

Transcription – Bible Study Romans Chapter 14

Alrighty, last week we're going over Romans the 13th chapter, won't really go over that again. Like I said, it really was a whole different chapter from the rest of Romans, all talking about government, congregational government and regular government and whatnot. And like I said, very different than the rest of the book.

The first eight chapters going into YAHWEH's justification and how you get justified before Him and then we went into 9, 10 and 11, all on the tribes of Israel and YAHWEH's still working with them. 12 was on spiritual gifts and then 13 was on government, so totally different.

Now we're up to chapter 14 and I will read the chapter first. Not every chapter do I read first, depending on the subject. This one, I think it's important to read first, because it's probably one of the most misunderstood chapters in Scripture, particularly in the book of Romans. So let's read the chapter and then we'll take it in context of what Paul's talking about. He says:

Romans 14:1-5 *Assist the one who is weak in the faith, not to judgments of your thoughts. One indeed believes to eat all things, but being weak, another eats only vegetables. The one eating, do not despise the one not eating. And the one not eating, do not judge the one eating, for Elohim received him. Who are you judging another's servant? To his own master he stands or falls. But he will stand, for his master is able to make him stand. One indeed judges a day above another day; and another one judges every day alike. Let each one be fully assured in his own mind.*

Romans 14:6-9 *The one minding the day, he is considerate of his duty to his Master. And the one not minding the day, he is not considerate of his duty to his Master. The one eating, he eats to his Master; for he gives thanks to Elohim. And the one not eating, he does not eat to his Master, and gives thanks to Elohim. For no one of us lives to himself and no one dies to himself. For both if we live, we live to Adonai; and if we die, we die to our Adonai. Then both if we live, and if we die, we belong to Adonai. For this Messiah both died and rose and lived again, that He might be Adonai YAHWEH over both the dead and the living.*

Romans 14:10-14 *But why do you judge your brother? Or why also do you despise your brother? For all shall stand before the judgment seat of Messiah. For it has been written, "As I live, says YAHWEH, that every knee will bow to Me, and every tongue will confess to Me." So then each one of us will give account concerning himself to Elohim. Then let us no longer judge one another, but rather judge this, not to put a stumbling-block or an offense toward a brother. I know and am persuaded by Yahshua YAHWEH that nothing by itself is common; except to the one deeming anything to be common, it is common.*

Romans 14:15-19 *But if your brother is grieved because of your food, you no longer walk according to love. Do not by your food destroy that one for whom Messiah died. Then do not let your good be spoken evil of. For the kingdom of YAHWEH is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. For the one serving Messiah in these things is pleasing to Elohim, and approved by men. So, then, let us pursue the things of peace, and the things for building one another up.*

Romans 14:20-23 *Do not by your food undo the work of Elohim. Truly, all things are pure, but it is bad to the man who eats through a stumbling-block. It is good not to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor anything by which your brother stumbles, or is offended, or is weak. Do you have faith? Have it to yourself before YAHWEH. Blessed is the one not condemning himself in doing the things he has selected. But the one doubting, if he eats, he has been condemned, because it is not of faith; and whatever is not of faith is sin.*

So, I think when we look at this chapter, if we are honest with ourselves, what on earth are they talking about? It is very easy. They are talking about food, it is something dealing with food. There is no doubt about that. As a matter of fact, there's 23 verses here. I think no less than 8 to 10 times Paul mentioned something about food. So, the first thing I want to say, right off the bat, there is absolutely zero that we read here, concerning the Sabbath day. There is nothing talking about the Sabbath day, there is nothing mentioned to the Sabbath day, there is nothing related to the Sabbath day, period. There is nothing in here about the Sabbath day.

And yet, if you look at almost all commentaries, they will look at verses 5 and 6 and try to say that you can worship on any day you want. That Paul is saying, we don't have to worship on the Sabbath day. All you do is, have to look at this chapter and every single thing we are talking about is some kind of problem they are having with food, whatever that

may be. And that is what we are going to get into today. So let's start with verse 1.

Romans 14:1 *Assist the one who is weak in the faith, not to judgments of your thoughts.*

So, like we said, when we are looking at the epistles of Paul, you have to look at **who** was he writing to, **what** is the problem, **where** are they at, **when** is this happening; all of the things to understand. And what is happening over here? Who is the Roman congregation? And we already said, it is basically an Israelite congregation. Because even when Paul is talking about the Israelites, he says, **we** Israelites this and he is saying just like you know the Torah...

