The Purpose of Romans
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Michael Öberg
The purpose of Romans.

This study determines the purpose of Paul’s Letter to the Romans, a purpose that does justice to the content and the flow of argument as well as to the syntactic structure of the letter text. The overall approach is to conduct a particularly close reading and detailed analysis of the introductory and concluding parts of Romans. Based on these analyses and a reconstruction of the historical and social context, a preliminary thesis of the letter purpose will be formulated. The thesis will then be tested and assessed to determine if it is reasonable against the flow of argument and the line of thought in the letter body at large.

The detailed analyses of the introductory and concluding parts will be performed in two steps for each part. First, a close reading and detailed analyses to understand the textual arrangement and the content in each part. Second, a study of what observations can be perceived from the content and flow of argument that provide information about the purpose.

The thesis is then tested and assessed against the content and flow of argument in the letter body at large, and what can be noted that are in line with the thesis, what arguments run against the thesis, and what additional observations have a direct impact on the thesis.

The conclusion is that Paul writes the Letter to the Romans as an apostle of God and Jesus Christ to proclaim the good news among all the nations. The good news is for all people, both Jews and gentiles. The good news both includes doctrinal statements and requires an ethical response from the believers in Christ. The previous work in the East is coming to an end. Paul wishes to work with the addressees in Rome in his coming mission to the West, a work that first begins in Rome and the area around, and eventually leads all the way to Spain. Paul in a way begins his future apostolic work in Rome by sending the letter, which will continue when he comes in person to the capital of the Roman Empire.

Keywords: Paul, Romans, the Purpose of Romans, the Good News, the Apostolic Call, the Syntactic Structure, Close Reading, Missionary Purpose, Ethical Demands, Apostolic Work in Rome
To my beloved family and friends
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# Abbreviations

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<tr>
<td><strong>BBR</strong></td>
<td><em>Bulletin for Biblical Research</em></td>
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<td><strong>CBQ</strong></td>
<td><em>The Catholic Bible Quarterly</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>CurBS</strong></td>
<td><em>Current in Research: Biblical Studies</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>DSS</strong></td>
<td><em>The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>DSSHU</strong></td>
<td>The Dead Sea Scrolls of the Hebrew University (Jerusalem)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>EKK</strong></td>
<td>Evangelisch-katholischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>GRBS</strong></td>
<td><em>Greek, Romans, and Byzantine Studies</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>ITQ</strong></td>
<td><em>Irish Theological Quarterly</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>JBL</strong></td>
<td><em>Journal of Biblical Literature</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>JJMJS</strong></td>
<td><em>Journal of the Jesus Movement in its Jewish Setting</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>JSNT</strong></td>
<td><em>Journal of the Study of the New Testament</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>KNT</strong></td>
<td>Kommentar till Nya Testamentet</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>LXX</strong></td>
<td>Hanhart, R. 2006, <em>Septuaginta</em>, Edito altera, Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, Stuttgart</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>NIV</strong></td>
<td>New International Version</td>
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NKJV  New King James Version
NA28  *Novum Testamentum Graece*, Nestle-Aland, 28th edition,
NovT  *Novum Testamentum*
NRSV  New Revised Standard Version
NTS  *New Testament Studies*
SBL  Society of Biblical Literature
WUNT  Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
ZNW  *Zeitschrift für die Neuestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der Älteren Kirche*
1. Introduction

Through his letters, the apostle Paul has had a major impact on biblical interpreters and scholars throughout history. William Wrede (1904) described Paul as “the second founder of Christianity” and James D. G. Dunn (1998) stated that Paul is “the greatest Christian theologian of all time”.¹ The Letter to the Romans is perhaps the most influential of all Paul’s letters.² Extensive studies and interpretative work on this letter have been performed since the earliest time, for example by the Church-Fathers Origen (c. 184 – c. 253 C.E.), Ambrosiaster (c. 2nd half of 4th cent. C.E.), and Augustine (354 – 430 C.E.). At the same time, as Origen stated in his commentary, “the letter … to the Romans is considered to be harder to understand than the Apostle Paul’s other letters”.³ Despite Romans being “the most intensely analyzed writing in Western literature”,⁴ there is still today no consensus among scholars on a number of topics.⁵ Even the very purpose of Romans continues to be debated. Several hypotheses why Paul wrote the Letter to the Romans have been proposed. The majority of them can be divided into two broad categories: either the purpose originated from Paul’s own situation and ministry, and thus it had a missionary purpose, or it was written to deal with some particular problems or identifiable circumstances among the believers in Christ in Rome, and thus it had a pastoral purpose. By themselves, neither of these hypotheses provide an adequate explanation of the content of the letter as a whole. Hence, some scholars suggest that Paul had several purposes in mind, related to different parts of Romans.⁶ On the whole there is no consensus on the reason why Paul wrote Romans. Rather, the purpose of Romans “has been a perennial problem during

¹ Dunn, J. D. G. 1998, The Theology of Paul the Apostle, T&T Clark, Edinburgh, 3; The quotations are from Dunn, who also refers to Wrede, W. 1907, Paul, Philip Green, London, 180.
² Longenecker, R. N. 2011, Introducing Romans: critical issues in Paul’s most famous letter, Wm. B. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, MI., 3, who believes that the “most uncontroverted matter in the study of Romans” is that the apostle Paul wrote the letter.
⁵ Longenecker, R. N. 2011, x-xii, gives a summary of challenges for interpreters of Romans.
⁶ For an overview of different suggestions about the purpose of Romans see Longenecker, R. N. 2011, 92-166; Jewett, R. 2007, 80-91.
the past two centuries”. For a presentation of the different hypotheses and their inherent problems, see chapter 1.3 Previous Research below.

In my opinion, the lack of consensus about the purpose of Romans lies primarily in one or both of the following motives. First, various scholars have largely focused on specific parts of the letter. The attention has often been on the letter body, either on the first doctrinal part, suggesting a missionary purpose, or on the second hortatory part, suggesting a pastoral purpose. Today most scholars agree that the introductory and final parts are also central for determining the purpose of the letter, but they tend to concentrate either on the letter introduction or on the closure. When focusing on the introduction, scholars often argue that the purpose is to address some major issues or circumstances in Rome. Other scholars focus more on the final part of the letter and suggest that Paul’s imminent travel to Jerusalem and/or his future mission to Spain is the reason why Paul wrote his Letter to the Romans. Seldom are the whole introductory and final parts considered in full, together with the content, the flow of argument and line of thought in the letter in its entirety.

The second reason why there is no consensus among scholars is that proposals are not always based on careful analyses of the flow of argument in relation to the syntactical structure and arrangement of the letter text. For example, often the so-called thesis statement in Rom 1:16-17 is in focus, and then the letter becomes a detailed description and elaboration of this thesis statement. Many scholars argue that there is a major break in the text between Rom 1:15 and 1:16-17, and at 1:18. However, there are problems with such a division due to the four successive coordinating casual or explanatory “for” (γάρ) particles. The particle γάρ is commonly used in sentences expressing the cause or explanation for what has just been stated. This problem is noticed by most, if not by all, scholars. The arguments for seeing 1:16-17, and 1:18 and forward, as separate paragraphs varies, and are based either on logical, rhetorical, or substantive (content or thematic) reasons, even though scholars agree

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7 Longenecker, R. N. 2011, 92.
that this is against the most common understanding and usage of the particle γάρ. Charles E. B. Cranfield, for example, writes on the one hand: “As far as the choice and management of grammatical constructions are concerned, the language of Romans is perfectly competent”, and states regarding “the importance of … the connectives linking the sentences” that in “the exegesis of Romans one is well advised to watch the connectives with the utmost attentiveness, wherever they are present … Paul uses them competently enough”. On the other hand he writes: “While it is no doubt formally tidier to treat [Rom 1:16b-17] as part of the division which began with 1.8, the logical structure of the epistle stands out more boldly when they are presented as a separate main division”. Likewise, when discussing the relationship between 1:16-17 and 18, Moisés Mayordomo thinks that it is “eine Frage der Gewichtung von Form gegenüber Inhalt” and argues that there are “demnach inhaltliche (und nicht formale Gründe), die für eine kontrastive Lektüre von 1,18ff gegenüber 1,16f sprechen”. Some scholars even believe that the particle γάρ should be regarded here more or less like the copulative particle “and” (καί or τέ). James D. G. Dunn argues that “γάρ, ‘for’, can express simply connection or continuation of thought without specifying what precisely the connection is,” and says that to argue “that vv 16, 17, and 18ff. are grammatically subordinate to v15 … is to overload the significance of γάρ, which may denote lighter connections of thought”. Such positions, though, do not give full justice to the syntactic structure in the surrounding close context. The four casual or explanatory γάρ-sentences in a row, in 1:16-18, after the previous meta-propositional statement or disclosure formula, in 1:13, the asyndeton, in 1:14, and the inference, in 1:15, make better sense if they are all part of the previous letter introduction in 1:8-15. So, even if scholars generally agree that an analysis of both the content and the form of the letter is crucial for determining the purpose, scholars have reached no consensus on the result, and at the syntactical level such an analysis is not always sufficiently elaborated. The establishment of

11 Mayordomo, M. 2005, 172, 174, and n382 and n383; See also Longenecker, R. N. 2011, 393-4; Jewett, R. 2007, 135; who both see 1:16-17 as the rhetorical theme of Romans.
12 Dunn, J. D. G. 1988, 37-8, 54.
13 Longenecker, R. N., 2011 169, 220-25; See also Funk, R. 1970, “The Form and Function of the Pauline Letter”, SBL Seminar Papers, Scholars, Missoula, MT, 8, who states that “(t)he first order of business is to learn to read the letter as a letter. This means above all to learn to read its structure”.
14 Wolter, M. 2014, Der Brief an die Römer. Röm 1-8, EKK, Neukirchener Theologie, Neukirchen-Vluyn, Ostfildern, 66, writes that scholars even use the same methodological approach, for instance rhetorical strategies, but reach no consensus on the textual arrangement – “Unter allen Vorschlägen, die bisher zur rhetorischen Gliederung des Römerbriefes vorgelegt wurden, gibt es keine zwei, die zu demselben Ergebnis kommen”; Fowler, P. B. 2016, The Structure of Romans, The Argument of Paul’s Letter, Fortress Press, Minneapolis, MN, 17, calls the lack of consensus of the textual arrangement and outline of Romans “the unresolved issue of the structure of Romans”.
the syntactic structure and arrangement of the text is the basis for understanding the flow of argument in the letter. Even if the question of the purpose of the letter is largely a matter at the pragmatic level, it is unreasonable to think that the text, both substantively and pragmatically, would be contrary to its syntax. In order to determine the purpose of Romans, there is therefore a need for a close reading and analysis of the letter as a whole, including its syntactic structure, and the way in which this affects the arrangement of the text and the flow of the argument and the line of thought.

1.1 Aim and Scope

Against the background presented above:

The aim of the present study is to determine the purpose of the Letter to the Romans, a purpose that does justice to the content and the flow of argument of the letter as a whole as well as to the syntactic structure of the text.

In the formulation of the aim and the title of this book the phrase *the purpose of Romans* is used. Thus, I am seeking to determine one purpose, even though there could possibly be several reasons why Paul wrote the letter. The decision to look for one purpose was not taken in advance. The question whether there is one or several purposes behind Romans is complex and much debated, and the answers given by scholars differ. It is not a clear-cut issue, and there are several nuances in the different possibilities. First, there could be one main purpose in Romans. A second alternative is that there is one overall purpose, but also one or several additional secondary or subsidiary purposes, Paul takes the opportunity to discuss or elaborate. A third alternative is several parallel and equally important purposes. An example of the second alternative is Paul’s letter to the Philippians, and First Corinthians is an example of the third alternative. However, the hypothesis that Paul had one main

15 The scope of this thesis does not permit any detail argument about the purpose(s) of Philippians and First Corinthians. In short, it is possible to understand the main purpose of Philippians as Paul’s writing from prison in order to strengthen and encourage the Philippians in their persecution, suffering, and sacrifice for the good news. A secondary purpose would be Paul taking the opportunity to express his joy at the Philippians’ concern for him and their gift, while he is in prison. The latter was a gift both in tangible terms, and in terms of their sharing in Paul’s distress and sacrifice for the good news. See Holmstrand, J. 1997, *Markers and meaning in Paul: an analysis of 1 Thessalonians, Philippians and Galatians*, Almqvist & Wiksell International, Stockholm, 139-144. – It seems that First Corinthians was written for several parallel and equal purposes when Paul had received reports about divisions and split within the assembly in Corinth, and about inappropriate behaviour among the believers. There were also questions asked about marriages, women prophesizing at gatherings, and regarding the resurrection of the dead. There were indeed many parallel reasons for writing to the Corinthians.
purpose for writing to Rome is based on the following premises: (A) In contrast to Philippians and First Corinthians, there are no distinct marks in the text of Romans that Paul had several main reasons for writing, especially not in the opening and introduction of the letter. (B) The text in Romans shows a coherent flow of argument, and a rather smooth progress in the line of thought throughout the letter with the message in different parts being closely related. (C) There is a close correlation between what is expressed in the introduction and at the end of the letter. (D) The fact that this letter was the first time ever that Paul addressed the Romans makes it more probable that his message is more coherent with one overall purpose. These four points together form the basis for the hypothesis that there is one main purpose. The work and the analyses in this dissertation have gradually strengthened this conviction. The assumption that there is one main purpose behind this letter does however not exclude the possibility that the single purpose might be characterised or expressed through several partial reasons, which are closely connected and inseparable, and which may be observed in the text.

1.2 Approach and Methods

In this chapter I describe the methodological approach applied to achieve the aim of this thesis including the rationale behind the approach. This will then be followed by a detailed outline of the dissertation. First the methodological approach with its motivation.

The methodological approach with its motivation

The aim of this study is to determine the purpose of Romans, a purpose that does justice to (A) the content and flow of argument of the entire letter, and (B) the syntactic structure of the text.

First regarding point (A). In order to determine a purpose of Romans that does justice to the entire letter, the overall approach is to conduct a particularly close reading and detailed analysis of the introductory and concluding parts of Romans. Based on these analyses, a preliminary thesis will formulate the purpose of Romans. The preliminary thesis will then be tested and assessed to determine if it is reasonable against the flow of argument and the line of thought in the letter at large.

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16 Jewett, R. 2007, 80, for additional arguments about one main purpose in Romans. Jewett believes that “[l]etter writers usually have a central goal in writing”. Even though this thesis disagrees with Jewett on the main purpose, there is agreement that Paul had one main purpose.
This approach has been chosen since it is not viable to undertake a meticulous analysis of the entire Letter to the Romans within the scope of this dissertation. Some delimitation is necessary, and in practical terms this approach is feasible. The approach assumes that the purpose of Romans is somehow expressed in the introductory and concluding parts; that is in the letter opening, the introduction to the letter body, the end of the letter body, and the letter closing. In general, this is common to all communication with other people, even today, for instance through a letter or in a speech. The sender or speaker would normally express the purpose at the beginning before the main part of the letter or the speech and recapitulate and summarise his or her message and purpose at the end. The reader or listener would reasonably expect the same method.

The significance of the introductory and concluding parts in ancient Greek and Jewish letters, like the Letter to the Romans, is evident by the formal epistolary conventions and formulas used for these parts, compared to the main text in between. It is generally agreed among scholars that ancient Greco-Roman and Jewish letters show many similarities, with a convergence of epistolary forms and features, and with a basic structure consisting of a formal letter opening and a formal letter closing, and the letter body in between. The letter body is in turn often divided in an introduction, the main part(s) of the letter body, and a concluding part or end of the letter body. The Letter to the Romans follows this basic structural convention. Most, if not all, scholars on Romans today agree on the importance of these introductory and concluding parts.

For example, Richard N. Longenecker states that “the beginning sections of Romans express in rather compressed and condensed fashion Paul’s attitude and concerns when writing [and] anticipate his primary purposes for writing”, and “the concluding sections recapitulate and unpack many of these attitudes, concerns and purposes”. Jeffrey A. D. Weima argues likewise that “the letter frame” (i.e. the beginning and the end) provides “a crucial key to

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19 Longenecker, R. N. 2011, 441, see also pp. 128-30, 205, 380, 387; Cranfield, C. E. B. 1975-79, 27; Jervis, L. A. 1991, 29-68. Similar to Longenecker, Jervis writes that “the function intended by the information in the letter body is indicated in the opening and closing sections”, ibid., 42.
solving the difficult problem of the ‘Reason for Romans’”. According to Weima, Paul not only presents himself in the letter opening, but also draws attention to his commission and message, and in the introduction of the letter body Paul anticipates the coming central themes. The end of the letter body and the letter closing similarly elaborate on Paul’s apostolic call and his message. So, for Weima “the evidence of the letter framework” suggests Paul’s primary concern for writing to Rome.  

It is especially important to indicate the purpose in the letter frame when a letter is sent for the first time to other people, as is the case with Paul’s letter to Rome. Scholars generally agree that Paul had not communicated with the congregations in Rome before, and this letter is his first written contact with them. He therefore had to work with the possibilities that the letterform would serve as a tool for his first contact and communication with the addressees. Compared to Paul’s other letters, this is more reasonable in the Letter to the Romans since Paul wanted to establish a new contact and a direct relationship with the Romans for a specific reason. To achieve this, Paul plausibly used and adapted the ancient letter conventions and the message in the introductory and concluding parts, together with the content and the flow of argument of the letter as a whole.

Romans was written to be read aloud and heard by its audience with the object to persuade, achieve a goal, and/or to influence the addressees. Therefore, in order to determine the purpose of the letter, it is necessary to study the four introductory and concluding parts of Romans particularly. However, the indicated purpose in the letter frame should be reflected in the flow of argument and the line of thought in the letter at large. Since there is a need to delimit the work of this thesis, the main parts of Romans will serve as a litmus test when assessing the results from the analysis of the letter frame. This is the basic motive for the overall approach to point (A) above.

Second, regarding point (B), in order to determine a purpose of Romans that does justice to the syntactic structure of the letter text as well, the analyses below will pay special attention to the organisation of the text, and the way in which the letter is structured and arranged syntactically within and between different textual units. A letter text such as Romans functions as a substitute


for direct personal communication between the author and reader/listener, between sender and recipient, between Paul and the addressees in Rome. Paul’s Letter to the Romans can thus be seen as a communicative act, and the text can be considered from three perspectives: (1) that of pragmatics, which studies the relationship between linguistic signs and sign users, or the readers/hearers of the letter; (2) that of semantics, which is concerned with the relationships between signs and the phenomena to which they refer or, with Wilhelm Egger and Peter Wick, between “den Zeichen und dem Gegenstand”; (3) that of syntax, which deals with the formal internal relationships of linguistic signs.

As was mentioned above, the purpose of Romans is an issue primarily within the pragmatic dimension of the letter text, but not entirely. The pragmatic point of view of the letter is dependent on the semantic and syntactical perspectives of the text, including the delineation and arrangement of the text into different parts and textual units. Consequently, it is not possible to study the pragmatic dimensions of the text without paying attention to the other dimensions. The semantic analysis, which deals with the meaning of the linguistic expressions, is based on the linguistic-syntactic analysis, and the pragmatic analysis also has the linguistic-syntactic analysis as a prerequisite, since the author wants to achieve certain effects on the reader by choosing certain linguistic means. As an act of communication, the primary characteristic of a text is coherence. The levels of syntax, semantics, and pragmatics, for instance in the Letter to the Romans, should harmonize. And, if they do not, the difference needs an explanation. The syntactic structure and arrangement of the letter text is the basis for understanding the content, the flow of argument and the development of the line of thought in the letter to Rome. This is a prerequisite for determining the purpose. A thesis on the purpose of Romans is therefore only acceptable if it does justice to both the semantic and the syntactic dimensions as well. Since in my opinion, previous studies have not taken

25 Egger, W. & Wick, P. 2013, 117; See also Hellholm, D. 1980, 22-23; for what is called a “pragmatisches Integrationsmodell”, in line with Morris, Ch. W. 1975, Grundlage der Zeichentheorie, Ästhetik und Zeichentheorie, 2. Aufl., Reihe Hanser, München [Engl.Orig. 1938 und 1939], 68-70. The unity of semiotics is stressed, since “dass die syntaktischen und semantischen Regeln ohne Bezug auf die Interpreten nicht denkbar sind und deshalb die ‘Einheit der Semiotik’ betont”.
27 Egger, W. & Wick, P. 2013, 47; “Tun sie dach nicht, bedarf diese Differenz einer Erklärung”.

sufficient account of the syntactic structure and arrangement of the letter, special attention will now be paid to this particular dimension in this dissertation; that is to point (B) above.

So, the detailed analysis of the introductory and concluding parts of Romans seeks to understand the whole from the content in the individual parts of the text and the relationship between these parts. However, there is no magic formula for reading and interpreting the text. Rather, it is necessary first and foremost to undertake a so-called close reading. I accede to Wilhelm Egger’s and Peter Wick’s definition in Methodenlehre zum Neuen Testament that the close reading means a careful, respectful reading of a text or a section of text, which aims to get a precise access to the text for further analysis, and in the end, this determines whether or not the resulting interpretation will be philosophically correct. Everything that cannot be proven on the basis of the text is untenable. For this thesis, the close reading will have a special focus on the syntactical structure and organisation of the text. In order to decide the syntactical structure and the textual arrangement, there is a need to study how clauses, sentences and paragraphs are connected by different conjunctions and connective particles, including anaphoric and cataphoric pronouns and other types of intertextual references. A text is hierarchically structured by units of meaning at different levels, from morphemes, via lexemes, phrases, clauses, and sentences, to paragraphs, chapters, and larger units.

