faith is insane. We **trust** Him in telling us how to live for Him, we need to **trust** Him for the courage (taking action in the midst of fear) and the change/strength of heart to live by the light of His instructions.

2Ti 3:16 & 17 All Scripture is God-breathed and profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, **for instruction in righteousness, so that** the man of God may be perfected, being fully furnished for every good work.

We **trust** (have faith in) Him that this is true and of the first importance.

- **Wrath?** Greek = οργή *orgē*. Used not only of G-d's anger against sin and sinner but about His future judgment. But this is **not** irrational anger, like ours which is always infected by our sinfulness. Rather this anger is His righteous indignation against injustice, lawlessness – in short, sin.
- **Ungodliness & unrighteousness?** Ungodliness = Greek ἀσεβεία *asebaeia*
Unrighteousness = Greek ἀδικία *adikia*. Note – the *a* prefix is known as an alpha privative and at the beginning of a word functions like our prefix “un”.
Ungodliness describes sins against G-d (traditionally the first tablet of Torah and unrighteousness describes sins against mankind, (traditionally the second tablet of Torah). But we must remember that all sin is sin against G-d!
- **Who suppress the truth in unrighteousness?** Suppress = Greek κατέχω *katechein* which means , “to hold down.” And can be used either in the negative or the positive. Paul is teaching us that sin by its very nature is an attempt to “hold down” the truth in that it offers to the heart and mind an alternative to the truth. Hegg says that the very character of the sinner is ungodly and unrighteous.

Verse 19

- **Because?** Deut. 29:29 Mankind has a certain level of knowledge, an experiential knowledge of G-d which demonstrates His existence and His power. It is G-d's initiative by which His existence is known.

Verse 20

- **Since the creation?** This is His “general revelation.” The word “understood” is the Greek word *νοιέω* *noieō* which carries the meaning:) to perceive with the mind, to understand, to have understanding, to think upon, heed, ponder, consider. The word often translated “Godhead” could be better translated divinity or divine nature.

Verse 21-23

- **They did not – they became?** This is the plight of mankind in a nutshell. Hegg draws attention to the fact that in this passage Paul shows that man’s inaction (did not honor Him and G-d or give thanks) leads to all manner of, “self-centeredness,” which leads to **idolatry**.
 - Hegg tells us the following concerning idolatry:

What is idolatry at its core? Idolatry is both the failure to give G-d the honor He deserves as well as giving the honor reserved only for G-d to another. At the heart of idolatry is the desire to **control** – to control one’s destiny or the outcome of the events of life. All paganism is characterized by attempts to control one’s gods through ritual and ceremony, or through trickery. The statue which the idolater erects as a point of worship is **nothing more** than an attempt to bring the invisible god closer by means of the image and ritual connected with it. We ought to examine our worship and walk with G-d, that we not slip into religious forms of idolatry, thinking that through our practice of worship we can somehow guarantee the outcome of life’s events.

Note the actions of mankind. Man turns to “futile speculation” and so “their foolish hearts were darkened.”

The result of this speculation and darkening was that mankind, though professing wisdom, became fools and bows to the animals over which he was intended to rule.

Verse 24-25

- **Therefore?** Gave them over = Greek *παράδιδωμι* *paradidōmē* . This phrase is repeated two more times and this indicates that it was not a passive response from G-d. G-d acts in punishment and retribution by giving man over to the very sin man desired.

- Hegg says:

We must see the actions of G-d as both just and merciful at the same time. G-d in His justice, gives to the sinner what the sinner seeks: the ability to sin and to go further in sin. Yet in the justice of this (since sin carries with it its own temporal penalty) there is also mercy, for the penalty of sin which sin carries may turn the sinner from his ways to the Lord.

- Note: the term *παράδιδωμι* *paradidōmē* is also used in Romans 8:32 where Paul writes of the Father “delivering up” the Son to the cross.

- The lie. *ψευδος* *pseudos*: conscious and intentional falsehood; in a broad sense, whatever is not what it seems to be; of perverse, impious, deceitful precepts.

- Gen 3:4 & 5 And the serpent said to the woman, **Dying you shall not die**, for God knows that in the day you eat of it, even your eyes shall be opened, and **you shall be as God**, knowing good and evil.

- “who is blessed forever. Amen” Paul. In good Jewish fashion pronounces a *brachah* or blessing as he writes these powerful words.

Verse 26

- **“Degrading passions”** Greek = ατιμία *atimia* (vile) πάθος *pathos* = an affliction of the mind, emotion, passion.
- **‘Changed the natural use to that contrary to nature’** This is first and most importantly a sin against G-d. “In no other dimension of human relations has G-d so clearly revealed His love for us than in male and female relationship properly held within the covenant of marriage. It is also contrary to G-d’s plan; **Gen 1:27** And God created the man in **His own image**; in **the image of God** He created him. **He created them male and female.**

Verse 27

- **Receiving -?** It is likely that Paul intends us to understand that the punishment they receive is the sexual perversion itself, attended with its lack of satisfaction and unquenchable thirst for more.

Verse 28

- **Acknowledge? επί γνωσις *epignōsis*** = precise and correct knowledge. They did not see fit to hold/maintain this “right” knowledge
- **A reprobate mind? ἀδόκιμος *adokimos***; not standing the test, not approved, that which does not prove itself such as it ought. **νοῦς *nous***; reason in the narrower sense, as the capacity for spiritual truth, the higher powers of the soul, the faculty of perceiving divine things, of recognizing goodness and of hating evil.

Verse 29-31

- Twenty-one items in a chiasmic format.

A chiasm is a literary technique that consists of two or more words, ideas, or events that are followed by a presentation of corresponding words, ideas, or events in reverse order. So it produces an inverted or reversed order of words, ideas or events. The resulting reversed order yields the appearance of a mirrored image.

Unrighteousness (opposite of *tzedakah*)

Wickedness (all forms of evil)

Greed (selfish getting w/o considering others (evil eye))

Evil (*κακία* *kakia* – bad actions)

Full of envy (ultimately, the desire to be G-d)

Murder (taking a life)

Strife (the opposite of *shalom*)

Deceit (lying in word, deed or presentation)

Malice (malicious craftiness)

They are gossips, slanderers, haters of G-d (see below)

Insolent ((ultimately trying to take the place of G-d)

Arrogant (Self-centered)

Boastful (principally seen in one’s speech)

Inventors of evil (perverting of G-d’s gift of creativity)

Disobedient to parents ((haters of authority)

Without understanding (concept of "fool" in Proverbs)

Untrustworthy (literally; a covenant breaker)

Unloving (without natural affection)

Unmerciful (unable or unwilling to show mercy)

- **They are gossips, slanderers, haters of G-d?** Hebrew: leshon hara (evil speech).

Verse 32

- **Know the ordinance of G-d** – which calls for capital punishment – they continue on and even encourage others to do the same- approvingly.