So, primarily this congregation is not a Gentile congregation. It is a Jewish and Israelite congregation, but there are Gentiles there. It is in Rome, my guess is probably 80-20, that it is 80% Israelites to some form or another Israelite-Jew and 20% Gentile. So somebody is judging somebody else and he is saying, *assist the one who is weak in the faith, not to judgments of your thoughts*. And as we are going to see what is the problem.

Romans 14:2 *One indeed believes to eat all things, but being weak, another one eats only vegetables*

So, they are having a problem that is over here. The Israelite brethren are not eating meat, as we will get into why in a minute and they are actually judging the ones who are eating meat, nothing to do with clean and unclean meat. This is clean meat as we are going to see, because unclean meat in this time, such as pork, was not even considered food. They did not even look at it as food.

Like across the Galilee, on the other side where Cursi is where the miracle of the pigs ... when Yahshua cast the demons out of the legion, they went into the pigs and they went into the water [Mar 5:1-13; Mat 8:28-32]. No Israelite lived there. And Israelite would not live in an area where there were pigs. And pork or pig was not considered food.

So, if there is a thing ... where the same thing to me, if I am telling you where you are volunteering and you are telling me, oh well we are not sure, because we don't think these people are Muslims there, but we are not sure. Maybe they may be taking our food in the back room and they may be praying that food to Allah, but you have no evidence of that. You are just afraid.

And I might say to you, look, if you don't see that happening and they put the food out, whatever they put before you eat. Eat it in good faith, because you know what? Anything you get where you are working is going to be clean. They don't serve you unclean food there, because whether you are Jew or whether you are Muslim, they don't eat pork, they don't eat unclean food.

So, if I were to make that statement, whatever they put before you, as long as they don't say that this has been worshiped to and idol, eat it, we don't even have to think that maybe he is talking to eat pork, because there is no pork. You can't buy it, they don't sell it, they don't cook it, they don't make it, it's not considered food.

So, that is not the issue here. Pork is not the issue here and certainly the Sabbath is not the issue. The Sabbath is never mentioned once. You are talking to a congregation that is 80% Israelite and Jew that are Sabbath keepers. That's a fact, they are keeping the Sabbath. So, when Paul was coming out with his revolutionary thoughts, that every day is good, you can worship any day, you better believe me, he would be mentioning it. He wouldn't just casually throw a phrase out there that makes no sense.

So, what are we talking about? *One indeed believes to eat all things but being weak, another eats only vegetables*. We could read our note [HRB 2012, #1] here, it says, Since some of the meat that was sold in the meat market could have been sacrificed to an idol, some brethren decided not to eat meat at all and were judging the ones who were eating meat.[1Cor 8:7-8, 1Cor 10:25-32]. It's very simple. Let's go to *1st Corinthians 8*, *1st Corinthians 8 starting in verse 7*. We'll see exactly ... let the Bible interpret the Bible. This is exactly what the problem was.

1st Corinthians 8:7 *Howbeit there is not in every man that knowledge; for some with clear conscience eat that which is offered to idols as a sacrifice; and their conscience being weak is defiled.*

So, the same thing is happening in Corinth. This is a normal thing at this time in the Gentile world. Now in Israel, you're not seeing this problem, why? Because in Israel, Jews are not mixing with Romans and they're not going to the Roman temple that they built over there. So you're not really having this problem in Israel, but yes, you're going to have this

problem in Corinth and you're going to have this problem in Rome or you're going to have this problem in Athens and all these places, why? Because people are coming to faith, that are Gentiles and they had these former way of practices.

So, to the Israelite brethren, they're seeing that this meat is sacrificed to some idol and now in the meat markets they're seeing all this meat and it's not advertised, it's not like 'half price on all meat sacrificed to Zeus', it doesn't say it like that. The only thing they're seeing is, wow, where did the meat come from? Where did it come from? Because face it, there's a lot of sacrifices being done and some of the meat from those sacrifices are ending up in the market.

So some of the Israelite brethren are saying, you know what? We shouldn't eat it. Just to play it safe, we shouldn't eat it. The others are saying, but we don't know. They're not advertising it, 'it's Zeus beef, 50% off'. No, there's no way of knowing.

So, they're just saying, no, I'm just going to the meat market, here's the guy, I've been buying for this guy from 20 years, he's just a normal guy selling meat and it's becoming a problem. So, some are eating the meat and some aren't eating the meat, but now some are judging each other by it. So if we continue here, he says:

1st Corinthians 8:7b-8 *for some with clear conscience eat that which is offered to idols as a sacrifice; and their conscience being weak is defiled. But food will not bring us closer to Elohim. For neither if we eat do we excel, nor if we do not eat are we lacking.*

So, it's a personal decision. The same as we have sometimes, that you might go in a place and you don't know if meat is halal or not and it's a personal decision whether you're going to eat that or maybe your conscience says no, I can't eat it just in case, but if you eat it, it doesn't make you any better and if you don't eat it, it doesn't make you any worse. It's a personal decision.

