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### I. Motivation for the letter

“The letter to the Romans stands as the clearest and most systematic presentation of Christian doctrine in all the Scriptures”. (Chuck Swindoll)

What would move the Apostle Paul to write this letter to a church he had never visited?

### A. He wanted to establish (strengthen) the believers.

Romans 1:11-12

11 For I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift, so that **you may be established** — 12 that is, that I may be encouraged together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me.

### B. Division In The Church

#### 1. Gentiles were proud

Romans 16:17-18

17 Now I urge you, brethren, note those who **cause divisions and offenses**, contrary to the doctrine which you learned, and avoid them. 18 For those who are such do not serve our Lord Jesus Christ, **but their own belly**, and by smooth words and flattering speech deceive the hearts of the simple.

#### i. Such people were not serving the Lord but their own appetite.

Philippians 1:15-16

15 Some indeed preach Christ even from envy and strife, and some also from goodwill: 16 The former preach Christ from selfish ambition NKJV

ii. teaching things contrary to what they had already learned – Romans 16:17b

iii. using smooth talk and flattery to deceive others

- makes people feel special and proud
- deceives the heart of the unsuspecting or ignorant
- be wise in good and simple or innocent of evil,
- peace = unity, God will bring unity while Satan wants to bring division.



## 2. Jews were Proud

Romans 2:17-29

25 For circumcision is indeed profitable if you keep the law; but if you are a breaker of the law, your circumcision has become uncircumcision. 26 Therefore, if an uncircumcised man keeps the righteous requirements of the law, will not his uncircumcision be counted as circumcision? 27 And will not the physically uncircumcised, if he fulfills the law, judge you who, even with your written code and circumcision, are a transgressor of the law?



Circumcision of the heart is more important.

Deuteronomy 10:16 Therefore circumcise the foreskin of your heart, and be stiff-necked no longer.

Deuteronomy 30:6 And the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, to love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live.

Jeremiah 4:4 Circumcise yourselves to the LORD, And take away the foreskins of your hearts, You men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem,



## C. The Issue In The Church

Romans 14:14-23

15 Yet if your brother is grieved because of your **food**, you are no longer walking in love. **Do not destroy with your food** the one for whom Christ died. 16 Therefore do not let your good be spoken of as evil; 17 for **the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking**, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit

20 **Do not destroy the work of God for the sake of food.**



## 1. The Teaching They Received

Romans 16:17 I urge you, brothers, to watch out for those who cause **divisions** and put **obstacles** in your way that are **contrary to the teaching you have learned**

Leviticus 17:15

15 "And every person who eats what died naturally or what was torn by beasts, **whether he is a native of your own country or a stranger**, he shall both wash his clothes and bathe in water, and be unclean until evening. Then he shall be clean.



Lev 18:24-28

24 Do not defile yourselves with any of these things; for by all these the nations are defiled, which I am casting out before you. ...

26b and shall not commit any of these abominations, **either any of your own nation or any stranger who dwells among you**



## 2. Jerusalem Council's decision

Acts 15:24-29

24 Since we have heard that some who went out from us have troubled you with words, unsettling your souls, saying, "You must be circumcised and keep the law" — to whom we gave no such commandment — 25 it seemed good to us, being assembled with one accord, to send chosen men to you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, 26 men who have risked their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.



27 We have therefore sent Judas and Silas, who will also report the same things by word of mouth. 28 For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things: 29 that you abstain from things offered to idols, from blood, from things strangled, and from sexual immorality. If you keep yourselves from these, you will do well. NKJV



They could live among Jews as "Righteous Gentiles"

Each of these four things had to do with the pagan practices of those days

- food sold in market was offered to idols
- the Roman temples had temple prostitutes
- strangled animals had blood in them and blood was also used in their temple sacrifice.