In order to determine the textual arrangement at higher levels, some analytical perspectives and terms from Jonas Holmstrand’s dissertation Markers and Meaning in Paul will be used. In antiquity, texts were usually read aloud, and reading or hearing a letter was a linear process. In the written Greek texts, there were essentially no formal marks for significant changes of topics, such as punctuations, markers of blank-lines for new paragraphs, head-lines for sub-chapters, chapters, and sections at different levels, which we are used to in modern texts. The ancient reader or hearer must have relied on other phenomena in the text to discern changes of topic, called transitions markers. There are two kinds of transition markers, opening markers and closing markers, which lead the reader or hearer through the transition. There are several phenomena in the text that can be considered a transition marker. Two phenomena frequently used as transition markers in this thesis are termed the meta-communicative clause and the meta-propositional clause or statement. They occur at different levels in the text and are often found at the higher

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28 Egger, W. & Wick, P. 2013, 105; “(d)as Ganze aus den Beziehungen der Einzelteile zueinander verstehen”.
29 ibid., 111-112.
30 ibid., 112; “Alles, was nicht anhand des Textes beweisen werden kann, ist nicht haltbar”.
31 ibid., 115, 125.
33 ibid., 24-32.
textual levels in Romans. A meta-communicative clause contains a verb that refers to the coding or decoding of the text, such as “say”, “promise”, “hear”, “listen”, for example “I speak the truth … that …” in Rom 9:1; “I have written to you … to remind you … that …” in 15:15. A meta-propositional clause or statement expresses attitudes to, or assessments of, what is stated in the text, such as “I want you to know that …” in 1:13; 11:25; “I urge you to …” in 12:1; 16:17; “I am convinced of you that …” in 15:14.

In addition, Richard N. Longenecker has given a list of common epistolary formulas, identified by scholars in the analyses of the Greek papyrus letters, which are significant when studying transitions in Paul’s letters. Examples of important formulas used and referred to in the analyses of this thesis are: the thanksgiving in Rom 1:8; the disclosure formula in 1:13; 11:25; the confidence formula in 15:14, 29; the request formula in 12:1; 15:30; and the greetings in 16:2-16; 21-23.

The terminology of Holmstrand and Longenecker sometimes overlap and occur in parallel in this thesis. The reason is that they complement each other, and together they capture both the content, the function and the character of a statement or proposition. For instance in Rom 1:8, Paul begins with a thanksgiving clause that is both meta-communicative and meta-propositional: “First I give thanks to my God through Jesus Christ regarding all of you since … your faith is proclaimed in the whole world” It expresses Paul's gratitude to God and praise for the addressees and gives information why. In this way, Paul also directs his focus directly on to the addressees as well. This is the characteristic positive opening of Paul’s letter body, but here uniquely adapted to the situation in Romans. Another example is found in Rom 1:13 and 11:25; both verses begin with the expression “I want you to know”, which is a meta-propositional statement and a disclosure formula. The expression is part of the opening in 1:13, and the closing in 11:25 respectively, and functions as the opening and closing of textual units at the highest level in the text. The former provides information of Paul’s intent, and the latter summarises a previously important discussion and argument. For more on the passages in 1:8, 1:13 and 11:25, see the analyses in Chs. 2.4, 4, and 8.

Thus, the overall approach is the close reading and detailed analyses of the introductory and concluding parts of Romans, with a special attention on the syntactical structure and the arrangement of the text into different textual units at different levels. Semantic analyses of special words and expressions are vital to understand the content and the flow of argument in the letter part studied. Based on these detailed analyses, a preliminary thesis about the purpose of Romans will be formulated.

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The preliminary thesis will then be tested and assessed against the content and the flow of argument of the letter body at large. For this assessment, the textual arrangement and the syntactical structure is also central besides the content itself. Basically, the same analytical conceptual apparatus used in the analyses of the introductory and concluding parts of the letter will be used here, but I will not extend my study to the same level of detail. In the analysis of the letter body at large, I will confine my study to a division of the text into textual parts and units at the three highest levels of the text, called the major parts, the sections and the textual units at the next subordinate textual level in the letter body. I will examine how these units of meaning relate to each other. I will also be more selective and only address those aspects of the content and the flow of argument that are relevant for the assessment and test of my preliminary thesis. For more on the overall delineation of the text in the letter body at large, see Chs. 2, 4 and 8.

So, the letter opening and the introduction of the letter body together with the end of the letter body and the letter closing will be studied in great detail, while the rest of the letter body will be studied more concisely than and not as comprehensive as the four introductory and concluding parts, with a focus on testing and assessing the preliminary thesis.

In addition to the main analyses, there is a need for certain preparatory analyses. The first to establish the letter text of Romans to be studied through a text critical analysis. The second to study the historical and social context of Paul and the addressees in Rome. Even if the focus of this work is on the close reading and the syntactical structure of the text, the letter in its context must also be taken into account.\(^{35}\) The purpose of Romans can be described as what the author, Paul, wants to achieve with the addressees in Rome. Thus, to be able to evaluate the purpose correctly, it is necessary to have an idea of the context presupposed by the letter text, and which it aims to influence. For instance, we need to know the identity of the addressees in Rome,\(^{36}\) whether they were of gentile and/or Jewish origin, in what proportions, and whether they lived separately or close together etc. The answers affect the way in which we should understand the many passages in which Paul seems to write directly to Jews, such as in Rom 2-3. Are they in the form of a diatribe with a fictive Jewish interlocutor with a message aimed at gentiles only, or is the message also intended for addressees with a Jewish background? The identity of the addressees affects how we should understand the admonitions in Rom 12-15 as well? The answer to the question whether the good news of God and Jesus Christ presented by Paul is relevant to Jews or only to gentiles depends to a


certain extent on the identity of the addressees. All this will impinge directly on our understanding of the purpose of Romans. Therefore, there is a need to reconstruct what can be said about the historical and social context of Paul and the addressees in Rome before we can embark on the detailed analyses. Finally, there is a primary need to determine the limits of the four introductory and concluding parts of the letter, which are the objects for the detailed analyses for this thesis, and the letter body at large, which is used for the assessment and test of the preliminary thesis.

A more detailed outline of the thesis will be presented next.

The outline of the thesis

Prior to the main analyses, the three preparatory studies will be conducted in Ch. 2. First, the text-critical analysis, in Ch. 2.1. The text-critical analysis discusses the integrity of the letter text, including possible interpolations. The focus is on the main questions that commentators discuss and that have a direct impact on the purpose of Romans, especially the question whether Rom 16 was original or a later addition. Other minor problems will also be discussed as part of the main analyses of the letter.

Second, the reconstruction of the historical and social context of the Letter to the Romans. The contextual analysis will be divided in two parts. In Ch. 2.2, the historical and social context of Paul and the believers in Christ in the Roman Empire and particularly in Rome will be reconstructed. This is preceded by a short discussion of terminology, and the sources to be used. Then, in Ch. 2.3, the issue of the identity of Paul’s addressees in Rome will be studied. Scholars agree that information about the identity of the addressees is given in the formal recipient part of the letter opening, but predominantly in the rest of the introductory and closing parts of the letter. The use of the Greek term τὰ ἔθνη (pl.), with the meaning “nations”, “people” or “gentiles”, indicates the identity particularly. In addition, the Edict of Claudius and the so called Wiefel-hypothesis are, according to many scholars, decisive for establishing the identity of the addressees. Therefore, the lexical meaning of the term τὰ ἔθνη will be discussed first, including how we should understand this term in Paul’s other letters. This will be followed by an analysis of all the references to the addressees in Rom 1:1-15; 15:14-16:15, and by a discussion of the references to the addressees in the letter body at large, particularly in Rom 9-11. Then a review of the Edict of Claudius and the Wiefel-hypothesis will follow. The discussion will be rounded off by stating the position on the identity of the addressees in Romans that I take in this dissertation.

The third preparatory study, in Ch. 2.4, consists of an analysis of the overall syntactic structure and textual arrangement of the Letter to the Romans. This analysis will be performed in order to determine the limits of the four introductory and concluding parts, which are distinguished from the rest of the letter body. The result shows an arrangement of Romans with the letter opening
in Rom 1:1-7, the introduction of the letter body in 1:8-18, the end of the letter body in 15:14-33, and the letter closing in 16:1-27.

In line with my chosen methodological approach, these four introductory and concluding letter parts are the object for the main and detailed analyses of this dissertation, the letter opening in Ch. 3, the introduction of the letter body in Ch. 4, the end of the letter body in Ch. 5, and the letter closing in Ch. 6. Each part will be studied separately and in detail to perceive what information is given to indicate the purpose of the letter. The study will be divided into two steps for each part.

The intention of the first step (1), in Chs. 3.1, 4.1, 5.1 and 6.1, is to grasp the flow of argument and the line of thought in the letter part in question. This will be achieved by a close reading and detailed analysis of the textual arrangement, the thematic content, and the transitions between different textual units. The Greek text will be analysed primarily at the syntactical and semantic levels. Concrete linguistic signs and epistolographic conventions that signal the opening and closing of different textual units and thus points to transitions between textual units will be identified.37 Different syntactical constructions in the text, such as rhetorical questions, emphatic expressions, and the extensive use of prepositional phrases, participial phrases, and infinitive constructions, will be analysed in order to highlight how they are combined in various sentences and dependent clauses. Lexical analyses of special words and key terms are performed. The linguistic signs, the epistolographic conventions, and the syntactical constructions, with important key words and themes, will be studied in their letter context, both in the contiguous text, and in the textual units before and after the current paragraph or textual unit – all in order to determine how the text is organised in textual units at different levels within the particular letter part studied.38 Where relevant, a comparison with Paul’s other letters will be made in order to shed light on how closings and openings are marked for the transitions between textual units and how to understand the content. A dialogue with other scholars will be needed, in order to express the arguments for or against the particular positions taken in this thesis. The result of the analysis will be summarised and presented in a tabular overview, which

37 Linguistic markers and connectives such as (a) copulative (καί, τε), adversative (Ἅλλα, δέ, μέν…) δέ), causal (γάρ), and inferential (ἄρα, δή, οὖν) conjunctions and particles, (b) asyndeton (the absence of connectives), (c) attention markers and particles (γέ), and emphatic expression (e.g. ἄδελφοι, "Brothers!", νυνί, "Now!") (d) the positioning of important words first or last in clauses and sentences, repetitions and special arrangements of the text, (e) rhetorical questions (τί οὖν ἐροῦμεν; "So, what shall we say?") and so called (f) meta-propositional or meta-communica tive clauses (οὐ θέλω δὲ ὑμᾶς ἀγνοεῖν ὅτι …, “I want you to know that …”), etc. For a detailed description of these kind of linguistic markers and epistolographic conventions, see Longenecker, R. N. 2011, 204-25; Holmström, J. 1997, 19-32; Egger, W. & Wick, P. 2013, 40-59, 106-111, 115-130.

38 Holmström, J. 1997, 21-2, 32. The suggested opening and closing transition markers, and the relationship between the different textual units will be motivated and argued for in the analyses below.
shows how the text is organised and how the argument runs in the four introductory and concluding parts of Romans.

Based on this result, the second (2) step of the study will proceed, in Chs. 3.2, 4.2, 5.2, and 6.2 respectively, with the outset being the question of what observations can be perceived from the textual arrangement and the syntactic structure with its content and flow of argument that points to, or gives information about, the purpose of Romans. The study will be centred on the thematic content and the different syntactic and semantic constructions of the text, and their function and effect in the overall flow of the arguments and the train of thoughts in the letter part in question. Elements that appear to be accentuated and particularly highlighted in the text will be studied in more detail; different statements and declarations of intent; highlighted arguments and special words or themes, and their relation to other words and themes in the context; particular parts of the argument where the addressees are significant; and when Paul and his intention seems to be more distinctly expressed, such as in final clauses or inferences, etc. Other scholarly positions and arguments will be contrasted in order to support or to problematize different positions. The content, themes and the specific arguments along with their occurrence and use in the literary context will be taken into consideration, with respect to both Romans and Paul’s other letters. Since citations and allusions to the scriptures are used extensively by Paul in Romans as part of the flow of argument, it is reasonable to assume that the scriptures, particularly in Greek (LXX), were part of Paul’s and his addressees’ broader literary context and thought world. Therefore, arguments taken and formulated with the help of related text passages in the LXX/HB are appropriate for the establishment of the different observations. This second step will be concluded by a summary and composition of the observations perceived regarding the purpose of Romans for each specific letter part studied.

In line with the approach chosen for this dissertation, based on the context analysis in Ch. 2.2 and 2.3, and the main analyses and observations made in Ch. 3-6, a preliminary conclusion and thesis about the purpose of Romans will be formulated in Ch. 7. The following questions will be taken in consideration when establishing the purpose of the letter – (I.) What observations about the purpose are related and common to all of the letter opening, the introduction, the end of the letter body, and the letter closing? (II.) What additional observations in the opening and introduction alone point forward and indicate what we might expect in the message and the flow of argument in the main part of the letter body? (III.) What observations in the ending and closing alone recapitulate, bring further light on, and give strength to themes and arguments that have been previously discussed? (IV.) What information regarding the historical and social context of Paul and the addressees in Rome have a direct bearing on the thesis? With these four questions in mind an overall conclusion of the analyses so far will be given in Ch. 7.1. This will be followed by the formulation of the preliminary thesis about the purpose Romans in Ch. 7.2.
The preliminary thesis will then be tested and assessed in Ch. 8 through an analysis of the content and the flow of argument in the letter body at large. The analysis of the letter body will also be made in two steps. First, the overall textual arrangement and the content of the letter body will be analysed in Ch. 8.1. Previously, in Ch. 2.4, the overall textual arrangement was analysed to draw the boundaries between the four introductory and concluding parts of Romans studied in Ch. 3-6, and the letter body at large studied here in Ch. 8.1. For the scope of this dissertation, the analysis of the textual arrangement will focus on the first two major parts of the letter, with the sections of the letter body after the introduction, and the different textual units on the next subordinated level. The analysis of the content will also be limited. Not every topic and subject matter in the letter body will be discussed in detail, but only what is relevant to the evaluation of this thesis regarding the purpose of Romans will be studied. It is of the greatest importance in the analysis how these sections and units with their content relate to each other in the overall progress of Paul’s flow of argument and line of thought.

Second, in Ch. 8.2, the previously formulated preliminary thesis will be tested and assessed against the content, the flow of argument, and the line of thought in the letter body. The following questions are important: What can be noted from the letter body that are in line with and support the preliminary thesis? What arguments run against or problematize the thesis? What can be observed in addition in the letter body that is important and has a direct impact on the thesis?

The dissertation will then come to an end in Ch. 9, by a concluding discussion, in Ch. 9.1, of all the previous work in Chs. 1-8, and by a formulation of the final thesis about the purpose of Romans in Ch. 9.2.

Before all this, a summary of the previous research will follow in Ch. 1.3.

### 1.3 Previous Research

One of the contributions of modern scholarship is the insight that even the texts in the New Testament (NT) were written in a particular context, for a specific audience, and for special needs or situations. This insight has also been used in the study of Paul’s letters, for example the letters to the Galatians and to the Corinthians. However, up to the middle of the twentieth century, Paul’s letter to the Romans has, with some exceptions, mostly been considered as a “compendium of the Christian religion”. From the second half of

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40 The quotation corresponds to phrases used by Melanchton, “*christianae religionis compendium*”, in his *Loci Communes Theologici* of 1521, and Anders Nygren in his commentary from
the twentieth century there has been increased scholarly attention on Paul’s intention in writing to Rome. Since 1970, a huge number of articles, monographs, and commentaries on Romans have been published. One question debated has been – Why did Paul write Romans? But there is no consensus about the answer. This is evident by the publication of Karl P. Donfried’s book *The Romans debate* (1977), with an expanded edition ten plus years later in 1991, and with a follow-up additional ten years later in 2001 by James C. Miller’s article “The Romans Debate 1991-2001”. These publications include essays mostly concerned with the issue of the purpose of Romans, and illustrate an area of research named by many after the title of Donfried’s book as The Romans Debate. For two decades after Miller’s article, the debate has continued with many new commentaries and scholarly work published, such as Sara H. Casson (2019); Scot McKnight (2019); Wendel Sun (2018); Mark D. Nanos (2018); Thomas A. Vollmer (2018); Richard N. Longenecker (2016, 2011); Robert C. Olson (2016); Paul B. Fowler (2016); Stanley E. Porter (2015); Michael Wolter (2014); Arland J. Hultgren (2011); Robert M. Calhoun (2011); Douglas A. Campbell (2009); Robert Jewett (2007); A. Andrew Das (2007); Samuel Byrskog (2006); Ben Witherington III (2004). The previous research is enormous, and as mentioned in the introduction the purpose of Romans “has been a perennial problem during the past two centuries” and it still is.

For the sake of this dissertation only a summary will be presented with some examples of different purposes suggested for Romans. The presentation will be based mainly on the accounts in the thorough works by Richard. N. Longenecker from 2011 and 2016, complemented by information from Robert

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43 The quotation is from Longenecker, R. N. 2011, 92.
Jewett’s rather recent commentary from 2007, and by the works of some other more recent scholars. The majority of the purposes suggested can be divided into two broad categories: (1) the purpose originated from Paul’s own situation and ministry, that is missionary in nature, or (2) Paul’s wish to counter some particular problems or identifiable circumstances among the believers in Christ in Rome, that is pastoral in nature. In addition, there are (3) some other opinions, including the view that Paul had multiple reasons for writing Romans. A summary of the scholarly propositions, divided into the three categories and their inherent problems, will be presented below.

**Purposes being missionary in nature**

**A theological treatise or tractate**

From an early date the Letter to the Romans was regarded as the first systematic theology of the Christian church, e.g. by the Church-Father Tertullian, and later by the Reformers Martin Luther, Melanchthon, and John Calvin. So also in the modern critical period, e.g. by Joseph B. Lightfoot (1865), who spoke of it as a theological treatise or tractate, even though regarding it as a letter. Likewise Karl Barth (1919 (Eng. 1933), Anders Nygren (1944), Frederick F. Bruce (1977, 1991), Leander E. Keck (1979), and Douglas J. Moo (1996). According to these scholars, Paul did not send this letter to Rome because of any the particular conditions in Rome, nor because of any circumstances related to the Roman congregations. This letter was more like the formal epistles of Seneca, who communicated his teachings in the guise of the ordinary letters. Especially because of the long middle body in Romans, it has been understood by scholars as “a theological treatise set within an epistolary frame”.

However, the problem is that Romans shows typical characteristics of an ancient letter, including personal allusions, travel plans, specific instructions and admonitions to the addressees in Rome. Also, Romans lacks a number of important subjects compared to Paul’s other letters, such as the resurrection of believers, the Lord’s last supper, etc. Therefore, as Paul’s complete theological treatise it seems to be somewhat truncated. If, however, Romans is not a complete theological tractate, why are the themes included selected, and why are the themes left out not included? And if it is a theological treatise, complete or not, why did Paul send it to the congregations in Rome?

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44 Longenecker, R. N. 2016, 9-12; *ibid*. 2011, 92-166; Jewett, R. 2007, 80-91. For a more recent overview of the purpose of Romans, see e.g. Vollmer, T. A. 2018, 41-96.
45 Longenecker, R. N. 2011, 94-97, including detailed references to scholarly work.
In order to determine the purpose of Romans, the letter must be studied as an ancient letter, written to be read aloud to the particular audience in Rome, which means that the introductory and concluding parts of the letter are important and not only the long body middle.

**A summary of Paul’s earlier teaching**

William Sanday and Arthur C. Headlam (1895), Charles H. Dodd (1932), and Ulrich Luz (1969)\(^47\) have proposed that the Letter to the Romans is a summary of Paul’s earlier teaching.

This suggestion is a variant of the view above that the letter is a theological treatise. Even though these scholars affirm that the letter was a real letter, they argue that the concern that has shaped the content of Romans most of all is Paul’s previous teachings and experiences gained by preaching the good news.

This suggestion, though, has much of the same problems as the previously suggested purpose. Why sending this summary of his earlier teachings and experiences to the Romans? It is plausible that Paul used much of his earlier teachings as well as what he had written in his other letters when he wrote Romans. But why the teachings selected, rather than those left out? The Letter to the Romans is a genuine letter on its own terms, written in a specific historical context, sent to the audience addressed in Rome. The message in the letter was argued by Paul for a particular reason.

Both the scholarly suggestions that the letter is a theological treatise and a summary of Paul’s teaching are also problematic in that scholars do not agree on what the major themes or subject matters of the treatise or summary in the letter are. How do the different themes and matters relate to one another, and how do they fit into the overall flow of the argument and the line of thought? Which part of the letter is the main section, and how does this relate to the other sections of the letter? And how does such a suggested reason for sending the letter conform to the letter at large, including what is expressed in the four introductory and concluding parts?

Questions such as these need to be addressed in the coming analyses, and since Romans is a real letter, the introductory and concluding parts of the letter are of special importance for determining the purpose.

**An encyclical letter for Paul’s churches**

A variant of the view that Romans is a theological treatise suggests that Rom 1-14 were written as a general encyclical letter to all Paul’s congregations. According to scholars who promote this view, Rom 15:14-33 plus the designation “in Rome”, in 1:7 and 1:15, were added to this particular letter to Rome, and Rom 16 was added to a letter to Ephesus. That Romans is an encyclical letter is argued for example by Kirsopp Lake (1927), and Thomas W. Manson

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\(^47\) Longenecker, R. N. 2011, 97-99.

The problem here concerns the acceptance of the premise of the short form of Romans (Chs. 1-14) as the original letter. The text critical issues of Romans have been studied, and the short form of Romans has been disputed, by for example Harry Gamble, 1977, *Textual History of the Letter to the Romans*. The suggestion though demonstrates the importance of a text-critical analysis of Romans before we begin the main analysis for this thesis. See the preparatory analysis in chapter 2.1 below.

**A final literary testament (“last will and testament”)**

Günther Bornkamm (1963, also found in Donfried, ed. *The Romans Debate*, 1977 (1991)) argues that Paul wrote Romans in order to summarise and develop his teaching for the benefit of “the Roman Christians”, and thereby produced his “final literary achievement or testament”. Romans was written at a particularly significant time in Paul’s ministry, after he had completed the mission in the East, and while he was planning to go up to Jerusalem to defend himself, before he headed West.