1st Corinthians 8:9-13 *But be careful lest this liberty of yours becomes a stumbling block to the weak ... And Paul's going to use the same terminology in Romans 14 ... For if anyone sees you, the one having knowledge, sitting in an idol-temple, will not the weak one's conscience be lifted up so as to eat things sacrificed to idols? So the weak brother will be lost, he for whom Messiah died on your indifference. And if you offend in this way against your brothers, and influence their weak conscience, you sin against Messiah. On account of this, if meat offends my brother, I will not at all eat flesh forever, so that I do not offend my brother.*

So, if Paul is talking about *Romans 14*, the big problem is not just meat sacrifice to an idol but the problem here is, as we'll see, certain things that are not Torah based, that are people's own personal convictions. And he's saying in these matters, you can't judge each other, because look at verse one,

Romans 14:1 *Assist the one who is weak in the faith, not to judgments of your thoughts.*

Same way we have today, people will judge a man who doesn't wear a beard. I say, "Oh, you want to build your righteousness on my facial hair?" And really, build your righteousness, whether I have facial hair or not. There's nowhere in the Bible, Old Testament and in the New Testament, ever once this says a man has to have a beard. Never, there's not one command. The only thing it says is, if you do wear a beard, don't cut the corners of the beard [Lev 19:27] and have what they call a goatee, a devil-like goatee.

Why? The pagans were sacrificing to these devil-like, goat-god demons. And that's what he's saying, don't look like a demon. You're coming into a land of Canaan where they're actually sacrificing these goats to this demon. And he's saying, don't look like a demon. It's pretty common. You'll never see in the Bible where it says, do not cut your beard or do not cut the hair on your face and never says it. It simply says, don't cut the corners of your beard.

So again, I wear a beard most of the time. Sometimes I shave it off, particularly when I'm traveling, not to have a problem at the airport. But somebody's going to judge their righteousness on my facial hair, that's ridiculous. It's absolutely ridiculous.

But at the same rate, like Paul says, if it's going to offend somebody, then I'm purposely not going to offend somebody. So, in matters that are non-Torah and matters that are basically judgment calls that people have to do, we have to make sure that we're not self-righteously judging other people by our own personal convictions. It's that simple.

That's what the whole chapter is going to be about. In particular though, as we're reading here in *1st Corinthians 8*, it's about meat that's sold in a market, whether that meat was sacrificed to an idol or not. Because like I said, most of the times they had no way of knowing. It wasn't publicized that way.

But there were times where right in the temple, they would be having after this sacrifice, they would invite a 100 people to have a meal. And that's what he's saying too, that if you were invited to the sacrifice where you knew it was to an idol, what if brethren see you and they're offended?

At the supermarket, that's why we don't buy our meat in the Arab supermarket, because we know it's Halal. To me it's no big deal. I don't think the meat matters. I don't think it makes a difference. But what if I'm buying this meat and somebody comes in and sees it and I become a stumbling block to them, right? So I wouldn't do it. I'd rather just not do it. It's just as easy to buy the meat from a Jewish store and not be a stumbling block to somebody else. So, he says:

Romans 14:3-4 *The one eating, do not despise the one not eating. And the one not eating, do not judge the one eating, for Elohim received him. Who are you judging another man's servant? To his own master he stands or falls. But he will stand, for his master is able to make him stand.*

So again, who are we to judge another person? That they should be believing like we believe. I say the same thing with mixed clothing. We could study it to the cows come home. We've studied it. We've studied it with Avi, a linguist. And at the end of the day, there's no way of knowing a hundred percent whether it means no fabric should be intertwined or it's talking about mixing kinds, that you can't mix wool that comes from a sheep and linen that comes from a plant.

If that's what he's talking about or it means you don't mix rayon and you don't mix polyester. They're both oil based, but you don't mix anything. It's a personal decision. But should we judge somebody that would wear a rayon and polyester shirt? "Oh, I would never do that." And the minute you say I would never do that, you're self-righteous. And you know what? You'd probably do 10 times worse.