## II. Brothers Can we consider pre-believing Jews Brothers?

Christians	Jews
<p><b>Brethren</b> - Rom 1:13 Now I do not want you to be unaware, <b>brethren</b>, that I often planned to come to you (but was hindered until now), that I might have some fruit among you also, just as among the other Gentiles. NKJV</p>	<p><b>Brethren</b> - Rom 9:3 For I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ for my <b>brethren</b>, my countrymen according to the flesh, NKJV</p> <p>Acts 13:15 15 And after the reading of the Law and the Prophets, the rulers of the synagogue sent to them, saying, "<b>Men and brethren</b>, if you have any word of exhortation for the people, say on." NKJV</p>



Christians	Jews
<p><b>Adoption as sons</b> - Rom 8:15 For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father."</p> <p><b>Children of God</b> - Rom 8:16-17 16 The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, 17 and if children, then heirs-- heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ,</p>	<p><b>Adopted as sons</b> - Rom 9:4 who are Israelites, to whom pertain the adoption, the glory, the covenants,</p> <p><b>Children of God</b> - Rom 9:8 That is, those who are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted as the seed. NKJV</p>



Christians	Jews
<p><b>Glory revealed to believers</b> - Rom 8:18 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.</p> <p><b>Abraham their father</b> - Rom 4:16 Therefore it is of faith that it might be according to grace, so that the promise might be sure to all the seed, not only to those who are of the law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all</p>	<p><b>Glory</b> - Rom 9:4 who are Israelites, to whom pertain the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the service of God, and the promises;</p> <p><b>Abraham their father</b> - Rom 4:16 Therefore it is of faith that it might be according to grace, so that the promise might be sure to all the seed, <b>not only to those who are of the law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all</b></p>



Christians	Jews
<p><b>Seed of Abraham</b> - Rom 4:18 who, contrary to hope, in hope believed, so that he became the father of many nations (<i>goyim/gentiles</i>), according to what was spoken,</p> <p>Gal 3:6-7 6 Consider Abraham: "He believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness." 7 Understand, then, that <b>those who believe are children of Abraham.</b> NIV</p>	<p><b>Seed of Abraham</b> - Rom 11:1 I say then, has God cast away His people? Certainly not! For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin.</p> <p>2 Cor 11:22 22 Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. <b>Are they Abraham's descendants? So am I.</b></p>

Christians	Jews
<p><b>Beloved of God</b> - Rom 1:7 To all who are in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: NKJV</p> <p><b>Called</b> - Rom 9:24 even us <b>whom He called</b>, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles? NKJV</p>	<p><b>Beloved of God</b> - Rom 11:28 Concerning the gospel they are enemies for your sake, but concerning the election they are beloved for the sake of the fathers. NKJV</p> <p><b>Calling irrevocable</b> - Rom 11:29 For <b>the gifts and the calling of God</b> are irrevocable. NKJV</p>

Christians	Jews
<p><b>Elected</b> - Rom 8:28 And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the <b>called</b> according to His purpose. NKJV</p> <p><b>Foreknew</b> - Rom 8:29 For <b>whom He foreknew</b>. He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. NKJV</p>	<p><b>Elected</b> - Rom 9:11 (for the children not yet being born, nor having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God <b>according to election</b> might stand, not of works but of Him who calls), NKJV</p> <p><b>Foreknew</b> - Rom 11:2 God has not cast away <b>His people whom He foreknew</b>. Or do you not know what the Scripture says of Elijah, how he pleads with God against Israel,</p>

Romans 15:1 We then who are strong ought to bear with the scruples of the **weak**, and not to please ourselves.

"weak" = pre-believing Jews.

Romans 14:15 Yet if your **brother** is grieved because of your food, you are no longer walking in love. Do not destroy with your food the one for whom Christ died.

"brother" = pre-believing Jews

Romans 14:20-21  
20 Do not destroy the work of God for the sake of food. All things indeed are pure, but it is evil for the man who eats with offense. 21 It is good neither to eat meat nor drink wine nor do anything by which your **brother** stumbles or is offended or is made weak.

**III. The Jewish Call**

Paul's burden – was it only ethnic?

Romans 9:1-4  
9:1 I tell the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit, 2 that I have great sorrow and continual grief in my heart. 3 For I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my countrymen according to the flesh, NKJV

4 who are Israelites, to whom pertain the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the service of God, and the promises; 5 of whom are the fathers and from whom, according to the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, the eternally blessed God. Amen.

Romans 10:1 Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved. NKJ



**Israel is God's witness** – Isaiah 43:10-11

10 "You are My witnesses," says the LORD, "And My servant whom I have chosen, That you may know and believe Me, And understand that I am He. Before Me there was no God formed, Nor shall there be after Me. 11 I, even I, am the LORD, And besides Me there is no savior.



**Israel was meant to be a light to the Gentiles**

– Isaiah 60:1-3

60:1 Arise, shine; For your light has come! And the glory of the LORD is risen upon you. 2 For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, And deep darkness the people; But the LORD will arise over you, And His glory will be seen upon you. 3 The Gentiles shall come to your light, And kings to the brightness of your rising.