It is a fact that, in Romans, Paul presents and argues both his theological and paraenetical message to his addressees at length, but there is a risk that Bornkamm’s argumentation “elevates his [Paul’s] theology above the moment of definite situations and conflicts into the sphere of the eternally and universally valid” too much. Even if Paul’s thoughts and arguments are praiseworthy and may be regarded, with Bornkamm, as eternally and universally valid, the message in Romans must also be understood as a message of a real letter to some specific addressees in Rome. So, when seeking to clarify the purpose of Paul’s situational letter, we must take into account the question why he gave such a lengthy exposition of his theological message to the addressees in Rome, and how the theological message relates to the hortatory parts of Romans. If it was an “eternally and universally valid” message, why did Paul send it to the congregations in Rome?

So, this suggestion has the same or similar problems as the previous ones, which needs to be addressed in the coming study.

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51 The citation is from Bornkamm’s own article, Bornkamm, G. 1991, 27-28; also quoted in Longenecker, R. N. 2011, 102.
A brief originally prepared for Paul’s defence at Jerusalem

Bornkamm proposed a subsidiary purpose, namely that Romans was a preparation for Paul’s coming visit in Jerusalem as his defence for his message and his mission to the gentiles. This was proposed by Ernst Fuchs (1954) as the primary reason why Paul wrote Romans. Jerusalem was the so-called “secret addressee” of Romans. A similar thought has been proposed later by Jack Suggs (1967) and Ulrich Wilckens (1974), who argue that Rom 1:18-11:36 was first prepared for presentation at Jerusalem, and 1:1-17 and Ch. 12-16 was later added to the letter to Rome for approval and support. Jacob Jervell has proposed a similar thesis (1971, also found in Donfried, ed. The Romans Debate, 1977 (1991)).

Important criticism of the view that Romans is a letter to Jerusalem have been given by Longenecker (2011), and earlier by Alexander J. M. Wedderburn (1988). The key problem, according to Longenecker, is Rom 11:13-24 where “Paul specifically addresses his readers as ‘Gentiles’ and characterizes them as ‘wild olive branches’ … among the ‘natural branches,’”. And citing Wedderburn, “[s]uch an argument … makes no sense addressed to the Jerusalem church”, with Jewish Christ believers, but is more reasonable in a letter to Rome with a mixture of Jewish and gentile believers. This criticism by Longenecker and Wedderburn is fair. More significantly, the trip to Jerusalem is neither mentioned in the letter opening, nor in the introduction to the letter body, in Rom 1:1-18, nor in the main parts of the letter body, but only in the end of the letter body, in Rom 15:19, 25-26, 31. Further, to regard Rom 12:1-15:13, with the exhortations to the Roman audience as more or less insignificant with regard to the main purpose of the Letter to the Romans seems unreasonable. The suggestion that the section is a later addition has no support in the external text witnesses. The integrity of the text, and the coherent flow of the argument in Romans as a whole, are important issues. Likewise, the ethnic identity and the composition of the letter addressees are crucial. They are Romans, but whether they are Jews and/or gentiles, and in what proportions, are debated. The identity is a major issue for determining the purpose of Romans. For more on this, see Ch. 2.3 as part of the historical and social context for the Letter to the Romans.

An ambassadorial letter of self-introduction that solicits support for Paul’s proposed mission to Spain

Robert Jewett characterizes Romans as an “ambassadorial letter”, a sub-type of epideictic rhetoric, and as a self-introduction that seeks support for Paul’s proposed future mission to Spain. Longenecker agrees with several points in Jewett’s argument, including that Paul introduces himself to the Christians in Rome, that Paul presents an abstract of his proclamation for the Roman addressees, which he wants to proclaim during the coming mission to Spain, and that Paul asks his addressees for their support in this mission to the West.

However, Longenecker also disagree or questions some parts of Jewett’s thesis. (A) His classification of Romans as an ambassadorial letter, or as a letter of introduction is questionable, since such letters were always written by others on behalf of the person who was being introduced, and they usually included expressions of high praise. (B) Jewett’s reference to Paul’s consciousness of himself as an apostle is, according to Longenecker, not more emphasised in Romans than in any of his other letters. (C) Paul’s extensive use in his theological statements and ethical exhortations of the ancient rhetorical categories of “honor” and “shame” in order to get rid of the current divisions in the congregations in Rome is also debatable. (D) Finally, according to Longenecker, Jewett’s “inadequate understanding of the identity, character, and theological orientation of Paul’s Christian addressees at Rome” is questionable. Jewett sees the addressees primarily in terms of ethnicity and as gentile Christians, who agrees with Paul’s teachings in contrast to the Jewish believers in Christ, with their different thinking and lifestyle. Even if the gentile believers were in majority, Longenecker does not see such a contrast between the theological orientations of the Jewish and the gentile believers addressed as Jewett does.

Even though Spain is part of Paul’s coming missionary plan to the West, and Paul’s apostolic call is much emphasised, Longenecker’s criticism of Jewett above is fair in other respects. That support for Paul’s coming mission to Spain was the main purpose for Paul writing to Rome is not the most valid hypothesis. The fact that the mission to Spain is only mentioned at the end of the letter body and not alluded to before, particularly the omission of any mention in the letter opening and the introduction to the letter body is especially problematic. Similarly, the Jerusalem visit is only mentioned in the end of the letter body, and not anywhere else in the letter. Theses omissions are problematic for the view that Paul’s main reason for writing Romans is the Spanish mission and/or the coming visit to Jerusalem. It is not reasonable that Paul

55 Longenecker, R. N. 2011, 105-8.
waits until the letter ending stating the main purpose in such a long and de-
tailed letter to the addressees in Rome, whom he has not visited or written to
before, and that he omits any allusion to this in the letter opening and the in-
troduction. It would be better if the letter opening and introduction, as well as
the letter ending and closing, all four together were to indicate more directly
the main purpose of the letter, which would then be elaborated in the flow of
the argument in the rest of the letter body. Thus, it will be paramount to study
the four introductory and closing parts of the letter to suggest the purpose of
Romans. Equally problematic and necessary to discuss in the contextual anal-
ysis, in Ch. 2.3, is Jewett’s and other’s view of the identity of Paul’s address-
nees, which effects how we should understand the purpose.

So, even though Jewett’s arguments are often lucid and significant, his con-
clusion that the main purpose of Romans is Paul’s appeal for support for the
Spanish mission can be disputed.

An attempt to establish an apostolic church at Rome
That the purpose of Romans was part of Paul’s wish to establish “an apostolic
church” in Rome, is argued by Günter Klein (1969, and in Donfried K., ed. The
Romans Debate, 1977 (1991)), and somewhat similar earlier by Anton
Fridrichsen (1947). Paul wanted to write to the Romans with his teachings,
and then later by his presence to establish “an apostolic church” in Rome.

Klein’s specific suggestion can be criticised. First the term “apostolic
church” is anachronistic. Further, the criticism by Karl Donfried that Klein’s
thesis has little exegetical support is valid. Paul does not indicate his dismay
with the addressees in Rome, rather the contrary, see for instance Rom 1:8 and
15:14. Also the addressees of Romans seems to be already believers in Christ,
and Paul refers with appreciation to other apostles, such as Andronicus and
Junia, who were possibly already working in Rome.

On the other hand, Paul’s focus on his own apostolic calling in the intro-
ductory and concluding parts of Romans, including his coming missionary
plan West and his eagerness to visit Rome should be noted. This must be con-
sidered in the main analysis designed to determine the purpose of Romans.

A mission document soliciting support
To view Paul’s Letter to the Romans as some kind of a mission document,
soliciting support for Paul’s work, is rather common in commentaries and
other scholarly work, for example by Gottlob Schrenck (1933), Werner Küm-

56 Klein, G. 1991, “Paul’s Purpose in Writing the Epistle to the Romans”, in Donfried, K. P.
There are valid points to consider regarding this suggestion, related to Paul’s apostolic call and missionary plans just previously mentioned. There are, though, some problems with this suggestion. It is especially difficult how to explain Rom 12:1-15:13, and other parts of the letter, which seems to be more related to the situation among the addressees in Rome, and thus more pastoral in nature. The validity of a mission purpose requires that the hortative parts of the message should be considered alongside the doctrinal parts in the explanation of the overall purpose of Romans.

Once again, there is a need for a detailed study, particularly of the introductory and concluding parts of the letter in order to determine the purpose of Romans. The suggested purpose should then be in line with the content and flow of the argument throughout the entire letter body or should at least not contradict what can be understood from the letter body. If the purpose is missionary, based on the content of the doctrinal parts, it is necessary to show coherence with the pastoral parts and the exhortative content of the letter. And, of course, vice versa as well if a pastoral purpose is proposed. Such scholarly suggestions will be discussed next.

Purposes being pastoral in nature

Besides the more missionary purposes described above, several scholarly suggestions about the purpose of Romans are motivated by conditions and/or problems among the believers in Christ in Rome, and therefore are of a more pastoral nature.

To oppose Jewish particularism and proclaim Christian universalism

F. C. Baur (1846) put forward the hypothesis that Paul wrote to Rome in order to oppose Jewish particularism and to proclaim “the universalism of Christianity”, and that the rejection of the Jews and the calling of the gentiles “is the Apostle’s position … and the theme which he works out in that Epistle”. In the second century, Marcion had read Romans in a similar fashion. To argue for this, Baur had to accept only Rom 1-14 as authentic. According to Baur, Rom 15-16 “must be held to be the work of a Paulinist writing in the spirit of the Acts of the Apostles”, in order “to promote the cause of unity, and therefore tempering the keen anti-Judaism of Paul”. 59

Longenecker is strongly critical of Baur. He thinks Baur discredits the textual evidence, and Baur’s understanding of Christian history is inappropriate.

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Longenecker concludes that “Bauer’s view regarding Paul’s purpose in writing Roman may safely be set aside as a fossil of an earlier age”. Longenecker’s and others similar position is appropriate. Baur’s arguments in favour of the sharp contrast between the universalism of Christianity and Jewish particularism, and his stress on Paul’s anti-Judaism, are not valid and must be criticized. For more on the historical and social context of Paul and his relationship to Judaism, see further below in Ch. 2.2.

However, it is nevertheless important to discuss some issues related to the universality of Paul’s message. That is the question of the relationship between gentile and Jewish believers in Christ, and whether the good news proclaimed by Paul was directed to both Jews and gentiles, that is to all human beings, or only to the gentiles, and on what grounds. What implication would such a message have for the Jewish and gentile believers in Christ, for their way of life, for the way in which they should treat one another?

Closely related issues focus on the way in which the good news connect to both the doctrinal parts as well as to the ethical exhortative parts, and how the good news are linked to the purpose of Romans, whether missionary and/or pastoral. All these issues must be discussed in the coming analysis.

To counter the claims of the Judaizers, as Paul did earlier in Galatians

According to Longenecker, more common and of far greater significance during the past two centuries is the view that Paul’s purpose with Romans is to counter the claims of the Judaizers. The situation in Romans is regarded as like the one in his letter to the Galatians, only now in a more moderate and reflective manner. Scholars have posited a similar opposition to Paul in Rome, since the same topics of law, sin, righteousness, justification, and faith, together with the rejection of the works-of-law, are discussed in Romans. Therefore Romans must be seen as something of an apologetic and polemic response to a form of “Judaizing Christianity” that viewed “the Christian religion” as simply part of Judaism, and that called all believers to observe the Jewish law, either as a whole or in part. So, did e.g. John Calvin, Joseph B. Lightfoot (1865), Kirsopp Lake (1927), and also more recent scholars, such as John J. Gunther (1973), Charles E. B. Cranfield (1977, 1979), Heikki Räisänen (1986), James D. G. Dunn (1988), Alexander J. M. Wedderburn (1988, 1991), and Douglas A. Campbell (1994, 2009).

According to Longenecker, “this hypothesis … needs to be tested” by its plausibility to provide “a coherent

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61 Donaldson, T.L. 2007 (2008 e-book), Judaism and the Gentiles: Jewish patterns of universalism (to 135 CE), Baylor University Press, Waco, TX, 411-35, discusses Jewish universalism in relation to the early Christ believing movement. For more on the good news of Paul for all humans, see the analysis in Ch. 3-6.
63 ibid., 113-17, with references.
picture of the life of the Christian community at Rome”, if it is compatible with the other historical data of “the earliest Christians”, and how it fits with “what Paul actually says in Romans”.  

There is a risk, though, in understanding the message of Romans in the same way as in Galatians, because of the different circumstances of the two letters. Even though Paul’s other letters are rightly part of the intertextual literary context of Romans, and should be used for comparisons with what is written in Romans, it is not necessarily correct to assume a similar congregational situation in, for example, Galatia as in Rome. It is disputed whether Paul had any real opposition in Rome and how much they had heard of him before he sent his letter. Scholars hold different opinions of the relationship between Jews and gentiles, and between believers and non-believers in Rome. However, besides the literary context to the Romans, it is important to consider the historical and social context of the believers in Christ, both in Rome and in the wider Roman Empire at the time of Paul. In short, there is a need for a preparatory study before the main analysis of what can be reasonable said about the historical and social context of the Letter to the Romans. For more on this, see chapter 2.2 and 2.3.

However, the pastoral and conciliar tone of the message of Romans, and the importance of the interdependence between both Paul and his addressees as well as among the addressees themselves should be noted. Further, the themes of the law, works of law, sin, righteousness, justification, and faith are significant, but there is a need to study these and other themes with regard to their place and function in the overall flow of the arguments and the line of thought in Romans. Which are the primary themes, and which are important but secondary to the message of the letter? How are they related both to the overall flow of the argument and the line of thought? How are these themes related to the content of the introductory and concluding parts of the letter?

To effect a reconciliation between “the strong” and “the weak”

Some scholars, e.g. Sanday and Headlam (1895 (1962)), see a difference between the general exhortations of Rom 12-13, and the specific exhortations of Rom 14-15. In their view, Rom 14-15 is related to the specific situation among the Christians. The question is whether this situation is specific to those in Rome, or whether it also applies to believers in Christ in other places. In recent times, the particular Roman situation has been more underlined. It has been suggested that one reason why Paul wrote this letter was to reconcile the so-called “weak” and the “strong” in Rome. Most scholars regard the weak as Jewish believers, and the strong to be gentile believers, with a view of “Christian liberty”. Compare, though, with Mark D. Nanos (1996) who sees the weak as the non-believing Jews in Rome. The division among the believers in Rome

64 Longenecker, R. N. 2011, 117.
is the underlying situation to what is presented in Romans according to e.g. Herbert Preisker (1952-53), Günther Harder (1954), Willi Marxsen (1968), Hans-Werner Bartsch (1967, 1971), Paul Minear (1971), Wolfgang Wiefel (in Donfried (1977, 1991)), and Francis Watson (1986 and in Donfried (1991)). Some scholars argue that the whole of Rom 12:1-15:13 is the main part and climax of the letter, and Rom 1-11 can be explained based on the content and the situation reflected in this second main part. In the recent monograph by Scott McKnight (2019) a similar argument is presented as well.65

These suggestions pay attention to three major issues to consider. (A) Given that the main purpose of the Letter to the Romans was to reconcile the weak and strong, how would this letter reasonably be introduced and concluded? Is this in line with the actual introductory parts of the letter to Rome? Is the content of the closing of the letter in line with this suggestion? (B) In addition, how should the argument in the letter at large be divided into different sections and textual sub-units at different levels, and what are their relative importance within the flow of the argument in the letter body as a whole? If the hortatory section, in Rom 12:1-15:13, defines the reason, or if the focal point is reconciliation between the weak and the strong in Rom 14-15, what role or function do the doctrinal parts in Rom 3.21-4:25, 5:1-8:39, and 9:1-11:36 have with regard to the purpose of Romans? (C) Every suggestion about the purpose must consider the importance of the relationship between the theological or thematic parts and the ethical or hortatory parts of the letter body. How should we understand the flow or the arguments in Romans, what is the major theme or thesis of the message, and how does this effect the purpose? Thus, these three points, (A), (B), and (C), must be addressed in the work below, since they effect both our understanding of Paul’s flow of argument and line of thought in the letter, and our view of the purpose of the Letter to the Romans?

To counsel regarding the relationship of Christians to the civilian government

Regarding the arrangement and outline of the text in Rom 12:1-15:13, scholars has pointed to the unique discussion of the relationship between Christians and the civilian authorities, in 13:1-7, within the context of the exhortation on love before in 12:9-21, and after in 13:8-10. By contrast others have interpreted Rom 13:1-7 as a gloss or an interpolation. Longenecker argues, though, for its authenticity, on both external and internal grounds. The theme of the Christ believers’ relationship to the civilian government is not discussed anywhere else in Paul’s letters, but according to Ernst Käsemann (1973, 1980), Peter Stuhlmacher (in Donfried (1991)), and Peter Stuhlmacher & Johannes

65 Longenecker, R. N. 2011, 117-20; McKnight, S. 2019, xiii-xv, 179-81, with references.
Friedrich & Wolfgang Pöhlmann (1976) it is quite a natural subject when addressing the Christians in the capital city of the Empire. The background might be some unrest during the mid-50’s in Rome, because of rapacious practices of indirect taxation reported by Tacitus, *Annals* 13.50-51. According to these scholars, Rom 13:1-7 should therefore be regarded as Paul’s counsel to the Roman believers in Christ about how they should respond to a particular situation. According to Alexander J. M. Wedderburn (1988), Rom 13:1-7 is evidence of Paul’s intimate knowledge of the circumstances in Rome and of the congregations there, and Paul’s advice to the addressees was written in the light of their particular situation.\(^{66}\)

This suggestion shows again the importance of the historical and social context, regarding Paul himself and the situation in Rome for the study of the purpose of Romans. However, some scholars point to the unreliability of the external data of this historical and social context. They therefore argue that it is only possible to use information directly from the Letter to the Romans itself. I agree on the insufficiency and uncertainty of the external data. However, even if the historical data is uncertain, it is also important to state ones view on what can reasonable be known or assumed, and on what is much contested. What, if anything, can be known, and what can, or must, be assumed with some degree of probability? What is most probably unknown or impossible to decide about? The answers to these questions will at least clarify our pre-understandings and assumptions about Paul and about the historical and social context in which the letter to Rome was written. Further, there is also a risk of circular argument if primarily, or only, the information from Romans is used to formulate a view of the historical and social context, which will then be used in the analysis of the letter. Therefore, there is a need to use other sources as well, including literary, archaeological and epigraphical ones, to learn more about the historical and social context of Paul and of the Letter to the Romans.

**Defence against criticisms and misrepresentations**

A few commentators have understood a number of comments and allusions in Romans as examples of Paul’s apologetic and polemic answer to certain criticisms of his person and/or his message. For instance, the expression in Rom 1:16a indicates that Paul wrote against an accusation that the Gospel was a shameful thing, or that Paul should be ashamed himself and of his Gospel. Also, that Rom 3:8 indicates criticism of Paul himself, or states some misrepresentation of his message, presumably by Jewish believers in Christ. Such opinions have been suggested by Kenneth Grayston (1964), Walther Schmithals (1975), Peter Stuhlmacher (in Donfried (1991)), Alexander J. M. Wedderburn (1988), Neil Elliot (1990), and Douglas A. Campbell (1994).

\(^{66}\) Longenecker, R. N. 2011, 121-22.
Likewise, Paul’s use of rhetorical questions is, according to Peter Stuhlmacher (in Donfried (1991)), an indication that there were some opposition to Paul and his message. The understanding of the Letter to the Romans as an apologetic letter has been a proposition from the beginning of the twentieth century, but it was not suggested in the earlier period of reception. Besides the scholars mentioned above, Wilfred L. Knox (1925), Maurice Goguel (1953), John Knox (1954), Archibald M. Hunter (1955), Ernest Best (1967), John W. Drane (1980) and Gerd Lüdemann (1989), have all suggested that Romans should be regarded in some way as an apology.

Stanley K. Stowers (1981, 1988)) and David Aune (1987) have criticized this idea. They regard these so-called diatribal texts in Romans not as an attempt to counter real opponents at Rome, but rather as examples of a pedagogical and rhetorical method, by which Paul uses the form of rhetorical dialogue and speech-in-character with a Jewish and/or gentile imaginary interlocutor, often depicted as an opponent or as a misapprehending person. Paul used these rhetorical techniques, with their hypothetical objections, for the purpose to persuade his readers rather than to argue against any real opposition.

That Paul and his message had been criticized or argued against by others is evident from Paul’s other letters, e.g. Galatians, cf. also Apg 14:4; 21:21. How well Paul and his message was known in Rome is hard to tell, but it is reasonable to assume that Paul was taking part in an inter-group or inter-Jewish debate regarding a number of issues, such as the meaning of Jesus as the Christ (the Messiah), the interpretation of the law, the relationship between Jews and gentiles, the necessity of circumcising gentiles etc. The Letter to the Romans should be seen as Paul’s argument within this debate.

This means that we must also consider and study Paul’s use of such categories as rhetorical questions, dialogue, and speech-in-character in his flow of the argument as we try to establish the possible reason why Paul used these techniques, and for what rhetorical or argumentative purpose. The way in which we understand this affects the way in which we understand the flow of


his argument and the line of thought throughout the letter, which is central to any attempt to determine the purpose of Romans.

Other suggestions and possible multiple reasons for Romans

During the last fifty years or more, there has been a discussion among scholars related to the literary, argumentative, theological, or thematic incoherence of Romans. Evidence of this can be found in the content of the added Part II of the 1991 revision of Donfried’s book The Romans Debate. This second part contains thirteen essays in three sections, of which many in Section B: The Structure and Rhetoric of Romans, and Section C: The Theology of Romans: Issues in the Current Debate, are related to this topic. In summary, the reasons for these incoherencies may be because (A) Romans is a composition of several letters, (B) Paul is just plain inconsistent in his argument, (C) Paul has included other traditional material that is not in line with Paul’s own thought, (D) the argument in one part sometimes contradicts the argument in other parts, due to the different internal textual context, or (E) Paul uses different rhetorical techniques in his argument. The suggested incoherence causes problems to understand the argument and to determine the purpose of Romans. The incoherencies in Romans are mostly detected in the more doctrinal and thematic first half, in Rom 1-11. A further and more recent suggestion from scholars is (F) that Paul had several purposes in mind, or maybe one major and many subsidiary purposes. According to these scholars, the arguments and the theological trains of thought are therefore not, or do not have to be, fully coherent in the letter. For the scope of this dissertation three examples of scholarly suggestions will be presented.