So, *who are we to judge another man's servant?* We can talk about it. We can discuss it, but unless something is outlined as sin in Scripture, because if it's sin in Scripture, then we have to address it because we have to go to the person. We have to tell them that they're sinning. If they don't listen, we have to bring witnesses and then we have to bring it before the congregation. And we may have to put the person out of the congregation, if they're lying, stealing, committing adultery.

If it's something that's a sin, we have to address it. But if it's something that is ambiguous, if it's something that is not clear, if it's something that's simply a matter of conscience, then we have to have the liberty to allow each person to make those decisions. Again, we could try to encourage somebody if we're strong on that. But we can't judge another man's servant because basically everybody has to stand before the judgment seat of Yahshua.

And then he gets into verse 5 because some of them were even saying, they were talking about, well, that's the case. Let's just fast. We'll fast two times in the week. We won't even eat. So all of this food thing that people are thinking that they're more righteous for eating vegetables, like he says, look at verse 1 or verse 2,

Romans 14:2 *One indeed believes to eat all things, but being weak, another one eats only vegetables.*

Isn't it interesting? He calls the weak one the one that didn't want to eat the meat. He doesn't call him the strong one. He calls him the weak one, the one that doesn't want to eat it. So now in verse 5, they're coming and they're setting up these fast days for that reason. And what is he saying?

Romans 14:5 *One indeed judges a day above another day; and another one judges every day alike. Let each one be fully assured in his own mind.*

The same way I called a fast here two weeks ago, like I said, except for Yom Kippur, I will never write, this is a fast that everybody has to do, because, who am I to tell you that you have to fast? What I can say is, the congregation is fasting on this day. If you'd like to fast with us, you're more than happy to. And praise YAHWEH, almost everybody in the world fasted with us, but that's their decision.

And if someone didn't fast for whatever reason or they couldn't have fasted, because they couldn't have got off the work, I'm not going to judge them that, "Oh, they're less righteous, because they couldn't fast that day." Maybe they'd fast the next day or the next week, whatever. So, that's what these people are doing though. What they're doing is, they're setting these fast days aside and then we're judging the ones who wouldn't fast with them, because look at verse 6.

Romans 14:6a *The one minding a day ...*

It should be **a** day, not **the** day. *The one minding a day*, meaningly it's not a specific day. Remember, the Sabbath, HaShabbat, is a specific day. So the perfect article is not in there, the 'the', it's simply a day.

Romans 14:6-7 *The one minding a day, he is considerate of His duty to his Master ... He's doing it to YAHWEH ... And the one not minding the day, he is not considerate of his duty to his Master. The one eating, he eats to his Master ... So, it definitely is enough fasting ... for he gives thanks to Elohim. And the one not eating, he does not eat to his Master, and gives thanks to Elohim. For no one of us lives to himself and no one dies to himself.*

So it's pretty interesting. What does Paul say? He says, okay, let's look at this logically. You want to fast because you want to set the day apart to Elohim. Great. So, by fasting, you're setting the day apart to Elohim. But the person who's eating on that day, he's praising and giving thanks to Elohim for the meal. So, isn't he also living to Elohim that day?

So again, he's using a kind of rabbinical philosophy to prove both people can be giving the day to Elohim. Now it's not like fasting is some magical thing that, oh, I'm going to fast and that makes me more righteous and everything's going to work out. Because we eat most of the time, we eat every Shabbat. It's a feast day. And don't we celebrate that day to YAHWEH? Don't we give thanks to Him? Don't we praise Him? Don't we glorify Him?

So, that's what Paul's trying to say. That not only fasting sets the day apart to YAHWEH. So, whether you're setting it apart by fasting or you're setting it apart by praying for your food, you're both setting apart the day to YAHWEH. That's the point he's making.

Romans 14:7-9 *For no one of us lives to himself and no one dies to himself. For both if we live, we live to Adonai; and if we die, we die to our Adonai. Then both if we live, and if we die, we belong to Adonai. For this Messiah died and rose and lived again, that He might be Adonai YAHWEH over both the living and the dead.*

And basically, that's it as far as the day goes. So again, nothing, absolutely nothing about the Sabbath mentioned, nothing related to the Sabbath, not the word Sabbath or even anything remotely related. But clearly, he's talking about setting a day apart for what? Verse 6, one is eating and giving it to YAHWEH, one is not eating and giving it to YAHWEH. So, it clearly has to do with setting your own day apart for fasting and nothing to do with the Sabbath day.