Sh'ma (Deuteronomy 6:4) is a declaration that there is only one God of all the earth, not that God is singular. "Sh'ma Israel, Adonai Eloheinu, Adonai echad"

"echad" – collective "one" vs "yachad" as in 1 in number.

God is god of both Jew and Gentile

Mark 12:28-32 – there is one God (of both Jew and Gentile)



Jewish calling is irrevocable. – Romans 11:29 For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.

Matthew 28:19-20

19 Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations (*goyim / gentiles*), baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.

Great commission was given first to Jewish disciples.



Acts 1:8 But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

Who would start out from Jerusalem? – The Jews



#### IV. Jewish Understanding of God's Plan

Jewish theology – “Olam Habah” – “the age to come”. Israel gets saved then Gentiles get saved. Gentile salvation was left on the backburner

Reality some of Israel saved, then God turns to Gentiles (Acts 10)



Acts 11:1-3

11:1 Now the apostles and brethren who were in Judea heard that the Gentiles had also received the word of God. 2 And when Peter came up to Jerusalem, those of the circumcision contended with him, 3 saying, "You went in to uncircumcised men and ate with them!"

Acts 11:18 When they heard these things they became silent; and they glorified God, saying, **"Then God has also granted to the Gentiles repentance to life."**

Peter's vision in Acts 10



Unbelieving Jews' reaction

Acts 22:21-24

21 "Then He said to me, 'Depart, for I will send you far from here to the Gentiles.' " **22 And they listened to him until this word, and then they raised their voices and said, "Away with such a fellow from the earth, for he is not fit to live!"** 23

Then, as they cried out and tore off their clothes and threw dust into the air, 24 the commander ordered him to be brought into the barracks

"The first shall be last". Mat 19:30 & 20:16



#### V. Paul's Revelation

Gospel goes to Jews first, some believe, some do not, Gospel goes to the Gentiles, some believe some do not Gentiles must make the Jews jealous, so that Jews would believe

Romans 11:11-15

11 I say then, have they stumbled that they should fall? Certainly not! **But through their fall, to provoke them to jealousy, salvation has come to the Gentiles**



#### The Tabernacle of David

Acts 15:13-21

16 After! this I will return and will **rebuild the tabernacle of David**, which has fallen down; I will rebuild its ruins, and I will set it up; 17 So that the rest of mankind may seek the Lord, even all the Gentiles who are called by My name, says the Lord who does all these things.



Amos 9:9-15

9 "For surely I will command, and will sift the house of Israel among all nations, As grain is sifted in a sieve; Yet not the smallest grain shall fall to the ground. 10 All the sinners of My people shall die by the sword, Who say, 'The calamity shall not overtake nor confront us.' 11 "On that day I will raise up The tabernacle of David, which has fallen down, And repair its damages; I will raise up its ruins, And rebuild it as in the days of old; 12 That they may possess **the remnant of Edom, And all the Gentiles who are called by My name,** "Says the LORD who does this thing



Acts 15:19-20 is the minimum requirement for  
"The righteous among the Gentiles"

Verse 21: the Apostles knew that the Gentiles  
would get teaching from the synagogues

Teachings they were primarily concerned were  
regarding morality and righteousness in Messiah,  
not becoming Jewish.

Gentiles were to remain Gentiles.

They were coming out of a very immoral  
background.



Acts 15:23-26

23 They wrote this, letter by them: The apostles,  
the elders, and the brethren, To the brethren who  
are of the Gentiles in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia:  
Greetings. 24 Since we have heard that some  
who went out from us have troubled you with  
words, unsettling your souls, saying, "You must  
be circumcised and keep the law" — to whom we  
gave no such commandment — 25 it seemed  
good to us, being assembled with one accord, to  
send chosen men to you with our beloved  
Barnabas and Paul,



### The Mystery

Romans 11:33-35

33 Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and  
knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His  
judgments and His ways past finding out! 34 "For who  
has known the mind of the LORD? Or who has become  
His counselor?" 35 "Or who has first given to Him And it  
shall be repaid to him?" 36 For of Him and through Him  
and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever.  
Amen

Jews became disobedient so that Gentiles could obtain  
mercy and by the testimony of the Gentiles the Jews  
could also attain that same mercy and be saved.