A composition of separate letters written on different occasions for different purposes

Some scholars have maintained that Romans is a composition of separate letters, written on different occasions for different purposes, including Walter Schmithals (1988), Robin Scroggs (1976), and Junji Kinoshita (1965). Schmithals argues that the Letter to the Romans is made up of two letters, one theological or thematic oriented, which contained most of Rom 1-11, and one hortatory oriented containing, which contained most of Rom 12-15, plus

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71 See the essays in Donfried, K. P. 1991, referred to in the previous note, and the three examples below.

a number of non-Pauline glosses and interpolations added later. Scroggs suggests that Rom 1-11 consists of two different sermons, based on the rhetorical differences between, on the one hand, Rom 1-4, 9-11, which was written for a Jewish audience and, on the other hand, Rom 5-8, which was written for gentiles.

These suggestions show once again the importance of (i) the text critical issues of the text itself, and more significantly (ii) the outline and arrangement of the text, based on the linguistic and thematic transition markers between the different sections and textual units at different levels, which are the basis for the coherent flow of the arguments and the line of thought throughout the letter.

The theological and rhetorical incoherence of Romans

Several scholars have pointed to what they perceive as the theological and rhetorical incoherence of Paul in Romans. For example, when discussing Romans 1:18-2:29, Ed P. Sanders (1983) concludes that there are “internal inconsistencies within the section”, which “cannot be harmonized with any of the diverse things which Paul says … elsewhere”. Further, “even when one considers that Paul is not always consistent … Romans 2 still stands out”. According to Sanders, the “principal incongruity” in the chapter is related to Rom 2:12-15, 26, with “the famous statement that those who do the law will be righteoused” and the “hearing and doing” theme, which does “not square well with the conclusion that all are under the power of sin” in 3:9, 20. He questions the statements in 2:13 that those who do the law will be made righteous, and in 2:4 about repentance, which is unparalleled and atypical of Paul. The statement that “all humanity will be judged and either justified or condemned according to the same law” is also atypical. Sanders concludes: “What is said about the law in Romans 2 cannot be fitted into a category otherwise known from Paul’s letters”, and therefore he treats the whole of Rom 1:18-2:29 as “an appendix”. Similarly, Charles H. Dodd believes that Paul in Rom 3:1-8 “is trying to show that, although ‘there is no partiality about God,’ yet ‘the Jew’s superiority’ is, somehow, ‘much in every way.’” Dodd concludes: “The argument of the epistle would go much better if this whole section were omitted”. Heikki Räisänen suggest that Paul, in Rom 3:1-8, because of his excessive zeal, simply has lost track of his argument.74

Another example discussed by scholars is Rom 5 and its role within the overall argument, which “is greatly disputed” according to Dunn. Some scholars even believe that Rom 5-8 is an extract from a separate letter or from a distinct homily (Dunn refers to Kinoshita and Scroggs, see the paragraph above). However, most scholars regard both Rom 5-8 and Rom 1-4 as part of the original letter, but as separate sections. The relationship between Rom 5-8 and the previous section are still “a perennial problem for interpreters”, according to Longenecker. The issue is how to relate the beginning of Rom 5 to the flow of the argument in both Rom 1-4 and Rom 5-8. In addition, it is debated where the focal point or major thrust of Romans can be found. Scholars are divided whether the major theme is expressed in Rom 3:21-4:25, or in 5:1-8:39, or in some other part of the letter.

Räisänen argues that contradictions and tensions have to be accepted and are constant features of Paul’s theology, not only about the law, but also in other matters. Räisänen refers to several contradictions in Paul’s argument, for example in Rom 9-11. Paul first describes the precarious situation among the Jews, who have rejected the good news of God, but the gentiles have found righteousness. God has held out his hand toward Israel, but Israel remains a disobedient and contrary people, clinging to works. So, they stumbled over Christ. Then, according to Räisänen, “Paul suddenly asserts that God cannot have rejected his people, ethnic Israel (Rom 11:1-2). This is rather surprising after chapter 9”. Finally, Paul states that “(w)hen the ‘full number of the Gentiles’ has ‘come in,’ all Israel – not just a remnant – will be saved”. Räisänen believes that “the idea of the salvation of ‘all Israel’ – in whatever way this is conceived to happen – is at odds with Paul’s other soteriological statements, and has rightly been called a ‘desperate theory’”. Räisänen understands the contradictions to be an evidence of Paul’s “theology in process”.

Thus, the theological and rhetorical incoherencies in Rom 9-11, and its structural relationship to the rest of the letter has been debated. By contrast, other scholars, including Longenecker, Alexander Kyrychenko, and Krister Stendahl regard Rom 9-11 as an important and integral part, or even the climax or culmination of Paul’s theological argument in Romans 1-11. But not only

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75 Dunn, J. D. G. 1991, 247.
76 Longenecker, R. N. 2011, 367.
the theological doctrines in Paul’s argument up to Rom 11:36 are hard to follow by scholars, but also the ethical exhortations in Rom 12-15. According to Fitzmyer, the passage is “not exactly an ethical treatise, for it is quite unsystematic and somewhat rambling”.\(^{81}\)

So, the perceived theological and rhetorical incoherencies and inconsistencies must be discussed further in the analysis of Romans. In this regard it is necessary to analyse the textual arrangement and the transitions between the textual units at the syntactical level as well, together with Paul’s use of rhetorical questions, dialogue and speech in character etc., in order to grasp the flow of the argument and the line of thought throughout the letter. Whether or not Paul is consistent and coherent is a crucial question for determining the purpose of Romans.

**Multiple reason for writing Romans**

In recent years, several scholars have affirmed the sometimes seemingly incoherent and contradictory arguments in Romans, and have understood the letter to have several purposes, or one major purpose and many important but subsidiary purposes. As indicated above, according to these views, the arguments and theological trains of thought do not have to be fully coherent throughout the letter. Two examples of such scholarly suggestions that Paul had multiple reasons for writing Romans follow below.

Longenecker (2011) argues in favour of several primary and subsidiary purposes behind Romans.\(^{82}\) In his view, there are two primary purposes: Paul wanted (1) to give to “the Christians at Rome” a “spiritual gift” and to “mutually encourage” one another (Rom 1:11-12). He wanted his reader to know more accurately and to appreciate what he was proclaiming in his mission to the gentiles; (2) to seek the assistance of the Christians in Rome for the extension of his mission to Spain (Rom 1:13, 15:24). In addition there are three additional but subsidiary purposes: (3) to defend himself against certain criticism of his person and various misrepresentations of his message, (4) to counsel regarding a dispute that had arisen among Christians between the strong and the weak, and (5) to counsel regarding the relationship of Christians in Rome to the city’s governmental authorities. According to Longenecker, the third purpose is to be regarded as subsidiary but a major or important concern, even though it is “more muted and implied [rather] than directly stated” in the epistolary frame. The fourth and fifth are not included in the epistolary frame and are proper subsidiary purposes.

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81 Fitzmyer, J. A. 1993, 638.
82 Longenecker, R. N. 2011, 158-60, gives a summary of his argument.
Dunn (2009 and 1988) also argues in favour of several parallel reasons for writing Romans:\(^\text{83}\) (1) To commend Phoebe to the Roman believers (Rom 16:1-2) as Paul’s personal representative in reading, and expanding the letter to the various groups in Rome, (2) to prepare the congregations in Rome for his planned visit (Rom 1:10-15, 15:23-24, 29, 32), (3) to seek support for his intended mission to Spain (Rom 15:24, 28),\(^\text{84}\) (4) to gain the support of the Romans for his imminent visit to Jerusalem (Rom 15:31), (5) to advice on hinted (Rom 12:14-13:7) and explicitly expressed (Rom 14:1-15:7) problems in the Roman congregations, and (6) to provide “a synthesis of [Paul’s] theology”, which is similar to what Günther Bornkamm has called Paul’s “last will and testament”. According to Dunn “it is not necessary to play off these various ‘reasons’ against each other”, but “what needs to be explained above all” is “why the letter takes the form it does” given these multiple reasons. Why such a detailed letter? Why is it so dominated by the relationship between “Jewish and Gentile believers”? Dunn states that, taken individually, almost all the proposed reasons fail to explain why. “A much briefer letter … would have met these aims”. Dunn concludes that it seems obvious from the letter that, during his stay in Corinth, Paul, having completed his mission in the East and before leaving for Jerusalem and then onwards to Rome and Spain, found enough time for his primary objective. This was in order to “to think through his gospel in the light of the controversies” experienced before, and to write down a “synthesis of his understanding” of “the good news of Jesus Messiah” for all who believes.\(^\text{85}\) Even though Dunn’s conclusion that Paul’s primary objective was to “think through his gospel” at a transition point in his apostolic mission, can be regarded as quite fair, the question why Paul sent such a letter to the believers in Rome remains. How can we explain the situational character of much of Paul’s message to the Romans in this letter? Can the relationship between Jewish and gentile believers be significant for the purpose of this letter, and can that significance be explained by the historical and social context in Rome?

It was, though, not only the good news that Paul had the time to think through, but also the structure and the flow of argument in his letter as a whole, especially since this was the first letter that he sent to the Romans, and the very first direct communication that he had with his addressees. In addition, as argued by Longenecker above, Paul’s reason should be clearly indicated and in line with both the introductory and concluding parts of the letter.

However, neither the letter frame, nor the body of the letter at large state clearly that Paul had multiple reasons for writing to the Romans. It seems more

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\(^{83}\) Dunn, J. D. G. 1988, liv-lviii, suggests three: “A missionary purpose”; “An apologetic purpose”; “A pastoral purpose”. In ibid., 2009, 863-68, Dunn elaborates a bit more on the motives in writing Romans, summarised in six points. Dunn’s six points are described here.

\(^{84}\) This third purpose is the single main purpose for by Jewett, R. 2007, 80-89.

\(^{85}\) Dunn, J. D. G. 2009, 865-68.
reasonable that there was one major purpose for writing his first letter to these addressees. For more arguments in favour of the hypothesis that the letter has one main purpose, see the discussion in Ch. 1.1.

A summary of the previous research

As shown in the description of the previous research, the Romans debate is still on-going and there is no consensus yet about the purpose of the letter. The discussion has pointed to several central problems and issues that need to be further addressed to achieve the aim of this dissertation. Therefore, the approach and the outline described, in Ch. 1.2, is relevant. There is a need of three preparatory analyses, which will be undertaken in Ch. 2, namely to establish the text of Romans to be studied; to discuss the historical and social context of Paul and the Letter to the Romans; and to determine the overall structure and to delimit different parts of the text for the main analyses and final assessment of the thesis. The main analyses then follow in Chs. 3-6, where the four introductory and concluding parts will be studied in detail. Based on these four main analyses, a preliminary (hypo)thesis will be formulated in Ch. 7. The (hypo)thesis will then be tested and assessed in Ch. 8, through the flow of the argument and the line of thought in the letter as a whole. Finally, the dissertation will be summarised and concluded, and the final thesis of the work will be formulated, in Ch. 9.
2. Preparatory Analysis for the Study of Romans

In line with the approach and methods for this thesis, there is a need for three preparatory studies before the main analyses of Romans. First, in Ch. 2.1, the text critical analysis. Next, an analysis and reconstruction of the historical and social context of the Letter to the Romans in Ch. 2.2, including the question of the identity of the addressees in Ch. 2.3. Finally, an analysis of the overall textual arrangement and delineation of the letter text in Ch. 2.4.

2.1 Text Critical Analysis

Prior to any exegetical analysis of the New Testament, it is important to establish the exact text to work with by a text critical analysis. The same applies to this thesis with the aim to determine the purpose of Romans. Especially significant in this respect is to study the introductory and concluding parts of the letter, in preparation for the main analyses in Chs. 3-6.

In commentaries on Romans, the integrity of the text and the text critical issues are analysed before the actual commentary and the detailed exegetical work begins. Scholars have suggested or pointed to a number of possible glosses and interpolations in Romans. Interpolations and glosses were a fairly common phenomenon in antiquity. In addition, some scholars have argued that “a number of passages in Romans are not only difficult to interpret but also seem obscure or contradictory” due to glosses and interpolations. However, according to Longenecker, arguments against any large-scale incorporation of glosses and interpolations into the text of Romans have proven far

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88 Longenecker, R. N. 2011, 16-19. See also the previous research in Ch. 1.3 of this thesis.
89 ibid., 16, gives some references to some late-nineteenth-century scholars.
more convincing to most scholars. The extant textual witnesses we have today provide evidence for this argument. However, some issues recently discussed by scholars remain to be addressed, since they may have an impact on our conclusions about the purpose of Romans.

The following three text critical issues are relevant for the study of the purpose of Romans:

- Rom 1:7 and 1:15, and whether the designation “in Rome” (ἐν Ῥώμῃ) is original. If not, there could be good arguments for not treating the letter as aimed specifically to an audience in Rome. This would change the scope of the historical and social context of the letter discussed in Ch 2.2, and particularly the identity of the addressees discussed in Ch. 2.3. It would directly affect the analysis and conclusions in Chs. 3-4, but possibly indirectly in Chs. 5-6 as well.

- The problem of whether Rom 16 is part of the original letter, including different forms of the text, primarily the question whether the original letter had fourteen, fifteen or sixteen chapters. If it did not have sixteen chapters, this would affect the analysis of the two concluding parts of the letter, in Ch. 5 and/or 6. It could further strengthen the suggestions that Romans is a general letter from Paul, a summary of Paul’s earlier teaching, or a later composition of several letters to different congregations, and not Paul’s situational letter addressed to Rome for a specific purpose.

- The internal integrity of Rom 16, if 16:17-20 is an interpolation, as is suggested by Robert Jewett in his commentary, and the problems of the benedictions in 16:20b, 24, and the doxology in 16:25-27. If a sixteen chapter long letter was sent to Rome, although with interpolations in 16:17-20 and 25-27, it would affect somewhat the analysis in Ch. 6, even though to a lesser extent than the previous text critical issues would. The letter would still be a letter sent to Rome with a unique letter opening and introduction, and with an ending and a closing. Some of the arguments, in Ch. 6, based on the analysis of Rom 16:17-20 and 25-27, would not be valid, but the work would otherwise still be adequate.

There are other less important text critical issues in the Letter to the Romans. They are discussed where appropriate as part of the main analyses in Chs. 3-6, or in the assessment and test in Ch. 8. Below follows my position on the three text critical issues mentioned above.

90 Longenecker, R. N. 2011, 18.
Rom 1:7 and 15, and whether the designation “in Rome” (ἐν Ῥώμῃ) is original

The designations “in Rome” (ἐν Ῥώμῃ) in Rom 1:7, and “those in Rome” (τοῖς ἐν Ῥώμῃ) in 1:15, are omitted in the ninth century bilingual (Greek and Latin) codex G, in the minuscules 1739 and 1908, and in the Old Latin recension “g”. In the minuscules the omission is noted in the margins. More importantly, some early interpreters, such as Origen, Ambrosiaster, and Pelagius do not refer to the designation in Rome in their comments on the letter.\(^91\)

If the omissions are original, it would be a good argument for treating Paul’s letter as not aimed specifically to an audience in Rome. This would change the scope of the historical and social context of the letter discussed in Ch. 2.2, and particularly the identity of the addressees discussed in Ch. 2.3. It would affect the analysis and weaken the conclusions in Chs. 3-4, but also indirectly in Chs. 5-6.

Harry Gamble (1977) argues that Romans was subjected to early “conscious revision” in order to “catholicize” the letter, possible as early as in the second century C.E., when Rom 15-16 was omitted, thus creating a fourteen chapter long letter (see the next issue discussed below).\(^92\) According to Gamble, this also explains the omissions in Rom 1:7 and 1:15. However, more significantly a great majority of the external text witnesses, including the important P10, P26, \(\kappa\), A, B, C, D, etc., include the prepositional phrases that refer to (those) in Rome.

Thus, based primarily on the strong external textual evidence, and supported by Gamble’s thesis, it is plausible that (those) in Rome (ἐν Ῥώμῃ) is original, as most recent scholarly studies agree.\(^93\)

Rom 16 as part of the original text

There is evidence that there has been a fourteen-chapter long letter in circulation, i.e. a short form of Romans that excluded the two last chapters, Rom 15-16. This was possibly used by Marcion (c. 85 – c. 160 C.E.). Such a letter was referred to by Origen and others as well.\(^94\) Robert Jewett refers to Kurt Aland’s and Peter Lampe’s analyses of the different forms of Romans, which identified fifteen different text types of the letter, all which can be categorised as a

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\(^{91}\) Longenecker, R. N. 2011, 31.

\(^{92}\) Gamble, H. 1977, 115-16;


\(^{94}\) Jewett, R. 2007, 4; Longenecker, R. N. 2011, 20-22. According to Longenecker it is possible that Irenaeus, Tertullian and Cyprian had access to such a fourteen-chapter letter.
letter with either fourteen, fifteen, or sixteen chapters. Some scholars have based their particular suggestions of the purpose of Romans on the two shorter forms of the letter, as we saw in the discussion of the previous research in Ch. 1.3. If the letter was originally only fourteen or fifteen chapter long, this could strengthen the suggestions that it was written as a general letter, for example as a summary of Paul’s earlier teaching, or perhaps a later composition of several letters to different congregations.

However, the short forms of Romans have been disputed for example by Harry Gamble, who argues particularly that Rom 16 includes common epistolary features and conventions of both ancient letters and Paul’s letter. Without Rom 16, the letter to Rome would lack a typical letter closing, and this needs explanation. Similarly, the concluding arguments in 15:1-13 of what began in 14:1 would be missing, if Rom 15 was not part of the original letter, and the coherent argument 14:1-15:13 would be cut in two. Further and decisively, the almost unanimous evidence of the external text witnesses makes it reasonable to base the current study of the purpose of Romans on the assumption that the letter was originally sixteen chapter long, Rom 1-16. This is in accordance with the conclusion of most, if not all, recent studies of Romans.

The internal integrity of Rom 16

The internal integrity of Rom 16 has been disputed among scholars more recently, and particularly the problems of the benedictions in 16:20b, 24, and the doxology in 16:25-27. There is a choice between considering 16:24 or 16:25-27 as the last paragraph of the letter. In addition, Jewett argues that Rom 16:17-20 is a later interpolation. The question of the internal integrity of Rom 16 as a whole is significant for the analysis in Ch. 6. However, these suggested integrity issues are not decisive for this study. It will partly affect the analysis and the argument in Ch. 6, but it will not refute the final thesis.

The position taken in this dissertation is that the letter closing consists of Rom 16:1-23, 25-27. Jewett’s arguments that Rom 16:17-20 is an interpolation, and that the letter ends with 16:24, while 16:25-27 is a later addition, are not convincing. The latter question, whether the letter ends in 16.24 or in 16:25-27 is an either or issue. The choice is not decisive for this thesis, but I

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96 For a summary of the argument in Gamble, H. 1977, see Longenecker, R. N. 2011, 28-30.
believe that Rom 16:25-27 is original, and this view is based on stronger external textual evidence.

With regard to Rom 16:17-20, Jewett believes that the paragraph gives “an egregious break in the flow and tone” of the greetings paragraphs in the letter closing, and that it contains “direct contradictions” and “non-Pauline” rhetoric and vocabulary compared to the previous arguments in the letter. Jewett also finds a later “plausible redactional rationale for an interpolation”, which lessens the “widely inclusive policy” of Romans, in order to give a more demanding and restrictive policy of “separation from heretics”.

Jewett’s last argument seems however to be an argument from silence and can-not be proven. For the other arguments: even if there is a break between the greetings in 16:3-16, and the admonitions in 16:17-20, the particular greeting in 16:16a is also a break from v3-15, and the one in v16b is yet another break from the previous ones. It is a break from one kind of greeting in 16:3-15, to different kinds in 16a and b respectively, which indicates a slight transition and change in the line of thought.

The change continues in Rom 16:17, where Paul opens the final admonitions to the addressees. Paul usually includes a final admonition to the addressees in his letter closings, for example in 1 Cor 16:13-22; 2 Cor 13:11a; Gal 6:17; Phil 4:8-9a; 1 Thess 5:25-26; and Phlm 20.

So, with the final admonition in Romans, Paul only follows his usual pattern. This argument will be further developed in Ch. 6. In Rom 16:17-20, Paul neither contradicts his previous arguments, nor uses altogether unfamiliar vocabulary, but rather relates to his previous arguments and recapitulates some of the important themes of the letter. In addition, Jewett’s argument that the passage is an interpolation is based solely on internal, and not on any external evidence. The external textual witnesses speak unanimously in favour of the view that 16:17-20 is part of the original text. This is the position taken by most scholars, and thus also in this thesis.

In summary: the textual basis for the main analyses is the twenty-eight edition of the Nestle-Aland Novum Testamentum Graece (NA28). There are no large-scale incorporations of glosses or interpolations in the text of Romans that have any significant impact on the work ahead. Therefore, the basic assumption for the coming analysis is that the Letter of Romans consists of a 16-chapter letter, where the letter closing is found in Rom 16:1-23, 25-27.

Next follows a discussion of the historical and social context of the Letter to the Romans. This will be done in two steps. First, a reconstruction of the historical and social context of Paul and of all the believers in Christ in the Romans Empire will be attempted, focusing particularly on what we can now

about the assemblies of believers in Rome in Ch. 2.2. Second, the specific question of the identity of the addressees will be studied in Rome in Ch. 2.3.