So, for anybody to try to bring this up in an argument that every day is the Sabbath, I say, "Wow, you've got to be a pretty lazy person, because you can't get a lot of work done." Don't we wish every day was Sabbath? It would be a great world, but it's not practical, because we have to work. Six days you shall work [Lev 23:3], that's part of the commandment and the seventh day, HaShabbat, it's a specific day, every seventh day ... and that's why it also cannot be by the moon cycle, because the moon cycle is not a seven day cycle. It's a 29 and a half day cycle. If you know your time tables, you know that seven does not go into 29.5.

Romans 14:9-10 *For this Messiah both died and rose and lived again, that He might be Adonai YAHWEH over both the dead and the living. But why do you judge your brother? Or why also do you despise your brother? For all shall stand before the judgment seat of Messiah.*

2nd Corinthians 5:10, we can go there.

2nd Corinthians 5:10 *For we all must appear before the judgment seat of Messiah, so that each one may receive the things done through the body, according to what he did, whether good or bad.*

So, very clearly again, the chapter is talking about judging your brother on matters that are not Torah based matters and

particularly, the matter is really with food. Paul is going to touch on some other things, but mostly it's dealing with food issues and he's challenging them that they're wrongly and self-righteously, judging their brother. Verse 11:

Romans 14:11 *For it has been written, "As I live, says YAHWEH, that every knee will bow to Me, and every tongue will confess to Me."*

And that comes from *Isaiah 45:23*.

Isaiah 45:23 *I have sworn by Myself, the Word has gone out of My mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, that to Me every knee shall bow, every tongue will swear.*

And then also *Isaiah 49:18*, two of those verses put together, 49:18 says:

Isaiah 49:18 *Lift up your eyes all around and see! They all gather and come to you. As I live, says YAHWEH, you shall surely wear all of them as an ornament, and bind them on as a bride.*

So again, he's using two scriptures from the prophet Isaiah, in the same verse and like we said before, more than 70 verses of Torah in one letter. Remember this is not really an epistle, we're calling it an epistle of Paul to the Romans, it's a letter that he wrote. He wrote a letter by hand, how many pages it was at the time, nobody knows, but it's a letter he's writing.

He's thinking, he's inspired by the Holy Spirit, he's writing this letter and he's sending it to the Romans. And in that letter there's over 70 references to the Torah and the Christian world tries to say that the book of Romans is proving that the Torah is done away with. Oh wow, why on earth did he write the letter then? Why do he need to put 70 references to something he's trying to say is done away with and when it's almost 30 years after the resurrection.

So, just totally illogical and here we see it again. Verse 12:

Romans 14:12 *So then each one of us will give account concerning himself to Elohim.*

So, he's challenging them that all of us are going to stand before the throne of Elohim, let Him not only be the judge of these people, but He's going to be our judge. And as we judge, we will be judged. And if we're judging our brothers and our sisters on non-Torah matters, we're bringing judgment back to ourselves. So, this is the point he's making. And then he says over here in verse 13:

Romans 14:13 *Then let us no longer judge one another, but rather judge this, not to put a stumbling-block or an offense toward a brother.*

So, that's really the point here. That even though some of these things may not be sin, we don't want to purposely put a stumbling block before any brother. And he says:

Romans 14:14 *I know and I am persuaded by Yahshua YAHWEH ... It's interesting he uses that term in this chapter, I think three times, calling Yahshua 'Yahshua YAHWEH' ... I know and I am persuaded by Yahshua YAHWEH that nothing by itself is common ... Now in the King James Bible, and I'm not sure of the NIV, but many Bibles use here 'unclean' ... that nothing by itself is unclean except to the one deeming anything to be unclean, it is unclean ... And it is a bad translation. That is not the word that's used there. The word is 'common'.*

What is he talking about? Let's go to *Acts 10* and we'll see what that word ... what is the difference between being common and being unclean? *Acts 10* in verse 11. And this is Peter seeing the vision ... with Cornelius. And what happens?

Act 10:11-15 *And he saw the heaven being opened and a certain vessel like a great sheet coming down on him, being bound by four corners, and let down onto the earth; in which were all the four-footed animals of the earth, and the wild beasts, and the creeping things, and the birds of the heaven. And a voice came to him, Rise up, Peter, slay and eat. But Peter said, Elohim forbid my Master, because I never did eat anything common or unclean ... Two different things ... And again a voice came to him a second time, What things Elohim made clean, you do not make common.*

What things Elohim made clean, you do not make common. What is he talking about? Well, first of all, we know the Christian world goes to this and says that Elohim is saying we could eat every kind of creeping thing on the earth and every wild thing or whatever. The interesting part is they use this to eat pork, but nobody is using this verse to eat rat or mice or maybe in China they are, who knows, because they eat that stuff. But when you really read it, is it saying that? No.

What he's saying is, there's a white sheet and all the different animals are there. There's sheep, there's cow, there's goat and there's pig. And He just said, *Peter, slay and eat*, he didn't tell him which one to eat. And what does Peter say? *No, Master, I did not ever eat anything common or unclean.* So, what is the thing? Why didn't he just get up and kill the sheep? That would have been clean.

It may have been clean, but according to the Jewish rabbis, according to the oral law, it would have been common. That when an animal, even a clean animal, is near an unclean animal, it becomes unclean. And you don't find it in the Torah. You do not find that in the Torah. So, if you happen to have a house and you had a pig for whatever reason, in your backyard and you had a sheep in your backyard, you wouldn't have to get rid of that sheep and never eat it, because it came in contact ... near a pig, that would not make it common.

Unless you were rabbinical, if you're orthodox and rabbinical, yes. According to rabbinical law, the same thing with human beings, that if you went to an ultra-orthodox house, they'd be very happy to offer you a glass of water. And as soon as you left the house, the first thing they would do is break the glass, because they couldn't drink from that glass anymore, because you are subhuman. You're a gentile and you're common. So, that glass is no longer able to be used.

So when we look at this, what is YAHWEH doing in *Acts 10*? He's using this vision to Peter, not to tell Peter to eat unclean food, but to show him ... verse 28...

Acts 10:28 *You know that it is not lawful for a Yehudean ... A Jew ... man to associate with or come near to a foreign man who is not a son of his tribe, but Elohim showed to me concerning a man not to say that he is common or unclean.*

So, he's not even talking about food. He's using food to show Peter, do not call a human being that I cleansed, that he's common. Then if we drop down to verse 34...

Acts 10:34-35 *And opening his mouth, Peter said, Truly I see that YAHWEH is not a respecter of faces, but in every nation the one fearing Him and working righteousness is acceptable to Him.*

So, this is what it's about. It's something according to the oral law, because even when I read in verse 28, don't you know it's not lawful for me, a Jew, to come near a man of another race? Where does it say that in the Torah? Does it say that in the Torah? That an Israelite can't come near a man of another race? Of course not. I don't know anywhere in the Torah, even remotely, where it would say anything to that.

Even the opposite, it talks about welcoming in the stranger, that there's the same law for the stranger and the one living in the land [Exo 12:49]. But again, this was part of the oral law. Part of the oral law that the rabbis made up, the extra laws, was that a Jewish man could not eat or come near a man of another faith.

So how could the Good News go out throughout all the world? Unless YAHWEH had a show them. And that's what this vision is about. Nothing about making pork clean, because you can't make it clean. It's not an edible food, period. So when we get to Romans, go back to Romans now and Paul is saying,

Romans 14:14 *I know and am persuaded by Yahshua YAHWEH that nothing by itself is common ... Not unclean, but common. Meaning used by all ... except to the one deeming anything to be common, it is common.*

So, what is he talking about? The same thing with the meat sold in the markets. That here it is, like we said, probably 80% Israelite, 20% Gentile ... And to the Israelites and maybe some who were very orthodox, maybe even some rabbis here, they're feeling that this meat that was sacrificed to an idol and then sold in the meat market, was now common.

And what is Paul trying to say? *That nothing is common of itself, except to the one who deems it common.* The same with the halal food. I don't believe that you could prove that eating halal food is a sin. I don't think you could prove it from

Scripture. Personally, if it bothers my conscience, so I don't want to eat it if I know it. But what does the Bible tell us? Paul tells us, you know, if you don't know it, eat it.

But if someone tells you, this is sacrificed to this idol, he says, don't eat it. Not for you, but for the other person. So, there's nothing by eating halal food that's going to hurt you. There's nothing different in the food. But for me, it does violate my conscience. I don't feel comfortable eating food that was blessed to Allah or given to it. But according to scripture, I can't prove that nobody should eat it, because it doesn't say that. And that's what Paul's trying to say, that look in verse 15.

Romans 14:15-17 *But if your brother is grieved because of your food, you no longer walk according to love. Do not by your food destroy that one for whom Messiah died. Then do not let your good be spoken evil of. For the kingdom of YAHWEH is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.*

So again, it gets back to respect for each other. And again, there are food laws in the Bible. It is a violation of Torah and a sin to eat shellfish, to eat pork, to eat things that the Bible says we shouldn't eat, that YAHWEH restricts. But in things that YAHWEH doesn't restrict, you have to make the choice in your life. But at the same rate, you want to make sure that you're not causing a stumbling block to a brother or sister by the liberty that you're having there.