2.2 The Historical and Social Context of Paul and the Assemblies of Believers in Rome

A prerequisite for understanding the purpose of the Letter to the Romans is to try to reconstruct the historical and social context of Paul and the assemblies of believers in Christ addressed in Rome. All Paul’s letters, including Romans, were written in a special context for a specific audience and for special needs or situations. At the same time, “Romans is probably the most difficult of all the NT letters to analyze and interpret”. If our understanding of the letter context, including the identity and situation of the addressees, is not valid, the analysis of Romans will be even more difficult, if not impossible, to carry out and the conclusions can be disputed. For example, Robert Jewett bases his suggestion about the purpose of Romans to a large extent on his understanding of the specific “cultural situation in Rome” and “in Spain”, and of “the situation of the Christian communities in Rome”. If Jewett’s understanding on these issues can be questioned, so too can his argument in favour of the purpose, at least in part. Therefore, prior to the analysis of Romans, it is essential to study the historical and social context of the letter and the believers in Christ in Rome. Yet, as Wolfgang Wiefel writes, the situation and the identity of “the Christians referred to in Romans and the larger question of the origin of Christianity in Rome cannot be clarified without considering the entire phenomenon of Judaism in Rome.” Most, if not all, recent commentaries and monographs agree on this. Several issues and questions have been debated:

- The situation and the relationship between Jews, gentiles, and the believers in Christ in the Greco-Roman world in the first century C.E., and the question of the parting of the ways
- The specific situation for Jews and for the believers in Christ in Rome in the first century C.E.

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101 Longenecker, R. N. 2016, xiv, refers to early interpreters, such as Augustine, Origen, Jerome and Erasmus.
102 Jewett, R. 2007, 46-79. According to Jewett, the purpose of the letter is to ask for assistance from the believers in Rome for his coming missionary work in Spain. For more on this, see below.
• Paul’s background and life before the revelation of Jesus Christ to him, and God’s call to Paul to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ among the nations
• Whether or not this event of Paul should be characterized as a conversion
• Paul’s subsequent life and work as an apostle to the nations until the time he wrote the Letter to the Romans

The overall question is what we can really know or reasonably assume about the early believers in Christ in Rome, the context of the Letter to the Romans, and the background and life of Paul. In Ch. 2.2 follows first a short discussion of terminology and of the sources to be used. Then the position of the historical and social context of the Letter to the Romans used for this thesis will be presented.

Terminology and definition: Jews, Christians, Gentiles etc.

The terms Jew and Judaism are used in this dissertation. The Greek word for “Jew” is Ἰουδαίος which is cognate to Ἰουδαία, and the word literally means a person from Judaea (Ἰουδαία), a “Judaean”. The Jews (pl.) as a collective term refers to the people or nation (ἔθνος) that originated from Judaea (Palestine), out of several people or nations (ἔθνη) from different areas in the Roman Empire. The term Jew (Ἰουδαῖος) is used both by Paul and by other sources. Thus, the term Jew are used in this dissertation for a member of the ethnic group that originated from Judaea and Galilee (Roman Syria Palaestina), and distinct from a member of other contemporary ethnic groups in the Greco-Roman world, such as a Greek (Ἑλλην), Egyptian (Αἰγύπτιος), and Roman (Ῥωμαῖος). Unqualified, the term Judaism should be understood as the ethno-religious term for the Jewish or Judaean way of life in the Second Temple period. In the period, there were several different groups of people who were regarded as Jews, and they were part of the multifaceted Second Temple Judaism. There were several congregations or assemblies within the contemporary Judaism, whether in Palestine or in the diaspora. A congregation could

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be connected to one of the specific Jewish groups, such as the Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes, or could include several groups. A Jew was either born into Judaism or was a proselyte.¹⁰⁵

The term “Christian” (Χριστιανός) will be avoided, if possible, since it was not used by Paul.¹⁰⁶ The use of the term Christian in the analysis of Roman may lead to thoughts along the lines of the modern sense of a Christian. It will however be used in direct quotations and in discussions of other scholars who use the term, for example here in Ch. 2.2 and in Ch. 2.3, as it was previously in Ch. 1, because of the extensive use of the term by these scholars. In the main analyses in Chs. 3-6, and in the assessment and test in Ch. 8, the term “believer in Christ” or a similar term will be preferred for a Jew or a gentile, who believes in Jesus as the Christ, the Jewish Messiah. The terms “Christianity” or “Church” will not be used, except in quotations or references, since they are not used in the external sources, nor the NT-sources referred to in this thesis. Instead of Church, the terms congregation, community, or assembly will be preferred, for instance as a translation of the Greek word ἐκκλησία.

The unqualified term “gentile” will be used for a non-Jew, a person who consider him- or herself as part of, or as originated from, a people or nation (ἔθνος, pl. ἔθνη) other than the Jewish people or nation (ἕθνος), such as a Macedonian (Μακεδών), an Achaean (Ἀχαιός), and a Galatian (Γαλατής). The word “pagan” or “heathen” or other related words will be avoided as much as possible, except in quotations.

The sources

The primary sources used here in Ch. 2.2 are divided into external sources and NT-sources. The external sources are (A) texts from contemporary Jewish and Greco-Roman writers, and (B) archaeological and epigraphical evidence referred to by scholars. The NT-sources are the letters of Paul, and the Acts of the Apostle, where Paul’s letters are usually preferred, especially when the letters and Acts disagree.¹⁰⁷ There is a risk of a circular argument if information from the Letter to the Romans is used to construct the context of Paul


¹⁰⁶ The approximately contemporary NT-sources in which the term Χριστιανός is used are Acts 11:26; 26:28; 1 Pet 4:16; Cf. also Did. 12:4. At that time, the term Χριστιανός might have referred to “a follower of Christ” or to “a person associated with Christ”, but it is usually translated “Christian”. See also the previous footnotes about scholars who discuss the topic.

and the assemblies in Rome, which is then used in the analysis of the letter itself. Therefore information from the external sources and from Paul’s letters (except Romans), complemented by Acts, will be used to propose a reconstruction of the historical and social context as a base for the main analysis of the purpose of Romans.\textsuperscript{108} Below follows a short abstract on the external sources as well as the NT-sources.

**The external sources (A) texts by contemporary Jewish and Greco-Roman writers.**

There are a number of Jewish and Greco-Roman writers of interest when trying to reconstruct the historical and social context of the Jews and the believers in Christ in Rome in the middle of the first century C.E. They are used by many scholars on Paul and the Letter to the Romans, for example by James D. G. Dunn. In the main Dunn’s list of external sources are followed below.\textsuperscript{109} First, two Jewish writers in the first century C. E., Josephus and Philo of Alexandria (Philo Judaeus).

*Josephus (37-ca. 100 C.E.)* lived in Rome after the Jewish war. According to Dunn, Josephus does not mention the term Christians anywhere in his writings. This indicates that Josephus was either unaware of Christians or did not notice them as “a significant or troublesome sect within or related to Judaism, even in Rome”, or the omission could suggest “the relative invisibility of Christian groups within the cities” at the time of Paul. The only brief account that Josephus gives on the subject is “the summary execution of James, the brother of Jesus in Jerusalem”.\textsuperscript{110} However, Josephus gives extensive accounts about the situation of the Jews during the first century C.E. These accounts are much used by scholars to illuminate the contemporary context of the Jews at the time.

*Philo of Alexandria (Philo Judaeus) (ca. 20 B.C.E-ca. 50 C.E.)*, a diaspora Jew living in Alexandria in Egypt, was a learned Jewish writer and scholar, who is known mainly for his biblical commentaries and allegorical interpretations. He has also written some accounts related to the contemporary Jewish situation, for example when he visited Rome in 38-41 C.E. He was the leader

\textsuperscript{108} Likewise Longenecker, R. N. 2011, 55. According to Longenecker, “(t)he usual way of determining the identity, character, circumstances, and concerns of Paul’s addressees at Rome has been first by ‘mirror reading’ the letter and then by turning to historical sources and data outside NT in order to supplement conclusions reached by such an internal process”. Longenecker chooses instead “to deal” with the issue “the other way around”. He first develops hypotheses from the extant, historical data outside NT, and then “noting how a mirror reading of Romans might support (or refute)” these hypotheses.

\textsuperscript{109} Dunn, J. D. G. 2009, 53-64.

\textsuperscript{110} ibid., 54; The brief account in Josephus, *Ant.*, 20.200 (from the TLG-database): ὁ Ἀνανος ... καθίζει συνέδριον κριτῶν καὶ παραγαγόν εἰς αὐτὸ τὸν ἀδελφὸν Ἡρωῦ τοῦ λεγομένου Χριστοῦ Ἰάκωμος δύομα αὐτῷ καὶ τινὰς ἑτέρους ὡς παρανομησάντον κατηγοριαν ποιησάμενος παρέδωκε λευσθησομένους.
of the Jewish embassy sent to defend the Jewish congregation before the Roman Emperor against the attack by Greek inhabitants in Alexandria. It should be noted that Philo does not mention Christians in his writings, but he does give some useful information about contemporary Judaism(s).\(^{111}\)

It is significant that Christians or Christianity are never mentioned in non-Christian Greco-Roman texts prior to the second century C.E. Five accounts from the second century C.E. or later are of interest as they refer to events in the first century C.E.

According to Dunn, *Epictetus (ca. 55-135 C.E.)* refers to Christians as “Galileans”, but only once in a text by his pupil Flavius Arrianus from the beginning of the second century C.E. Epictetus discusses a new movement called the Galileans, which was large enough to make an impression on Epictetus. He refers to their way of life, to baptism, and to their calmness and readiness to lose property, family, and even their lives. According to Dunn, the reference to baptism maybe connects the Galileans to Christians, “assuming that baptism had already become established as part of proselyte conversion”. Dunn acknowledge also the overlap between the two terms Galilean and Jew, so that it might be that “Epictetus thought of ‘Galileans’ also as ‘Jews’.”\(^{112}\)

*Tacitus (ca. 56-ca. 120 C.E.)* recalls that the Emperor Nero in 64 C.E. chose a group, whom the crowd styled Christians (Christianos) because they went back to Christus/Chrestus, as scapegoats for the fire in Rome. Chronologically Tacitus’ reference goes back to one of the earliest events at which Christians are mentioned. According to Dunn, this indicates that the group was large enough at the time to be noticed and chosen as scapegoats. Dunn estimates that there were “several hundred ‘Christians’ already in Rome by the mid-60s”. At the same time, he notices that the accusation “hatred of the human race” was a standard charge against Jews, and therefore this probably means that the Christians were regarded as a group within Judaism. There is another much later comment by the Christian writer Sulpicius Severus (ca. 363-ca. 425 C.E.), which possibly goes back to Tacitus and that refers to the opinion of Titus in the year 70 that “Christians … still was understood as part of the Jewish religion.”\(^{113}\)

*Suetonius (ca. 70-ca. 140 C.E.)* refers briefly to the expulsion of the Jews from Rome, most likely in the year 49 C.E., because of “the instigator Chrestus (impulsore Chresto)”, (*Divus Claudius* 25.4).\(^{114}\) For Dunn, this indicates


\(^{112}\) Dunn, J. D. G. 2009, 55-6. However, I wonder, could the reference to baptism not be a reference to a Jewish baptism of renewal in Galilea (cf. John the Baptist), or even to a Jewish rather than a “Christian” proselyte ritual?

\(^{113}\) *ibid.*, 57-8; Suetonius, *Life of Nero*, 16.2, also refers to Christians during the reign of Nero.

that Jesus was proclaimed as the Christ, which caused disturbances within the Jewish assemblies of Rome. Many scholars agree on this. However, Chrestus was a common Roman name at the time and could refer to someone other than Jesus. The question also is whether all Jews or only the leaders were expelled, and whether it was caused by other Jewish missionary activities addressed to non-Jewish Romans within or outside the synagogues. According to Dunn, the account in Acts 18:2 about Priscilla and Aquila, who were “among the Christian Jews who were expelled from Rome” because of their preaching within “one or more of the Roman synagogues,” makes an interesting connection.115

Pliny (ca. 61-113 C.E.), who was governor of Bithynia Pontus, refers in his letter to the Emperor Trajan to Christians and asks for advice on how to handle several issues. According to Dunn, it is interesting that “the name ‘Christian’ was by then (112) well established” and used “to identify those referred to.” Dunn believes that the Christians were “widespread and influential” and the conflict between “loyalty to Jesus as Lord and Emperor Trajan” was a fact at the beginning of the second century.116

Cassius Dio (ca. 160-230 C.E.) describes, in a debated passage, how the Emperor Domitian executed his cousin Flavius Clemens and his wife in 96 C.E. The charge was atheism, which was often levelled to those who lived like Jews. Jewish customs were attractive to some non-Jews. According to Dunn, nothing indicates that Flavius Clemens and his wife became Christians, but the possibility that it referred to “Christian Judaism” should not be ruled out, since “the Christian message was not clearly distinct from historic Judaism.” Dunn argues that “Christianity was growing more rapidly among non-Jews than among Jews”, and, according to Dunn, that was also the case forty years earlier in the middle of the 50’s C.E.118 However, Dunn states that “Christianity would not have appeared very different from Judaism at this time” (in 96 C.E.). Thus, it was a Jewish movement identified by “the reference to Christus or Chrestus” and “a branch of the religion of the Jews” that already in the 60’s had “a substantial and distinctive presence in the capital city, Rome.”119

The external sources (B) archaeological and epigraphic discoveries
According to Harry L. Leon, the re-discovery of the catacombs and their inscriptions gives us “tremendous information about the situation of the Jews and Christians in ancient Rome.”120 Leon argues that, in many respect, the

115 Dunn, J. D. G. 2009, 58-60.
116 ibid., 60-63. The account by Pliny was written ca 60 years after Paul’s letters.
117 Dunn’s reference to “Christian Judaism” is an argument from silence.
118 Even though such a large growth among non-Jews might be possible around the year 100 C.E., it was not certainly so at the time when Paul wrote his Letter to the Romans (see below).
119 ibid., 63-4. What Dunn refers to by the phrase “a branch of the religion of the Jews” with “a substantial and distinctive presence” is uncertain. It would have been better if he had been more precise or more cautious here.
Christian catacombs resemble those of the Jews, since the earliest Christians in Rome originated from the Jewish community, and the Jewish catacombs antedates the Christian ones. Most catacombs are from the second and third century C.E., but some go back to the first century B.C.E and the first century C.E.\footnote{Leon, H. J. 1995, 66.} The dating has been debated, but, according to Margaret Williams, radio-carbon analysis has demonstrated that “at least part of it [the Nomentana/Villa Torlonia catacomb complex]” goes back at least to “the first century C.E. and possible even earlier (c. 50 B.C.E.)”\footnote{Williams, M. H. 2013, Jews in a Greco-Roman Environment, WUNT 312, Mohr Siebeck, Tübingen, 14 and note 54. Cf. Lampe, P. 1989, Die stadtömischen Christen in den ersten beiden Jahrhunderten, J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), Tübingen, 13-28, (or the English translation from 2003). According to Lampe, whether the Jewish inscriptions goes back to the first century “muss dahingestellt bleiben” (is uncertain), but it is certain that Jews lived in the Trastevere in the first century, \textit{ibid.}, 28.}

The epigraphic discoveries give evidence that, to a large extent, the Jews in the diaspora were Greek speaking, also in Rome. The inscriptions from the Jewish catacombs in Rome are 76% in Greek, 23% in Latin, and 1% in another language, including Hebrew and Aramaic,\footnote{Leon, H. J. 1995, 75.} with all levels of literacy as it is for all less educated groups in Rome.\footnote{ibid., 78, 92.} However according to Leon, “the Roman Jews had accepted the Latin names … to a much greater extent than they had adopted the Latin language,” especially among women, and “in this respect, at least, the Jews of ancient Rome had gone far toward integration with their pagan neighbours.”\footnote{ibid., 108.}

Even though several terms in general were used for the Jewish assemblies or place to congregate and worship in the diaspora, such as synagogue, assembly (συναγωγή); synagogue, place of prayer (προσευχή); assembly, meeting (σύλλογος); or assembly, congregation (ἐκκλησία),\footnote{Korner, R. J. 2015, “Ekklēsia as a Jewish Synagogue Term: Some Implications for Paul’s Socio-Religious Location”, \textit{JMJS} No. 2, 59-60; Runesson, A., Binder, D., & Olsson B. 2008, \textit{The Ancient Synagogue from its Origins to 200 C.E.: A Source Book}, AJEC 72, Brill, Leiden, 159–63, 328, 10, n. 21.} only the term synagogue (συναγωγή) is found in the catacombs of Rome.\footnote{Leon, H. J. 1995, 108. See the discussion of the synagogues in Rome below.} There is evidence for eleven named synagogues.\footnote{ibid., 159; for example, the synagogue of the Herodians.} Perhaps the synagogue of “the Augustesians” named after the Emperor Augustus, and the synagogue of “the Hebrews” are the oldest, and go back to the first Jews in Rome in the first century B.C.E.\footnote{ibid., 142.}
Regarding the organization of the synagogues, there is according to Leon, “no good evidence for a body exercising supervision over Roman Jewry as a whole,” nor did anyone hold authority over the entire community. The inscriptions reveal titles such as ἀρχισυνάγωγος (probably the religious leader), ἄρχων (annually elected leader of non-religious matters), γερουσία (a council for general supervision, headed by a γερουσιάρχης), γραμματεύς (the secretary of the congregation), etc. There were also honorary offices such as archon-for-life, and father- and mother-of-the-synagogue. Margaret Williams argues against Leon and others that the synagogues were totally autonomous. The Jewish communities must, she argues, “sometimes have been faced with problems unlikely to have been dealt with except by some degree of co-operation between its constituent synagogues,” for instance the safe transport of the Jerusalem Temple tax. It seems likely that there was some degree of cooperation in special cases, such as the Temple taxes, even though there was a large degree of autonomy for the different synagogues in Rome.

The NT-sources, the Acts of the Apostles, and the letters of Paul

Many scholars discuss the use of The Acts of the Apostles (Acts) as a source for the context of Paul and the assemblies of believers in Christ. Both the differences and the similarities of the information deduced from Acts and from Paul’s letters are noted. The so called “theological tendencies” of Acts are problematic. Some scholars therefore seek to work “as exclusively as possible from Paul, with little or no reference to Acts”. However, it seems that they often do not take into account the degree of concurrence between Acts and Paul’s letters at all. By contrast James Dunn suggests that “the author of Acts was well informed about Paul’s life and mission.” There are many details in Acts that can be correlated with non-biblical sources. According to Dunn, “[t]he accuracy of such details” is an indication of the author of Acts’

131 Leon, H. J. 1995, 193-4. The exact function or role of these titles are not certain. See the LSJ lexicon for translations of the Greek terms, or in the TLG-database open LSJ lexicon.
132 Williams, M. H. 2013, 15-16, and note 57. Even though there is no direct evidence for Williams’ assumption, but not vice versa either, she still argues reasonably – “the safe transportation to Jerusalem of the Temple dues” (of large sums of money) was a matter of significant magnitude because of the size of the Jewish community in Rome. She asks, what is better than co-operation and organization through a centralized authority in such a case? Another possible co-operation between the synagogues is alluded to in Acts 28:17-28, regarding Paul’s teaching. It is likely that there was some cooperation among the Jewish congregations in Rome in special cases.
133 Dunn, J. D. G. 2009, 82-87.
134 ibid., 500 and note 3, for reference to such scholars.
135 ibid., 77-79.
136 Examples are the death of Herod Agrippa I (Acts 12:20-23; Josephus Ant. 19.343-46); the expulsion of the Jews from Rome by Claudius (Acts 18:2; Suetonius, Claud. 25); the author of Acts knows that Herod Antipas was only titled tetrarch of Galilee (Acts 13:1), whereas Agrippa I and II were both titled king (Acts 12:1, 25:13).
“own involvement with those caught up in the events (or with the events themselves), or by his having accesses to eyewitness accounts of the events.”

This last statement possibly makes too much of the facts. The conclusion however is that even if Paul’s letters should have priority, Acts is a good complement as a second source to the context of the Jews and the believers in Christ in the middle of the first century C.E.

Regarding Paul’s letters as sources for Paul’s historical and social context, the majority of scholars agree about their reliability. However, it is necessary to be aware that Paul’s letters, even though they are central, are also biased. They were written from Paul’s own position in relation to the different assemblies, with their specific situations, problems, and sometimes conflicts. Paul is only one voice of several on those issues, but they are the most reliable sources we have in this respect.

Following the discussion about terminology and the different important sources, a discussion of the historical and social context of Paul and the assemblies of believers in Rome comes next, including the position taken for this study of the purpose of Romans.

The Jews and believers in Christ in the Greco-Roman world in the first century C.E.

Regarding the Jews and the believers in Christ in the Greco-Roman world in the first century C.E., I agree with Dunn that we must study the context and development “as a social phenomenon” and focus on groups, interactions and different social structures and processes.

Lester L. Grabbe gives a plausible summary description of the situation of the Jews within the Second Temple Judaism in the first century. Some specific points that affect this thesis should be noted. First, there were many different groups and views within Judaism, including in the diaspora. The degree of Hellenistic influence ever since the third century B.C.E. both in the diaspora and in Judaea is notable. According to Mark Janse, the Greek language was common among the Jews, also in “Jewish Palestine” and Jerusalem. Dunn understands the term Ἑλληνιστής to mean “one who [only]

137 Dunn, J. D. G. 2009, 81 and note 108.
139 ibid., 42, 238. Therefore, the work of social scientist Rodney Stark and other are referred to.
140 Grabbe, L. L. 2010.
speaks the Greek language”, and Ἑβραῖος to mean “one who speaks Hebrew or Aramaic”, but possibly also Greek. Based on evidence found in inscriptions, the estimate is that 8,000–16,000 (10-20%) Greek-speaking Jews out of a total of 80,000–100,000 lived in greater Jerusalem.144 This indicates that many Jews in Judaea and Galilee were bilingual. The Jews in the diaspora were mostly Ἑλληνιστὴς, but we must assume that some were also Ἑβραῖος. How many is uncertain, but we know that at least one of them, Paul, who was Ἑβραῖος. See for example 2 Cor 11:22 and Phil 3:5.

The different groups within Judaism, held many things in common, such as their faith in one God, the importance of the Temple in Jerusalem, the election of Israel by God, the Torah, etc. At the same time views could differ, sometimes greatly, for example between the Qumran community, the Sadducees, and the Pharisees regarding the Temple and the interpretation of the Torah.