Romans 14:18-20 *For the one serving Messiah in these things is pleasing to Elohim, and approved by men. So, then, let us pursue the things of peace, and the things for building up one another. Do not by your food undo the work of Elohim. Truly, all things are pure, but it is bad to the man who eats through a stumbling-block.*

And again, a mis-translation. Many translations put here, 'all things are clean'. But even in the Greek, it's in the Aramaic and even in the Greek, if you look that word up, the word means purity. It has nothing to do with clean and unclean food defilement. It has to do with purity.

So again, when you're looking at *Romans 14*, if you have a bad translation, yeah, it can really look like what's going on here. What is he saying? All food is clean, eat whatever it is. It's not saying that whatsoever. The topic at hand is meat that was sacrificed to an idol that somehow is winding up in the meat market. Maybe it is. That's the point. You don't even know it. There's just a market there and you don't know it.

Let's say in Tiberius, right? Tiberius, there's a market there. There's fruit and there's meat. Now if you go in there, how would you know if some of that meat was halal meat? There's no way. There's a lot of Arab vendors in that market. I don't know if you knew that or not, in the Tiberius market. How would we know? We don't know. We have no idea of knowing. Probably isn't, but who knows? And that's what we're saying here. If you know for sure, that's one thing. But if you don't know, what are you going to do? So he's saying,

Romans 14:20-21 *Do not by your food undo the work of Elohim. Truly, all things are pure, but it is bad to the man who eats through a stumbling-block ... So, if you're saying, causing a stumbling block before your brother, then it's not good ... It is good not to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor anything by which your brother stumbles, or is offended, or weak.*

So, here it is again. Now he's getting into some other issues beside just the meat, but he's saying anything. You know that if we're really mature, then we shouldn't put a stumbling block. And alcohol, there's like in Africa, there's a lot of places. I remember when I was in Uganda and we were walking down the street and it was just a little restaurant there that I think had a beer tap and the man that was with me said, if the pastor of his church ever was seen walking into that place, there would not be one person in his congregation that Sunday, because many places in Africa, they believed that alcohol is sin. You can't find that in the Bible.

Matter of fact, in the Bible, wine is a normal staple of life. We have messages on it. We have articles on it. But at the same rate, if somebody was with us and they were that offended on it, do we really have to have the wine? No, you don't put it out when somebody's there.

Just at Sukkot, we never regulated Sukkot, we never talked about it, but I would say probably 95% of the time, I never remember anybody having alcohol at Sukkot. And that's the time where you're actually allowed to it even says, you know, have a glass of wine or a strong drink [Deut 14] or whatever.

But, again, it's just the way it is. But if somebody did bring a bottle of wine or whatever, nobody would say a word unless

somebody was offended by it. If somebody was really offended by it, maybe they're only offended, because they used to be an alcoholic. And maybe it's just ... it's too much on them. It's a stumbling block. So, it's just better not to happen. So that's what he's saying here.

Romans 14:21 *It is good not to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor anything by which your brother stumbles, or is offended, or is weak.*

My sister-in-law will not eat veal, because of what they do to the calves. They make those calves where they put them in these tiny little spaces that are totally dark and they don't let them stand because they don't want them to build their legs. It's cruelty. So because of that, she won't eat veal. And my brother, before he married her, that was the best thing he liked, everywhere he went, he got veal. But because it really offends her, he stopped eating veal, because he didn't want to offend her and it's a valid reason there.

So again, if I'm going to invite them over to my house, am I going to make a veal dinner, to prove to her there's nothing wrong with it? Of course not. You're not going to put a stumbling block before somebody purposely, because he says in verse 22:

Romans 14:22 *Do you have faith? Have it to yourself before YAHWEH. Blessed is the one not condemning himself in doing the things he has selected.*

So, if you have faith, have it between you and YAHWEH. You don't have to bloister around everywhere and boldly in self-righteousness, prove your point to somebody else. If you have faith, have it between you and YAHWEH.

Romans 14:23 *But the one doubting, if he eats, he has been condemned, because it is not of faith; and whatever is not of faith is sin.*

And that's the important point. I think to get out of this chapter, beside the main point of loving each other and not putting stumbling blocks before each other, is that anything in our life, *whatever is not of faith is sin*.

So, it doesn't matter. Of course the Torah is the Torah and the Torah is clear and we don't break the Torah. But in matters of your conscience and like I said, it bothers me to eat halal meat. I better not eat it, because if I eat it, even if it was okay, it's a sin, because it's violating my conscience.