Second, the spread of the diaspora Judaism in the Mediterranean world was considerable during the first century C.E. and possibly long before that.145 There were large Jewish communities in several cities in the Eastern part of the Roman Empire outside Palestine and Galilee – in Syria, in Asia Minor, in the Aegean area, for instance in Caesarea, Damascus, Antioch, in Cyprus, possibly in Philippi, definitely in Thessalonica, in Athens, in Corinth, possibly in places in Galatia, definitely in Ephesus – and of course also in Rome, the centre of the Roman Empire.146

The cultural situation in the Western parts of the Roman Empire (that is from Rome to the Iberian Peninsula, modern France, etc.) is discussed by scholars, and is central to this thesis. Robert Jewett argues that Paul’s future mission to Spain is the main reason why Paul wrote the Letter to the Romans. He bases his suggestion to a significant extent on his understanding of the cultural situation in Spain.147 According to Jewett, there were essentially no Jewish population in Spain and no synagogues there in which Paul could begin and establish his apostolic work, as was often the case in his previous missionary work in the East. The limited Greek settlements in the Western part would “make the barriers to a Greek speaker like Paul” rather high. Jewett concludes that the cultural situation in Spain would be a great challenge for

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it should not be taken to imply that every Hellēnistēs necessarily know Aramic nor every Ἑβραῖos Greek”, or Hebrew. Many educated, though, may have been tri-literate.
145 Josephus, Ant. 14.7.2, quotes the geographer Strabo, who by the year 87 B.C.E. wrote “[the Jews] had already spread to every city and it would be difficult to find a place in the entire world which did not have a large influential Jewish community”. This is an obvious exaggeration, according to Leon, H. J., 1995, 1.
Paul’s coming mission. Therefore, Paul’s primary reason for writing to Rome was to ask for assistance and help in “the Spanish mission”.\(^{148}\)

However, the situation in the Western part of the Roman Empire is debated. John M. G. Barclay has criticised Jewett’s position and argues that the cultural situation, even if different, would not necessarily have been a major problem for Paul. Barclay believes that Paul had completed his mission in the East “on the basis of very limited contacts with their population”. It would therefore have been possible for Paul to succeed in the same way in the West.\(^{149}\)

More importantly, there are additional recent archaeological research that provide a more open picture of the cultural situation in the Western part of the Roman Empire, including stronger Greek and Jewish presence and connections. In a volume edited by Michael Dietler and Caroline López-Ruiz (2009) scholars discuss archaeological evidence of Eastern colonial encounters in the Western Mediterranean during the first millennium B.C.E.\(^{150}\) Pierre Roulliard believes that the Iberian Peninsula is the only place where groups of both Semitic and Greek origin lived side by side for centuries without the geographical boundaries that existed for example in Sicily. There are archaeological findings and evidence of the coexistence of indigenous and immigrant groups in places close to modern Huelva, Seville, Cadiz, Malaga in Andalusia, Los Nietos in Murcia, La Picola in Alicante, and in Ampurias in Catalonia in Spain. According to Rouillard, the traditional role accorded to Emporion (Ampuria) as the only significant trading port on the Eastern coast of Iberia must be re-evaluated because of the recent discoveries, such as that of Los Nietos and La Picola.\(^{151}\) Carolina López-Ruiz argues that the Semitic name “Tarshish”, found in both the Hebrew scriptures, e.g. in 2 Chr 9:21; 20:36; Ezek 27:12; 38:13; Isa 23:6, 19; 60:9; 66:19; Jer 10:9, Ps 48:7; 72:10, and in epigraphic sources, probably refers to the ancient region of the Iberian Tartessos in modern Andalusia at the mouth of the Guadalquivir River that flows from Cadiz to Seville. López-Ruiz explains that it is “the archaeologically established importance of the region that we call Tartessos (based on the Greek sources) that explains why those Phoenician-Hebrew sources would have mentioned Tarshish/Tartessos in the first place”.\(^{152}\)

\(^{148}\) Jewett, R. 2007, 79. Jewett believes that the letter to the Romans was sent to “prepare the ground for the complicated project of the Spanish mission”.


Therefore, it seems likely that there were a significant Greek presence and many Greek connection in Spain, and possibly also Jewish presence and connections. Even if the cultural situation in the Iberian Peninsula differed from the Eastern part of the Romans Empire at the time of Paul, it is plausible that the situation was not so very different in Spain compared to other areas of the Western part of the Empire, that is in the area of modern France, Sardinia, Corsica, Sicily and the Italian peninsula outside Rome.\textsuperscript{153}

Third, a central aspect of the historical and social context is the relationship between Jews and gentiles both in “Jewish Palestine”,\textsuperscript{154} and in the diaspora. Many scholars point to the importance of their co-existence.\textsuperscript{155} Socially, it was crucial for the Jews to have both the opportunity to live as Jews, and to function within the Greco-Roman city culture. The Emperors Julius Caesar and Augustus had granted the Jews in the diaspora special rights “to live according to their ancestral laws”, with the synagogue governing the Jewish community.\textsuperscript{156} Many groups or sects were generally accepted as part of Judaism in the first century C.E. The Jewish synagogues were classified as a collegia with the right to assemble, to have common meals, common property, fiscal responsibilities (e.g. the Jerusalem tax), disciplinary rights among its members, and responsibility for burials. Some Jews (or groups) held negative views of the gentiles as reflected in for example 4 Maccabees and in Joseph and Ase-neth, but vice versa is also true. Negative views of Jews led to problems with the Roman authorities. One important but debated issue is that of Jewish proselytism. What is undisputed, though, is that some gentiles were attracted by Judaism and the Jewish way of life. There is substantial evidence that persons with a gentile origin lived with or close to Jews, either as God-fearers that is still as gentiles, or as proselytes that is as Jews.\textsuperscript{157} Nanos’ discussion regarding the righteous gentiles, the Noahide Commandments, the Apostolic Decree, and table-fellowship and synagogue attendance for gentiles is quite valid. Nanos believes that “Judaism’s view” on the righteous gentiles or “God-fearers” was of a considerable concern during Paul’s lifetime. Even though they would not be expected to keep all the 613 commandments of the Torah, the gentiles were expected to keep what in later rabbinic Judaism is called the


\textsuperscript{154}Janse, M. 2014, 238-9.


\textsuperscript{156}Nanos, M. D. 1996, 42-50.

\textsuperscript{157}Dunn, J. D. G. 2009, 560-63. But if the existence of proselytes was the result of active Jewish mission or not is uncertain.
Noahide Commandments, and which refers to the laws that govern the “resident alien” or the “stranger within your gate”. These are the minimal rules of purity and righteousness required of foreigners who dwell in the land of Israel, without becoming Jews. Nanos states: “It is important to recognize that ‘righteous gentiles’ were welcomed by the synagogue in the first century and practiced specific Jewish customs, but without a standing as full-fledged Jews since they were not circumcised”. According to Nanos, the table-fellowship was also a significant concern among the diaspora Jews. On the one hand Jews in the cities often avoided meat and wine, because they might be tainted by idolatry, but on the other Jews did eat with gentiles, and the righteous gentiles were expected to follow the minimal rules of purity and righteousness. Nanos notes, with Peter J. Tomson and the Tannaitic literature, that outside the synagogue, where idolatry was almost unavoidable especially in the context of sharing meals, the majority of Jews still ate with gentiles and were proud of their hospitality, although the minority opinion denounced such universalism. When questionable, Jews simply refrained from meat and wine, ate vegetables, and drank water, or brought their own food and wine.

Fourth, it should be noted that there were also a plurality of views among believers in Christ, like the plurality of views among Jewish groups in the diaspora. According to Stanley K. Stowers, Paul identified himself with “[the] Jewish tradition of the prophetic reinterpretation of the sacred [Jewish] writings for new situations”, and “[w]hen Paul wrote [Romans], the church was still fundamentally one of the sects within the diverse Judaisms of the second temple period”. Different views prevailed both among believers in Christ and (other) Jewish groups regarding gentile believers and how the law should be interpreted, for example the rules governing food and common meals. The degree of Greco-Roman influence varied in different places in the Roman Empire. There must have been discussions and disagreements as well, regarding the Messiah and specifically about Jesus as the Messiah.

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160 Nanos, M. D. 1996, 56-57. For a discussion of Nanos view of the Antioch incident in Gal 2:11-21, in the light of Romans, see *ibid.*, “Summary and Appendix 1”, 337-71, where the incident is not about e.g. a law-free gospel vs. the Torah, or if Jews and gentiles could eat together, but if a gentile believer, behaving as a righteous gentile, would be considered equivalent to a Jew among the believers in Christ, without being circumcised.
161 Barclay, J. M. G. 1995, “Paul among Diaspora Jews: Anomaly or Apostate?”, *JSNT*, 60, 89-120. Living as a Jew in the diaspora also involved or led to various degree of assimilation, acculturation, and accommodation.
162 Stowers, S. K. 1994, 6, 9, 13. Stowers explicitly writes “Judaism (pl.)”.
163 Compare the situation in Alexandria, Rome, and Jerusalem, or the examples of diaspora Jews discussed in Barclay, J. M. G. 1995.
Paul’s letters themselves testify to several of these early discussions. Mark D. Nanos states that the NT-literature in general can be read as “Jewish correspondence, written by and for Jews and gentiles concerned with [the] new faith in Jesus as the Jewish Messiah who had come first to restore the Jewish people, and also to bring salvation to non-Jewish people” (italic original), as the Saviour of the world. The NT-literature should be read, not as anti-Jewish, but as an intra-Jewish discourse on various issues, such as the role of the Torah, concerning the halakha (the “rule of behaviour”), disagreements about Jesus, and whether gentiles are equal co-participants without having to become Jews first.164

Fifth, it is important for this thesis to explore the early rise of the movement of believers in Christ, how it arose and how it spread throughout the Roman Empire outside Palestine and Galilee.165 However, Robert Stark reminds us that “rarely are any figures offered” for the total growth of the movement. First “we must quantify … if we are to grasp the magnitude of the phenomenon” to be explained (italic original).166 Thus, if there are any reasonable figures or estimations available we must take them into serious account in our analysis for this study of Paul’s Letter to the Romans.

One problem with quantifying is the lack of reliable statistics,167 so scholars can only estimate. The starting point is usually that the entire Roman Empire had a rather stable population of up to 60 million people.168 The number of Jews is estimated to not more than 10-15% of the population, probably much less, and most of them living in the diaspora.169 According to Stark, the possible number of Christians soon after the death of Jesus is given in Acts 1:15, where Peter talks to 120 believers.170 Howard C. Kee (1990) has estimated that the early Christians numbered a few dozens. Robert L. Wilkens

164 Nanos, M. D. 1996, 4. For scholars who discuss Paul’s voice in this intra-Jewish discourse see note 69.
165 Stark, R. 2011, 153. For specific details on Paul’s missionary strategy and tactic see below.
167 ibid. 2011, 153-4. The few figures given by historical sources are, according to Stark, often not reliable, e.g. when Josephus, J.W. 6.9.3, reports that 1,100,000 Jews were killed in 70 C.E. in Jerusalem and 97,000 were enslaved. If “there never were even 40,000 people in Jerusalem” and many did escape, then Josephus figure is impossible. On the other hand, Josephus’ account, J.W. 7.9.1, that 960 Jewish zealots were killed at Masada is probably more correct, according to Stark.
169 ibid., 79-80. Other scholars estimate the number of Jews to be lower than 10%.
170 ibid., 155-6, claims that 120 Christians “is consistent with the early days of most new religious movements since it seems that conversion is a person-by-person phenomenon that only slowly gains momentum through social networks. Sudden mass conversions simply don’t happen”. There is no evidence for that. Stark refers to the social scientists Turner, R. H. & Killian, L. M. 1987, Collective Behaviour, 3. ed., Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, NJ. For Stark, this means that the figure in Acts 2:41 where Peter baptized 3000 persons must be “dismissed as a hyperbole”. I do not think that the figure 120 in Acts 1:15 necessarily ment all Christ believers.
(1984) argues that by the year 150 C.E. there were probably less than 50,000 Christians, and Robin L. Fox (1987) believes that the Christians made up ca. 2% of the population that is one million by the year 250 C.E. According to Stark, historians have estimated the Christian population in the Roman Empire in the year 300 C.E. to about 6 million, and by the year 350 C.E. they were in the majority, 30 million plus. Based on these figures, Stark has proposed “a simple model of Christian growth”, starting with 1,000 in the year 40 C.E., with an average growth rate of 3.4 % per year (39.7% per decade).

The figures in this model do not represent facts, but only Stark’s calculated estimates. They seem, however, to be rather convincing and possible. Robert Jewett is critical of Starks early estimates of 1,000/1,400 by the year 40/50 C.E. The Swedish scholar Bo Reicke (1967) has estimated that ca. 67 C.E., the Christians made up of least 2% of the Jewish population of two million that is ca. 40,000, of whom ca. 2,000 lived in the Aegean area and Italy.

It seems unlikely that all believers in Judaea and Galilee would have been gathered at the same time.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Christians</th>
<th>Milestone</th>
<th>Percent (%) of population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.0017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>1,397</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.0023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>1,951</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.0033</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70</td>
<td>2,726</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.0045</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80</td>
<td>3,809</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.0063</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90</td>
<td>5,321</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.0089</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td>7,434</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>150</td>
<td>39,560 (-50,000)</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>180</td>
<td>107,863</td>
<td>(1 million)</td>
<td>0.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200</td>
<td>210,516</td>
<td>(6 million)</td>
<td>0.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>250</td>
<td>1,120,246</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>300</td>
<td>5,961,290</td>
<td></td>
<td>9.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>312</td>
<td>8,904,032</td>
<td></td>
<td>14.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>350</td>
<td>31,722,489 (+30 million)</td>
<td>52.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As a complement to the above estimated milestones, Stark refers to studies using “available bodies of actual data”, made by Roger S. Bagnall on “the percent of Christians in the population from the year 239 through 315 based on an analysis of the percentage of Christian names among those appearing in Egyptian documents”, and by Carlos R. Galvao-Sobinho who uses a time-series analysis based on “the number of Christian epigraphs appearing on gravestones in the city of Rome” and “the projection of the Christian population of the empire”. From 200 to 375, the figures in the table have “an almost perfect correlation of .996”.

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172 Stark, R. 2011, 156, note 13 for references to other scholars.

173 ibid., 156-9, note 16, 17 and figure 9.1. Stark’s figures for the year 40-350 C.E. are given in the table below.
Around the year 100 C.E. there were according to Reicke ca. 320,000, and in 140 C.E. the Christians outnumbered the Jews.175

There are however problems with estimating a significant higher number of believers in Christ in the first century. For example, if the believers in Christ amounted to, say, 10,000 or 40,000 around the year 60 C.E., and still to 10%/+50% of the population around the years 300/350 C.E., as in the table in note 173, the average growth rate would not have been 3,4 % as in Stark’s model, but much lower, as low as 2,7 % or 2,1 %, between 60 to 300 C.E. That calls for an explanation why the growth of the believers in Christ in the second and third century was significantly lower than what modern social scientists have found to be the conversion rate in new religious movements, such as the Mormons or the Jehovah’s Witnesses.176

However, and more importantly, even if we estimate that there were a total of 10,000 Christians and 4 million Jews (6,7% of the total population) in the Roman Empire, the Christians would still have been a tiny minority compared to the number of Jews (0,25 % vs. 99,75%), and an almost unimaginable fraction of the total population (<0,02 % vs >99,98%), spread around the entire Eastern Empire. If there were 2,000 Christians in the 60’s, that would have been an even smaller minority. Even though all these figures are only estimates, it is very reasonable to conclude that there was only such a relatively very small number of Christians in the middle of the 50’s C.E.177 Such a small number of Christians at the time of Paul must be taken into account when reconstructing the historical and social context of the Jews and the believers in Christ in the diaspora, and especially in Rome.

Next follows a discussion of the specific contextual situation in Rome.

The Jews and the believers in Christ in Rome in the first century C.E.

The date of the first permanent Jewish settlement in Rome is uncertain, but it could be as early as the beginning of the second century B.C.E.178 If the Praetor Gnaeus Cornelius Hispalus expelled the Jews from Rome already in 139 B.C., there must have been a Jewish establishment in Rome already since quite a

176 Stark, R. 1996, 7. According to Stark, the estimate is in line with “the normal processes of conversion, as understood by contemporary social science”; ibid. 2011, 156-62. The documented growth rate referred among the Jehovah’s Witnesses and the Mormons is ca. 3.4 percent a year.
177 ibid. 2011, 33, estimates the number of Jews up to 9 million (10-15% of the population). If so, my argument is even more compelling.
178 Longenecker, R. N. 2011, 60-69.
while. However, more certain is that there was definitely a Jewish settlement in Rome by the middle of the first century B.C.E. and that they originated both from immigrants and from slaves who were brought to Rome.

Scholars’ estimates of the number of Jews in Rome in the middle of the first century range from 15,000 to 60,000. Leon’s estimate of 40,000-50,000 is a reasonable figure. He bases his figures on Josephus, *Ant.* 14.10.1-8, according to which an embassy of fifty Jews from Palestine were sent to the Emperor Augustus in the year 4 B.C.E. and they were supported by 8,000 Jews living in Rome. At that time, we must presume that this was only a minority of the Jews in Rome. The Jewish settlements were concentrated to certain areas, such as in Transtiberium (Trastevere) across the Tiber. It is likely that they acclimatised themselves rather well in Rome. Some of them, including freed Jewish slaves, became Roman citizens, and some bore Latin names. The evidence shows that the Jews spoke mainly Greek, many also spoke Latin, and some adopted Latin names. Jewett agrees with that view, which for him shows “a substantial degree of inculturation”. Most of the Jews were relatively uneducated and impoverished. A minority probably spoke Hebrew/Aramaic as well. It is possible that they had a special relationship with Jerusalem, since there are such indications both in Acts and in external sources, and they probably also had relationships with Jews in other places, such as Alexandria and Corinth.

The synagogue was the central organizational entity, and according to Longenecker, inscriptions show that “there were as many as eleven, twelve, or even thirteen (Jewish) synagogues in Rome … during the first century

179 Valerius Maximus, in the first century C.E., wrote that Gnaeus Cornelius Hispalus, the Praetor of Rome, forced the Jews to return to their home-land already in 139 B.C.E. because they tried to proselytise the Romans to become Jewish adherents, either as actual proselytes or as God-fearers. Another early evidence of Jewish-Roman relations is in 1 Mac 8:1-32, possibly written in the 2nd century B.C.E., where envoys were sent to Rome, establishing an alliance between the nation of the Jews (τὸ ἔθνος τῶν Ἰουδαίων) and the Romans (Ῥωμαίοι). But it does not say that Jews were already then living in Rome.

180 There are three additional literary references; (i) Pss. Sol. 2:6-7, 17:11-14, which describe General Pompey’s capture of Jerusalem in 63 B.C.E., who brought a rather large number of Jewish slaves to Rome; also (ii) a quote from Horace, *Satires* 1.4.142-43, a celebrated Roman poet in the Augustan period, together with (iii) Cicero’s speech in 59 B.C.E., *Oratio prof Flacco* 28:66-67, both of which confirmed that a large Jewish community was living in Rome in the first century B.C.E. This indicates that the Jews in Rome originated both from immigrants and from slaves who had been brought to Rome, according to Longenecker, R. N. 2011, 60-69.


183 Longenecker, R. N. 2011, 68.


185 For example, according to Philo, the Jewish embassy that was sent from Alexandria to Rome in the 1st century was met and joined by many Roman Jews.
C.E.”186. They were autonomous but co-operated with each other in certain cases, for example in sending the Temple tax to Jerusalem, as was argued above. The Jews in Rome welcomed gentiles into the synagogues, either as righteous gentiles or as proselytes.187 It is debated, whether the Jews specifically in Rome were engaged in proselytism, but that was probably the case, and this led to friction and repeated disputes with the Roman authorities. The Jews, or some of them, were expelled or experienced other problems in the years 19, 41, and 49 C.E., and possibly also as early as in 139 B.C.E.188 Longenecker concludes with Wiefel that, despite such difficulties and setbacks, the “Jews continued to live and prosper at Rome during the first sixty years or so of the first Christian century without significant hindrance.”189 This seems like a fair judgement.

Ambrosiaster wrote in his commentary on Romans that the first “who had come to believe [in Christ] … came from a Jewish background”.190 This seems fair and Longenecker, Jewett and Wiefel agree191 that the first believers in Christ in Rome were either Jewish immigrants from Jerusalem, who had become believers in Judaea, and/or Roman Jews who had become believers during a visit to Jerusalem. The first believers definitely appeared at the time of Romans, probably earlier in the 40’s, but possibly before that. The narrative in Acts 2:11 indicates this. The first gentiles became believers through associating with the Jews in Rome, and thus in the 50’s believers in Christ in Rome were of both Jewish and gentile origin.192

187 Leon, H. L. 1995, 256; who states that “on the basis of both literary and epigraphic sources … the Roman Jews welcomed proselytes [and] the Jewish community had a fair number of them. These were regarded as Jews in every respect and were honored with burial in a Jewish cemetery. Those, on the other hand, who practiced a few Jewish rites, such as worship of One God, celebration of the Sabbath, and abstention from pork, were not regarded as Jews and did not receive a Jewish burial”. See Nanos, M. D. 1996, 50-56, for a discussion about “the righteous gentiles” in the synagogues.
188 Horace’s, Satires 1.4.142-43, where the poet accuses the Jews in Rome in the middle of the first century B.C.E. of being a sect engaged in tenacious proselytizing of gentiles. Josephus, Ant. 18.81-84., recalls that the Emperor Tiberius ordered the expulsion of the entire Jewish community from Rome in 19 C.E., κελεύει πᾶν τὸ Ἰουδαϊκὸν τῆς Ῥώμης ἀπελθεῖν, possibly because of Jewish proselytism. Cf. Williams, M. H. 2013, 9, who refers to this event with reference to Josephus, Tacitus and Suetonius. Williams argues though that the reason was not because of Jewish proselytism, but because of “their reputation for being a disruptive element in society that had made them [the Jews] a convenient scapegoat at a time of considerable economic, political and social difficulty for the emperor Tiberius”.
189 Longenecker, R. N. 2011, 64; Wiefel, W. 1991, 89.
Estimates of the number of believers in Christ in Rome are uncertain as well, due to lack of reliable statistics. Peter Lampe does not give any specific numbers but discusses the issue in quality terms. Lampe concludes that at the time of the Letter to the Romans, “the Gentile Christians” were in majority, and that there were “at least seven separate islands of Christianity”.\(^{193}\) Robert Jewett refers to Tacitus, *Ann.* 15.44.4, who reports that “a tremendous crowd (*multitude ingrens*) were condemned” at the time of Nero.\(^{194}\) This, together with 1 Clem 6:1, which speaks of “a vast multitude of the elect”,\(^{195}\) who joined the apostles Petrus and Paulus in Rome, leads Jewett to infer that “several hundred victims” suffered under Nero, mostly gentile believers, even though many believers must have escaped. According to Jewett “the [Christian] movement must have been sufficiently large to have become unpopular with a significant portion of the population to make scapegoating worthwhile”. Jewett estimates that the Christians in Rome were “several thousand” by the summer of 64 C.E.,\(^{196}\) which he thinks correlates with Stark’s estimate of 7,000 Christians in Rome around the year 200.\(^{197}\) At the time of the Letter to the Romans, Jewett estimates that the Christians in Rome constituted “a large movement” with “dozens of groups”, consisting of 20-40 persons each.\(^{198}\) If this estimate is correct, and if we calculate with 20 groups with an average membership of 30 per group, the estimate would land on ca. 600 believers in Christ in Rome in the middle of the 50’s. However, even if we double these figures, it would require a growth rate of 100-200% in ten years to reach Jewett’s “several thousand” Christians in Rome in 64 C.E. Rodney Stark has provided a model with a “growth rate” of < 40% per decade by which to gauge their numbers from the first to the fourth century. He assumes that 7.5% of the total population of 60 million within the Empire lived in places with more than 1,000 inhabitants and 10%, i.e. 450,000, lived in Rome. Further, Stark refers to two milestones, the first (i) that less than 1,000 Christians lived in Rome at the end of 1st century C.E. (William L. Countrymen, 1980), and the second (ii) that 20,000 Christians lived in Rome in the year 200 C.E. (Robert M. Grant, 1977).\(^{199}\) A recalculation of Stark’s model into figures show that the number of Christians would have been less than 200 in the 50’s and less than

\(^{193}\) Lampe, P. 2003, 70, 360.
\(^{194}\) Jewett, R. 2007, 61.
\(^{195}\) 1 Clem 6:1, τούτοις τοῖς ἀνδράσιν ὃσίως πολιτευσαμένοις συνηθροίσθη πολὺ πλῆθος ἐκλεκτῶν
\(^{197}\) Stark, R. 1996, 9. Note that in Stark’s more recent work – Stark, R. 2011, 162-4, – he has extended the estimate from 7,000 to 20,000 Christians in Rome in 200 C.E. On Stark’s estimate see below.
1,000 in the year 100 C.E.\textsuperscript{200} Even if we assume that the number of believers in Christ was as high as 1,000 already in the middle of the 50’s, and if we accept the significantly lower growth rate many years afterwards, the believers in Christ in the 50’s would still have been a \textit{tiny minority group}, compared to the total Jewish population in Rome (only 2\% vs 98\%), and only a small fraction of the total population of the capital (0,2\% vs 99,8\%). An important question for this thesis to discuss thus arises, namely what impact could such a very small number of believers in Christ have on their relationship with the Jews in Rome who did not believe in Christ?

The Edict of the Emperor Claudius is significant for the reconstruction of the situation for Jews, believers in Christ, and their assemblies in Rome. It is considered as a fixed-point-in-time. There are two accounts during the reign of Claudius. One in Dio Cassius, \textit{Historia Romana} 60.6.6, that recalls how Claudius, in 41 C.E., ordered Jews not to hold meetings while they were free to continue their traditional mode of life. Another account from 49 C.E. found in Suetonius, \textit{Vita Claud.} 25.4, \textit{Iudaeos impulsore Chresto assidue tumultuantis Roma expulit}, which reports that the Emperor expelled from Rome the Jews or Judaeans who were constantly making disturbances at the instigation of Chrestus. This latter account is known as the Edict of Claudius.\textsuperscript{201} Both these events may have arisen because of a conflict in the synagogues in Rome concerning Jesus as the Christ, the Messiah. What has become known as the

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|c|c|}
\hline
Year & Number of Christians in Rome & Milestone & Percent (%) of population in Rome & Percent (%) of the Jews (45,000) in Rome \\
\hline
40 & (not estimated) & -- & -- & \\
50 & 100-150 & -- & 0,02-0,03 & 0,04 & 0,44 \\
60 & 200 & -- & 0,06 & 0,62 \\
70 & 280 & -- & 0,09 & 0,89 \\
80 & 400 & -- & 0,12 & 1,18 \\
90 & 530 & <1,000 & 0,15 & 1,56 \\
100 & 700 & -- & 0,8 & 8 \\
150 & 3,600 & -- & 4,2 & <50 \\
200 & 19,000 & 20,000 & 17,3 & Ca twice as many \\
250 & 78,000 & -- & 66,2 & 6 times more \\
300 & 298,000 & -- & \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{table}

\textsuperscript{200} Stark, R. 2011, 162-4; See also Dunn, J. D. G. 2009, 57-8, on the account from Tacitus about Nero, “should we be thinking of several hundred ‘Christians’ already in Rome by the mid-60s?”; Cf. Jewetts statement above about “several thousand” by the summer of 64 C.E., and his estimate at the time of the Letter to the Romans, which indicates 600 Christians. The table below show Stark’s model and his estimate of the number of believers in Christ in Rome from 50 C.E. to 300 C.E., recalculated into digits:

\textsuperscript{201} Jewett, R. 2007 46-61, also 60, note 388; Longenecker, R. N. 2011, 68-9, 82-5; Dunn, J. D. G. 2009, 505-7, for convincing arguments for the opinion of two events.
Wiefel-hypothesis,202 maintains that the movement of the Christ-believers in Rome began in the Jewish synagogues. After the Edict of Claudius in 49 C.E. and the expulsion of the Jews from Rome, the Christians became largely separated from the synagogues, and thereafter had mostly “Gentile-Christians” as leaders. Later, according to Wolfgang Wiefel, when the Jewish believers in Christ returned after the death of Claudius in 54 C.E., they created tensions and split with the “Gentile-Christian” communities.

This hypothesis is quite a consensus opinion among scholars today. According to Longenecker, the order by the emperor Claudius in 41 C.E. and the Edict in 49 C.E. led to the result that the “Christians” in Rome “could no longer function and be protected within the synagogues of Judaism”. Thus, Longenecker concludes, they “had to establish their own identity” and to meet in their own “‘house churches’ or ‘tenement congregations’.”203 Jewett argues that the social structure of the “house-churches” and the “tenement churches” at the time had already been “assimilated into the hierarchical social structure of the Greco-Roman world”.204 In addition to the Edict of Claudius in 49 C.E., scholars point to Suetonius’ and Tacitus’ reports of the persecution of Christians during the time of Nero. The conclusions of, for example, Peter Lampe and Reidar Hvalvik are that in the 60’s “the separation was evident also for the Roman authorities” and “the links between the Jewish and the Christian community in Rome seems to have become almost invisible”.205 Thus, Longenecker, Jewett, Lampe, Hvalvik, and others argue that there was an evident separation between the gentile Christ-believers and the Jews in Rome by the time of Paul’s Letter to the Romans.206

The view that two events took place during the reign of Claudius is reasonable,207 but the separation between Jewish and gentile believers in Christ can be disputed. First, Dunn’s discussion of the accounts of Tacitus and Suetonius regarding Nero is more balanced. It indicates “that the name ‘Christians’ was already current” at the time of Tacitus, and that Tacitus himself knew that the movement that had begun with Christ had spread beyond Judaea. However, it does not mean that the name “Christians” was necessarily current at that time. It also indicates, according to Dunn, that the Christians were a sizeable body,

204 Jewett, R. 2007, 64-65.
205 Lampe, P. 1989 (English transl. 2003), 8-9 (15-16), writes “Im Jahr 64 n. Chr. unterscheiden sogar die Behörden, zwischen Juden und Christen”; Hvalvik, R. 2007, 198; the citation in the text is from Hvalvik.
206 Lampe, P. 1989, 8-9, writes “Erstes sicheres Datum ist der Römerbrief: Spätestens zu seiner Abfassungszeit in der zweiten Hälfte der 50er Jahre präsentiert sich die stadtrömische Christenheit losgelöst von Synagogenverband”; and in note 22, “cf. z.B. Röm 16,5a; 1,5-8; in 15:24 erhofft sich Paulus von den Römern Unterstützung für seine gesetzesfreie Heidenmission in Spanien!”, the exclamation mark is original.
207 For a summary of convincing arguments for this position see Dunn, J. D. G. 2009, 505-7.
maybe there were “several hundred ‘Christians’ already in Rome by the mid-60s”, but those martyred were a minority of all. In addition, the charge of “ha-
tred of the human race” was a standard charge against Jews. According to Dunn, it is quite likely that Tacitus saw the Christians as a form of Judaism. Finally, an account by Sulpicius Severus from ca. 400 C.E. includes the opinion of Titus in the year 70 C.E. that “the Jews and Christians formed a single religion”, with *religio* in singular. According to Dunn, there is therefore no evidence to prove that Nero did not still see the believers in Christ as a sub-
group of the Jews. 

Second, the account of the Edict of Claudius is not attested by neither Jo-
sephus nor Tacitus in their accounts of the period. Was the event not dramatic
enough, or was it not fully implemented, to be registered or mentioned by Josephus or Tacitus? Another question focus on which group(s) were affected
by the Emperor’s order. Where they directed against the Jews, the believers
in Christ, or only against the agitators or leaders of the conflict, and how many
of them?

Third, there is also important criticism from other scholars, for example
from John M. G. Barclay, towards the understanding that the events during
Claudius reign was a result of “Christian” disturbances. In his review of
Jewett’s commentary on Romans, Barclay criticises Jewett’s view of the prior
history of the Roman assemblies and argues against the Wiebel hypothesis by
highlighting the following seven problems and issues: (a) the history of
Rome in the 40’s is based on a small number of comments by Dio Cassius,
Suetonius, Acts, and Orosius, all written several decades after the events and
not easily aligned with one another. (b) Dio Cassius discusses some prohibi-
tion on synagogue meetings, but according to Barclay, there is no indication
that this had anything to do with believers in Christ. (c) Suetonius refers to
somebody named Chresto who caused trouble, which resulted in the expulsion
of the Jews in 49 C.E. However, according to Barclay, “Chresto” was “an
extremely common name in Rome,” and in his account on Nero, Suetonius
knows that the believers in Christ are called “Christianoi” (*italic* original). To

208 Dunn, J. D. G. 2009, 56-60.
209 Longenecker, R. N. 2011, 75, writes: “For certainly Jews were living in Rome after Clau-
dius’s death in 54 C.E., and it may be presumed that many of them were living in the city even
before the repeal of the Edict”; See also Brown, R. E. and Meier, J. P. 1983, *Antioch and Rome:
210 Barclay, J. M. G. 2015, 456 and note 16, for further references; See also Williams, M. H.
2013, 63-80, and the discussion of the Roman hostility against the Jews regularly resulted in
expulsions and possibly other actions as well, for example during the reign of Tiberius in 19
C.E.
211 Barclay, J. M. G. 2008, 89-111. Jewett’s response to Barclay’s critique is in the same volume
of *JSNT*, 113-18.
connect the Edict of Claudius in 49 C.E. with disputes concerning “Christia-
noi” requires a supposed “Suetonian error” in spelling. (d) In Orosius’ possi-
ibly independent fifth century C.E. report of the event in 49 C.E., recapitulated
in his Historiarum adversum paganos libri VII 7.6.15-16,212 Chrestus is
changed to Christus. This could reflect a later tendency to “Christianise” Jew-
ish history. (e) Acts 18:2 says that Aquila and Priscilla had been expelled from
Rome, but Acts does not indicate that the couple were believers in Christ be-
fore they left Rome (cf. Acts 19:1), or that their expulsion had anything to do
with the message of Christ. (f) According to Barclay, we do not know how
soon after the expulsion in 49 C.E. those expelled were able to return to Rome.
There is no reason to think that all the expelled returned only after the death
of Claudius. Some of them might have returned before his death. (g) There is
no evidence in Paul’s Letter to the Romans or from any other sources that
either the expulsion or the return had any effect on the community of Christ-
believers in Rome. Therefore, Barclay regards the Wiefel-hypothesis as
mostly speculation, based on many presuppositions.

So, with these tree points of disagreement in mind, to base a separation
between the Jews and the Gentile believers in Christ on the Edict of Claudius
in 49 C.E. is not certain. Instead, Nano’s view that the believers in Christ still
associated with the synagogues in Rome is more credible. He argues against
the assumption that the believers in Christ in Rome functioned within “house-
churches that are separated … from the Jewish synagogue(s)” because of the
Edict. Nanos believes that the gentile Christ believers still met in the syna-
gogues of Rome, and that they were part of the Jewish community(s) as right-
eous gentiles.213 He states that even though “Christianity and rabbinic Juda-
ism” found it necessary to separate “in the second century and thereafter”, the
separation may not have been earlier, and “certainly not as early” as the Letter
to the Romans in the mid 50’s C.E. There are too many indications of “the
coexistence, or even inter-dependence” of the Jews and the gentile believers.
For example, Nanos asks: “How would [the gentile believers] learn the Scrip-
tures”? “[O]utside the synagogue environment the early Christians would
have had little opportunity to learn the ‘Scriptures’”. Also, would the believers
in Christ outside the synagogues have the “right to congregate for fellowship
and worship”, or the right to refrain from worshipping the Emperor, exclusion
from military service etc., unless they petitioned to be viewed as another kind

212 Paulus Orosius was a fifth-century Roman priest, historian and theologian, and a student of
Augustine.
213 Nanos, M. D. 1996, 14, 22-26, 31. Nanos refers to scholars such as James D. G. Dunn,
of *collegia*, distinguished from the synagogues?\textsuperscript{214} Thus, to argue for a separation of the gentile believers from the Jews and all the synagogues based on the Edict of Claudius is uncertain. It is more probable that they still associated with at least some of the synagogues in Rome.

Finally, an important issue is the proportion of the gentiles vs the Jews vs the tiny minority of believers in Christ in Rome, illustrated in fig 1 below.

![Fig 1](image_url)

Is it reasonable to believe, as many scholars do, that the tiny minority group of believers in Christ in Rome, in fig 1, were predominantly of gentile origin? That the Jewish believers in Christ were an even smaller minority of this tiny minority? How many of, say, 1,000 believers in Rome were Jews? I have found no scholarly estimate on this. If the believers in Christ still associated with the synagogues, and were part of the Jewish community, is it likely that 90% of them would have been gentiles or what would be a credible figure? Is it possible that most of the believers in Jesus as the Jewish Messiah, who were associated with the synagogues in Rome, were not Jews?\textsuperscript{215} As will be discussed in Ch. 2.3, the position taken in this thesis is that there was a 50/50 proportion of Jews and gentiles in the tiny minority of believers in Christ, who lived with the Jewish community in Rome at the time of Paul. Before that, a

\textsuperscript{214} Nanos, M. D. 1996, 69, 73-5; In addition, there is no external report or other evidence for a special *collegia* for the gentile Christ believers, separated from the Jewish synagogues (assemblies).

\textsuperscript{215} If so, is this not an indication that the apostolic work among the Jews was a failure compared to the work among the gentiles in Rome? Cf. Stark, R. 2011, 77-80, who argues that “it seems likely that the mission to the Jews was far more long-lasting and successful than has been assumed”.

73
presentation follows next of what can reasonably be said about Paul, the apostle to the nations, on his background and life.

Paul, the apostle to the nations, his background and Life

There are a significant agreements among scholars on what we can know about Paul’s background and life.\textsuperscript{216} According to James Dunn, Paul was most probably born in the city of Tarsus, Acts 22:3.\textsuperscript{217} Paul was a Jew, from the tribe of Benjamin, an Israelite, and he had been circumcised, Phil 3:4-5.\textsuperscript{218} He identified himself as \textit{Hebraios} (Ἑβραῖος), 2 Cor 11:22, Phil 3:5, that is as one who speaks Hebrew or Aramaic.\textsuperscript{219} He was also a \textit{Hellenist} (Ἐλληνιστής), in the sense that he was a Jew who also spoke Greek, although he never used this term about himself. Paul was probably a Roman citizen, Acts 22:25.\textsuperscript{220} Tarsus was a city of Hellenistic culture, philosophical education, and a notable centre of commerce. According to Philo, \textit{Leg.} 281, it had a large Jewish community with strong links to Jerusalem, cf. Acts 6:9. Whether Paul had some Hellenistic education from the strong intellectual centre at Tarsus besides the ordinary education that Greek-speaking diaspora Jews would normally have is debated.\textsuperscript{221} So too is the question whether Paul received his education in Jerusalem at the feet of Gamaliel. However, Dunn’s opinion is feasible that, given “(t)he close match between Paul’s own autobiographical reminiscences in Phil 3:5-6 and Gal 1:13-14 and … (the) account in Acts 22:3 and 26.4”, it is not unreasonable to think that Paul “did indeed spend his most formative years of education and training (\textit{paideia}) in Jerusalem” and thus became a highly trained Pharisee.\textsuperscript{222}

\begin{footnotes}
\footnotetext[216]{Summaries of the activities, location, references to the Judaism at the time, and autobiographical elements of Paul can be found in e.g. Dunn, J. D. G. 2009, 78-9, 101-103, 499, 512.}
\footnotetext[217]{Most scholars think 2 B.C.E – 4 C.E. (5-11 C.E. is possible). All years and the timeline given are estimates, with no firm evidence. See also Dunn, J. D. G. 2009, 497-512.}
\footnotetext[218]{Dunn, J. D. G. 2009, 327-8. Dunn mentions that “of Jacob’s twelve sons only Benjamin had been born in the promised-land (Gen 35.16-18), and only the tribe of Benjamin had remained faithful to Judah, and the house of David when the kingdom split after the death of Salomon”. In note 35 Dunn refers to Hengel, M. 1991, \textit{The Pre-Christian Paul}, SCM, London, 26-27, that “several prominent Jews could claim descent from Benjamin, including Gamaliel”, Paul’s teacher according to Acts.}
\footnotetext[219]{Dunn, J. D. G. 2009, 246.}
\footnotetext[220]{\textit{ibid.}, 325-7. It seems most reasonable in order to explain why Paul legal case was transferred to Rome.}
\footnotetext[221]{\textit{ibid.}, 329.}
\footnotetext[222]{\textit{ibid.}, 333. In the citation the \textit{italic} is original.}
\end{footnotes}
In Paul’s earlier (adult) life he was a persecutor of believers in Christ. However, Paul’s experience of the risen Christ, the Messiah, ca. 33 C.E., was a life-changing event, which Paul understood to be in accordance with God’s plan and decision to reveal his son (Jesus Christ) to Paul, Gal 1:15-16. Paul was called to be an apostle of Christ to the nations, 1 Cor 15:8-11, Gal 1:16, 2:2. To characterize this experience as Paul’s conversion to “Christianity” is inappropriate. It is more correct to understand it, with Krister Stendahl and Karl Olav Sandnes, as Paul’s prophetic vision and call from God, similar to that of Jeremia (1:5) and Second Isaiah (LXX 49:1-6), i.e. as a call to redirect his beliefs and mission in life, and a call to become a servant of Jesus Christ (the Messiah).

A possible reconstruction of Paul’s life after his experience of the Christ (God’s son, the Messiah) would be that: he spent three years in Arabia (Ἀραβία) before going up to Jerusalem (the first visit) to meet with Kefas (and Jacob). From ca. 35 C.E. Paul worked for fourteen years as an apostle based in Antioch. The important Jerusalem council in ca. 47-49 was followed by the incident in Antioch. Paul then began his apostolic work in the Aegean area, from ca 48 (50) to 56 (or 57), followed by his arrest and imprisonment 57, his journey to Rome 59 (59-61), and finally his execution 62 (62-67) C.E. An approximate chronology of Paul’s seven (7) undisputed letters would be: 1 Thess, 50 C.E. (maybe 49-52); Gal, 52 C.E. (possibly 55-56, after 1 and 2 Cor

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224 According to Acts 9:3-9; 22:6-11; 26:12-16, the experience and the event occurred “on the road to Damascus”. Scholars’ estimation of what year is ca. 33 (31-34) C.E.

225 Stendahl, K. 1976, Paul Among Jews and Gentiles, And Other Essays, Fortress Press, Minneapolis, MN, 7-23; Sandnes, K. O. 1991, Paul- One of the Prophets? A Contribution to the Apostle’s Self-Understanding. WUNT II/43, Mohr Siebeck, Tübingen, ch. 5, e.g. 68-70; Cf. Dunn, J. D. G. 2009, 353-7, and note 152. Even though Dunn sympathizes with Stendahl, he still talks about Paul’s experience as a conversion, with reference to Phil 3:7. He sees it as “a conversion, not from one religion to another, but from one form of Second Temple Judaism to another, that is, from Pharisaism to Jesus messianism … from a closed Judaism to an open Judaism”.