For some people, they don't want to drive on the Sabbath. There weren't cars in ancient days. So it's, can you prove it? You can discuss it, whether it is wrong or it's not wrong to drive on the Sabbath, what's a Sabbath day's journey, what's working, what's not. But at the end of the day, it's a matter of conscience.

The Jews won't drive. Many times, when I talk to Jews here and particularly religious ones and I tell them I'm a Sabbath-keeper and they will ask me, will you drive a car on the Sabbath? When we were in the old city, living there, the first thing that comes up is, do you light a fire on Shabbat?

So, for us, even though, looking into it very extensively, we didn't see anywhere in Scripture, where preparing your food on Yom Shishi, the preparation day and then heating it on Shabbat, was a problem. But when we were living near the Jews, we didn't even do that, just not to cause a stumbling block before them.

So, it's a matter of maturity in that way, because once you put a stumbling block before your brother, you've lost the battle. And the other thing is, if you're convicted of something and then you do it anyway, even if it was right or wrong, you've also lost the battle because now you're double-minded. You're saying one thing...

I remember one time, somebody was ardently trying to convince me against eating mushrooms. That how much it was a sin and I didn't see it. Mushroom doesn't have a seed, but has a spore. And this person that sat there for almost an hour trying to convince me and they didn't. All of a sudden, we were having the meal the next night and there's mushrooms served and they're eating it. I said, "Why are you eating the mushroom?" And they said, "Well, I don't know. They put it out. I'll eat it." I'm thinking, well, that's really strange. You sat here an hour and trying to convict me not to eat them and then you're gorging them down like there's no tomorrow.

So, is it the same with us, with the Sabbath? Are you going to go to somebody and tell them, yeah, the Sabbath is

Saturday. It's not Sunday. And then the Sabbath comes around and you're washing dishes, you're cooking food, you're doing things and then that person thinks, wow, he's trying to convince me of the Sabbath and he's breaking it.

When we were pretty new in the Sabbath, me and Petra were only married a couple of years and again, we start working Saturday night. It's a normal work night. And like I say, I love it here in Israel, because in America, they don't start till Monday morning. I'm a day and a half into my work week by the time the rest of the world is already starting to work. But it was interesting because, when Sabbath is done, the sun's down, it's over and we start our work.

And my father came up and says to Petra, he sees her work. I don't know if she was typing or doing whatever and he said something like, "You're not supposed to work on the Sabbath, right?" And then she said, "Well, the sun is down, the Sabbath is over." And he said, "Just testing you."

So, people watch, they watch. And again, you're never going to convict somebody by your words, you're going to convict somebody by your actions. So, you want to make sure that your action is backed up and is a witness of your words and the mouth of two witnesses and everything being established [Deut 19:15], your words are one witness, your action is the other witness.

So, that's pretty much everything. And interesting, also going back to verse 13, when he says not to put a stumbling block or an offense, in Aramaic, the word literally means a stone to make one fall. So, it would be like people would do that, like, if they were trying to get their enemy ... you might put a stone on the road to make somebody fall. So, it's literally putting a stone to make somebody fall. So, when you're putting a stumbling block, that's what you're doing. You're trying to trip somebody. You're trying to make them fall.

But to me, I think the chapter is an important chapter. I think that it's extremely clear with the context, especially when we go to *1st Corinthians 8* and back it up. And it's talking about primarily one big subject. The subject of food, of brethren having a problem that some were offended at meat that was sacrificed to idols that could wind up in a meat market and they stopped eating meat, thinking they were more righteous.

Others didn't feel the same way. And now you had this friction in the congregation. And this is what Paul is writing about. But if anybody is honest with themselves, whether you're a new believer in the Bible or you're a scholar of 50 years, there is nothing in this chapter that would remotely make you think that Paul is saying anything against the Sabbath day. It's just not there. That is their only argument against the Sabbath and they have a very weak argument, because there's scripture after scripture that we can go into, like: *Hebrews 4:8* [should be verse 9]:

Hebrews 4:9 *therefore remains the keeping of the Sabbath to the people of YAHWEH*

1st Corinthians 7:19 *Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of YAHWEH.*

It's not the hearers of the Torah that are justified, **Romans 2:13**, but the doers of the Torah.

So over and over and over, Paul is consistently talking about keeping the commandments and the Sabbath day in particular. There's absolutely zero to make somebody think over here that he's saying that that's not important.

So, I will stop there for now and we will open up if anybody has any comments or questions on Romans the 14th chapter and YAHWEH willing, next week I think I'll combine 15 and 16 and then we'll end up on the book of Romans from there.