226 Paul’s death or execution is never mentioned, neither in the Acts of the Apostles, nor in the NT-letters. The conclusion of Acts 28:30-32 state that Paul stayed (in house-arrest) in Rome for two years. In Phil 1:20-25, Paul discussed the possibility of his (approaching) death, when he was a prisoner. Whether he was executed during his house-arrest in Rome is uncertain but possible. Cf. 1 Clem. 5:5-7, according to which Paul died (departed from the world, and went to the holy place), after he had preached both in the East and in the West and having taught to the whole world, and had reached the farthest limit of the West (ἐπὶ τὸ τέρμα τῆς ὀδύσσεως ἔλθων). According to First Clement, Paul apostolic work to the West seems to have been carried out to some extent.
but before Rom); 1 Cor, 53-54 (maybe the beginning of 55); 2 Cor, end of 55; Rom, 56/57; Phil, 60 (possibly 60-62); Philem, 60-62 C.E. 227

Paul’s working strategy and tactics as an apostle to the nations in the Aegean area are important for this study. First, Paul was not working alone. He followed the same principle previously used in the Antioch area, which was probably also used by the other apostles. He had several co-workers, e.g. Barnabas, Gal 2:1, 9; Silas/Silvanus, 1 Thess 1:1; 2 Cor 1:19; Timothy, 1 Thess 1:1; 2 Cor 1:1; Phil 1:1; Titus, Gal 2:1, 3; 2 Cor 2:13; Apollos, 1 Cor 1:12; and several of them were Jews. 228

Secondly, as Rainer Riesner and others have noticed, 229 there is a possibility that Paul’s principal travel route for his apostolic mission in the Aegean area was influenced by “the first and only time in the Hebrew Bible that a missionary outreach to the nation is envisaged,” 230 in Isa 66:19-20, with the hope that the diaspora Jews would form the eschatological offering. 231

Third, according to the Jerusalem agreement Paul was to proclaim the good news “only in virgin territory” among the “non-Jewish nations”, 1 Cor 3:10-11, 2 Cor 10:13-16, Gal 2:8, which may not necessarily be interpreted only as an ethnical term, but also as a territorial term, see Ch 2.3. 232

Fourth and most significant, Paul’s apostolic work was city-centred for several reasons. This is attested by Paul’s letters and by Acts 13-14 with cities such as Thessaloniki, Corinth and Ephesus. 233 One major reason was that there were large Jewish settlements in many of the larger cities besides Alexandria, Antioch, and Rome. 234 It is reasonable to assume, with Dunn and the accounts


228 Hvalvik, R. 2007, 154-78. Hvalvik identifies twenty-eight co-workers as Jewish. See also Dunn, J. D. G. 2009, 566-72.


230 Dunn, J. D. G. 2009, 542. The italic in the quotation, “to”, is original.


232 Dunn, J. D. G. 2009, 545; Bird, M. F. 2016, 71-84, 101-104. Paul’s apostolic work among the nations, understood in an ethnic or a geographical sense, is discussed further in Chs. 3-6.

233 Dunn, J. D. G. 2009, 555-66.

234 See e.g. Philo Leg. 245, Ἰουδαίοι καθ’ ἐκάστην πόλιν εἰσὶ παμπληθεῖς Ἀσίας τε καὶ Συρίας; ibid., 281-82, περὶ δὲ τῆς ἱεροπόλεως τὰ προσήκοντά μοι λεκτέον· ἐμὴ μὲν ἔστι πατρίς, μητρόπολις δὲ οὐ μιᾶς χώρας Ἰουδαίας ἀλλὰ καὶ τῶν πλείστων, διὰ τὰς ἀποικίας ἃς ἐξέπεμψεν ἐπὶ καιρῶν εἰς μὲν τὰς ὁμόρους, Ἀγριππόν, Φοινίκην, Συρίαν τὴν τε ἄλλην καὶ τὴν Κοίλην προσαγορευομένην, εἰς δὲ τὰς πόρρω διῳκισμένας, Κιλικίαν, τὰ πολλὰ τῆς Ἀσίας ἄχρι Βιθυνίας καὶ τῶν τοῦ Πόντου μυχῶν, τὸν αὐτὸν τρόπον καὶ εἰς Εὐρώπην, Θετταλίαν, Βοιωτίαν, Μακεδονίαν, Ἀργον Κρήτην, καὶ σιωπῶ τὰς πέραν
in Acts 13:14; 14:1; 16:13; 17:1, 10, 17; 18:4, 19; 19:8; 28:17, 23, that in a new city, Paul would first begin his proclamation of the good news in the synagogue.\textsuperscript{235} The Jewish communities were part of the ethnic and cultural mix in the Mediterranean cities, particular in those with seaports. The communities were held in high esteem.\textsuperscript{236} The natural place for the Jews to gather and to associate with each other was the synagogue, the prayer-house, or the homes of well-to-do Jews, which were often used for the Sabbath gatherings. It is also a fact that many non-Jews were attracted by Judaism, even though Philo, \textit{Mos.} 2.17-23, and Josephus, \textit{Ap.} 2.280, 2.123, 209-19, \textit{War} 2.462-63, 7.45, exaggerates. According to a number of Roman sources, Seneca, \textit{Ep.} 95.47; Persius, \textit{Sat.} 5.176-84; Epictetus 2.9.19-20; Plutarch, \textit{Life of Cicero} 7.6; Juvenal, \textit{Sat.} 14.96-106; Suetonius, \textit{Domitian} 12.2; Cassius Dio 67.14.1-3 this also applies for the Jews in Rome.\textsuperscript{237} Besides the Jewish majority, these gentile adherents or sympathizers, cf. Acts. 10:2, 13:16, 26, 43, 50, 16:14, 17:4, 18:7, whether called God-fearers, proselytes, or Judaizers, provided an important base for Paul’s further proclamation outside the Jewish community. Paul’s apostolic work was most certainly performed within the broader social network of the members of the communities of Christ believers. This seems to be entirely possible. How and to what extent, if at all, Paul did proclaim to others outside these social networks connected to the Jewish communities is also an important question.

Finally, it is, according to Dunn, a fact that “most of (Paul’s) letters are peppered with quotations from Scripture, the LXX”, which are an essential part of his argumentation. Paul was “comfortable with the assumption that many if not most of these references would be recognized, that they would resonate in the echo-chamber of a much wider knowledge of Israel’s scriptures”.\textsuperscript{238} One rather common conclusion and explanation is also shared by Dunn, namely: that Paul usually addressed a predominantly gentile audience. Since “the LXX was not widely known in the Greco-Roman world”, we must infer that the gentiles were familiar with and “well schooled” in the scriptures. This is only reasonable on the assumption that they had been closely connected with the Jewish community for a long time and had “attended […] (the) readings and expositions […] in the synagogue on Sabbath days”,\textsuperscript{239} cf. Apg 15:19-21. This was certainly the case with several of the gentiles, but is it

\textsuperscript{235} Dunn, J. D. G. 2009, 420 note 17, 560.
\textsuperscript{237} Dunn, J. D. G. 2009, 562, note 187.
\textsuperscript{238} \textit{ibid.}, 563.
\textsuperscript{239} \textit{ibid.}, 563. See also the position of Nanos, M. D. 1996, 73, discussed previously in this chapter.
reasonable to think that the entire gentile audience had such an education? It must be equally reasonable to infer that the many quotations and allusions from the Scripture were inserted as part of Paul’s argument because there were as many schooled Jews as gentiles in the audience. The quotations from the scriptures could have been used to convince Jews as well as gentiles of Paul’s good news. Paul’s apostolic proclamation of the good news had most certainly been directed to non-believing Jews at an earlier stage, prior to the apostolic agreement in Jerusalem. Did Paul’s teamwork involve proclamation of the good news to the Jews as well as to the gentiles at a later stage? Was this the case when he wrote his Letter to the Romans? These are questions to have in mind in the coming analysis of the Letter to the Romans. Next follows a summary and conclusion so far.

A summary and conclusion of the historical and social context of the Letter to the Romans

What we can really know of the historical and social context of Paul and the believers in Christ in Rome is rather limited. We can only give some more or less reasonable assumptions and qualified guesses. These are the suggested assumptions for this thesis, based on the discussion above:

Paul was a Jew, born and raised in the diaspora, educated in Jerusalem to become a Pharisee. After the event, by which the risen Christ, the Messiah, was revealed in him, he still regarded himself as a Jew. That event was for him a prophetic calling to proclaim the good news of God regarding Jesus as the Christ, and he became an apostle to the nations. He met opposition from some other Jews, but possibly also from some Roman authorities, and sometimes very violent opposition. The opposition from some Jews was related to for example Paul’s view on the relationship between Jews and gentiles and to what was required of the gentiles, but such opposition did not come from all Jews. As discussed in Ch. 1.3, page 36 and note 69, recent scholars have confirmed that Paul was involved in an intra-Jewish dialogue on several issues at the time, but he never left or converted from Judaism.

The early believers in Christ began as a Jewish messianic movement in Palestine. At the time of the Letter to the Romans that movement had spread into the diaspora and consisted of both Jewish and gentile believers. They were a small minority group compared to contemporary Judaism. In the diaspora the believers in Christ were city centred, mostly living in cities with a large Jewish congregation. It is reasonable to assume that the early gentile believers originated from the righteous gentiles associated with the synagogues and possibly continued to be closely associated with the synagogues during the time of Paul, at least in most cases.

The first believers in Christ in the city of Rome were of a Jewish origin. There were believers in Christ in Rome in the 40’s and possibly before that,
that is within 5-10 years after the death of Jesus. The first gentile believers in Rome probably originated from the gentiles associated with one of the many synagogues there. So, the believers in Christ in Rome consisted of both Jewish and gentile believers at the time of Paul’s Letter to the Romans. They numbered not more than 1,000 and probably fewer than that and were only a tiny minority group of the 40,000-50,000 Jews in Rome and a hardly noticeable fraction of the entire Roman population of at least 450,000 people who lived in the city.

The assemblies of believers in Christ in Rome at the time of Paul were not separated, but closely associated with the synagogues, or at least with some of them. The believers in Christ in Rome were not necessarily predominantly gentiles. It was possibly more of a 50/50 % gentiles/Jews. Paul was the apostle of the good news to the nations. He probably expected to encounter and to present his message to both a Jewish audience and a gentile audience in Rome. However, this last issue about the identity of the addressees in Rome is the subject of Ch. 2.3 next.

2.3 The Identity of the Addressees of the Letter to the Romans

In line with the methodological approach in Ch. 1.2, and as mentioned in the preparatory discussion of the historical and social context above, there is a need to study the identity of the addressees of Romans too. For Richard N. Longenecker, “crucial questions for an understanding of Paul’s letter to the Christians at Rome … have to do with the identity, character, circumstances and concerns of the apostle’s addressees.”240 At the same time, the variety of suggestions among scholars on the identity of the addressees is one reason for the lack of consensus about the purpose of Romans.241

There are several issues related to the identity of the addressees: a) whether they were of Jewish or gentile origin, believers or non-believers in Christ, b) the size of the group, the number of the believers, c) the addressees’ relationship to the surrounding society, especially to the Jewish synagogues in Rome, d) the addressees’ social status, whether they were slaves, free-persons, rich or poor, and what level of education they had, and e) Paul’s knowledge of the addressees and their situation. The issues b) to e) were discussed above in Ch. 2.2. The focus here in chapter 2.3 is on the issue a) and to some extent an elaboration on b) and c).

In the middle of the nineteenth century Ferdinand C. Baur stated that Paul’s addressees were “Jewish Christians”. Other scholars have argued for a similar

240 Longenecker, R. N. 2011, 75.
241 For more on the problems of the scholarly opinions on the purpose of Romans, see Ch. 1.3.
By contrast, most scholars today argue that the addressees of Romans are “only gentiles” (e.g. Stanley K. Stowers, Mark D. Nanos, Runar M. Thorsteinsson, A. Andrew Das, Michael Wolter), or “predominantly gentiles” (e.g. James D. G. Dunn, Samuel Byrskog, Robert Jewett, Richard N. Longenecker).

The author of an ancient Greco-Roman letter typically specified the addressees in the recipient part of the formal letter opening. It is commonly understood that Paul follows the ancient letter form, even though he extends and adapts his letter openings significantly in a personal way.

Therefore, if one wants to find out to whom Paul is writing in any of his letters except Romans, the obvious first place to look would be in the recipient part of the letter openings. That is, we should look at 1 Thess 1:1b, Gal 1:2b, 1 Kor 1:2, 2 Kor 1:1b, Fil 1:1b, Filem 1:1b-2, where the recipients or the addressees are specified with a nominal phrase in dative, including possible qualifications.

In Romans, the formal recipient part is found in Rom 1:7a. However, Paul expands and adapts the letter opening of Romans in a far more significant way than in all his other letters, and scholars and commentators agree that Paul refers to the addressees already at the end of the sender part, in 1:5-6. Further, they usually connect the identity of the addressees to Paul’s statement in the introduction of the letter body, in 1:13, where he expects to have, or to receive, some fruit also among the addressees as he has among the other gentiles or nations (καὶ ἐν ὑμῖν καθὼς καὶ ἐν τοῖς λοιποῖς ἔθνεσιν). Scholars see direct references to the addressees in the final parts of the letter, in Rom 15-16, especially in 15:16-21, in line with rhetorical theory, where the introductory part should relate to the final part of a speech (or a letter), the “the exordium should relate to the peroratio”. The direct references to the addressees in the introductory and final parts should correspond or be in line with the content of the letter body as a whole, especially were Paul seems to address (some of) his audience directly or indirectly.

To be more precise, scholars argue that, in the letter opening, the introduction and the end of the letter body, and in the letter closing, Paul gives the identity of the addressees through (A) the Greek term τὰ ἔθνη, e.g. in Rom 242

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244 Jewett, R. 2007, 96; Longenecker, R. N. 2016, 46-47. See also Ch. 3 in this dissertation.
246 *ibid.*, 42.
1:5, 13, 15:16; (B) direct and indirect use of the term in several prepositional phrases, such as ἐν πᾶσι τοῖς ἔθνεσιν in Rom 1:5, 13; (C) the named persons in the greetings in Rom 16:3-15; (D) the direct references to the addressees in the letter body at large, especially in Rom 9-11, which are in line with the references in the introductory and concluding parts. Finally (E), many scholars refers to the Edict of Claudius and the so called Wiefel-hypothesis regarding the relationship between the gentile believers in Christ and the Jews in Rome, and argue for an evident separation between the different groups. All these five points are used as arguments in favour of the assumption that Paul’s addressed only or predominantly gentiles in this letter.

In this chapter the issues (A) – (E) will be discussed, beginning with a lexical analysis of the term τὰ ἔθνη and including how we should understand the term in Paul’s other letters besides Romans. Then there will be an analysis of the references to the addressees in Romans, particularly in Rom 1:7, 5-6, 8-15, and 15:14-33; followed by the persons greeted, in 16:3-15; the references to the addressees in the letter body at large, particularly in Rom 9-11; and finally a discussion of the Edict of Claudius and the Wiefel-hypothesis.

The term τὰ ἔθνη as “the nations” or “the people of the nations” or “the gentiles”

The terms τὸ ἔθνος (sg.) and τὰ ἔθνη (pl.) occur twenty-eight times in Romans (or twenty-nine if 16:26 is original). Only the quotations of Deut 32:21 in Rom 10:19 are in the singular, usually translated as “nation” or “people”. The term τὰ ἔθνη (pl.), in e.g. 1:5, 13, and 15:16, is translated by the majority of scholars as “the gentiles”. However, the Greek terms τὸ ἔθνος (sg.) and τὰ ἔθνη (pl.) are ambiguous. Lexica translate τὰ ἔθνη (pl.) as a multitude (living together), (foreign) nations, people, gentiles, unbelievers or pagans, and Christians. In a Jewish context the term usually denoted either other people or nations in contrast to the Jewish people or nation, or those living outside the land of Israel or Judaea, e.g. in Exod 34:24, Lev 18:24. It was, though, not always used as a contrast. In some cases, the Jews can be considered part of, or closely related to, all τὰ ἔθνη, see Gen 27:29, Josh 4:24, Isa 66:18-20. See also in 1 Macc 8:23, 25, 27,

247 For a discussion of the Edict of Claudius see the previous chapter 2.2.
248 NIV, NRSV, “people” or “nation”; Bibel 2000 “folk”.
249 So Stowers, Nanos, Das, Jewett, Longenecker. Wölker has “die Heiden”, and translations e.g. Bibel 2000 “hedningar(na)”; NIV, NRSV “the Gentiles”; Cf. Dunn and NKJV who have the “nations” in 1:5 but e.g. in 1:13 “the Gentiles”.
where the people of the Jews, or the nation of the Judaeans (τὸ ἔθνος Ἰου-
δαίων),\textsuperscript{251} establishes a treaty with the Romans (Ῥωμαῖοι).

So, the term has either a geographical, ethnical or a religious connotation in lexica. In the ancient Greco-Roman world at the time of Paul and in the contemporary Jewish context, the religious aspect of for instance the word pagans was more conflated with the first two. As discussed in Ch. 2.2, the word Christian (Χριστιανός) is not used by Paul and occurs for the first time in the NT in Acts 11:26; 26:28; 1 Pet 4:16. Therefore, when translating the term τὰ ἔθνη in Romans, it is more reasonable to distinguish and choose between the geographical where and the ethnical who connotations. To determine whether τὰ ἔθνη should be rendered as the nations or people (living in the geographical area outside Judaea/Palestine), or as the gentiles (individuals or groups of people that are not Jews/Judaeans),\textsuperscript{252} we must rely on the literary context in which the term is used. The term as such is ambiguous. Paul’s other letters are part of the literary context of Romans. The term τὰ ἔθνη occurs 17 times in Paul’s other letters.\textsuperscript{253}

In Paul’s First Letter to the Thessalonians, the addressees in the assembly of believers in Christ probably had a gentile back-ground, and as such they were non-Jewish believers. This conclusion is not based on Paul’s use of the term τὰ ἔθνη in the letter opening or introduction, but this seems likely from Paul’s statement in 1 Thess 1:9 that his previous visit to Thessalia had made the addressees turn to God, away from the images or idols [of gods] (πρὸς τὸν θεὸν ἀπὸ τῶν εἰδώλων). The term τὰ ἔθνη occurs twice in 2:16 and 4:5. First, in 2:16, where Paul explains how the Jews, the Judaeans, or the people from Judaea (Ἰουδαίοι) seek to hinder him and his associates from speaking or proclaiming to the nations, the people of the nations, or the gentiles (ἡμᾶς τοῖς ἔθνεσιν λαλῆσαι). Paul is writing about his apostolic work and mission. In the close context of 2:16, Paul refers to the addressees as examples for all the believers in the Roman provinces of Macedonia (Μακεδονία) and Achaia (Ἀχαία), in 1:7, 8; 2:2; and he refers to his former visit and preaching for the addressees (in Thessalia), in 2:2-13, and to the way in which the addressees have followed the example of the assemblies in Christ, who are in Judaea (τῶν οὖσῶν ἐν τῇ Ἰουδαίᾳ), 2:14. In addition, Paul writes in 3:1 and forward about his stay in the city of Athen (Ἀθήναι). So, in 2:16, the term τὰ ἔθνη occurs in a letter context where several geographical places are mentioned. It is therefore not improbable that the term should be understood in a geographical sense. The second occurrence of τὰ ἔθνη in 1 Tess 4:5 is found in Paul’s exhortation to the addressees not to bring upon themselves desire

\textsuperscript{251} See the discussion in Ch. 2.2 about the term Jew and other suggestions as a translation of Ἰουδαίος.

\textsuperscript{252} For a similar discussion of the meaning of τὰ ἔθνη see e.g. Bird, M. F. 2016, 71-74.

\textsuperscript{253} The term τὰ ἔθνη occurs in 1 Cor 1:23; 5:1; (10:20;) 12:2; 2 Cor 11:26; Gal 1:16; 2:2, 8, 9, 12, 14, 15; 3:8 (twice), 14; 1 Thess 2:16; 4:5, a total of 16 (17) times.
and lust as the gentiles or the people of the nations (καθάπερ καὶ τὰ ἔθνη). Even if the term here, in 1 Tess 4:5, could be understood in an ethnic sense, the addressees as believers in Christ are not identified as τὰ ἔθνη but set in contrast to τὰ ἔθνη. The two occurrences of τὰ ἔθνη in First Thessalonians are thus ambiguous and can be understood in a geographical or an ethnical sense.

The Letter to the Galatians include ten occurrences of the term τὰ ἔθνη, which must be discussed in some detail.254 The believers in Christ addressed in Galatians are of a gentile origin, which seems obvious by the content of the letter, but not necessarily from Paul’s use of the term τὰ ἔθνη. How the term should be understood is ambiguous. It cannot be only an ethnic term for the gentiles. The first time the term occurs is in Gal 1:16, where Paul explains how God appointed and called him to proclaim the good news about Jesus Christ among the nations, the people of the nations, or among the gentiles (ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν). Note that the primary meaning of the preposition ἐν is locative. It indicates a location, in or among some place.

Then, in 1:17-2:10, Paul writes that three years after his call by God, having travelled into Arabia (εἰς Ἀραβίαν) and to Damascus (εἰς Δαμασκόν), he went to Jerusalem (εἰς Ἰεροσόλυμα) to meet with Cephas (Peter) and Jacob (James). After that Paul went into the districts of Syria and Cilicia (εἰς τὰ κλίματα τῆς Συρίας καὶ τῆς Κιλικίας), without having contact with the assemblies of Judaea (Ἰουδαία). After fourteen years Paul travelled to Jerusalem again, where he explained the good news that he proclaims among the nations, the people of the nations, or the gentiles (ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν) to Cephas, Jacob and Johannes (John). The other apostles saw that Paul was entrusted with the good news to the uncircumcised, as Peter was to the circumcised. And God, who had empowered Peter (literally) for the apostleship of the circumcised (εἰς ἀποστολὴν τῆς περιτομῆς), had also empowered Paul with the apostleship for or (in)to the nations, the people of the nations, or the gentiles (εἰς τὰ ἔθνη). Paul and Barnabas were to go (in)to the nations, the people of the nations, or the gentiles (εἰς τὰ ἔθνη), and Peter, Jacob and Johannes to the circumcised.

In Gal 2:11-21, which includes the report on the incident in Antiochia, where Paul approached Cephas (Peter), who used to eat together with the people of the nations or the gentiles (μετὰ τῶν ἔθνων), and although he was a Jew or Judean (Ἰουδαῖος) lived like a person of the nations or a gentile (ἔθνικός) and not like a Judean or a Jew (Ἰουδαϊκός). Paul asked Cephas why he would compel the people of the nations or the gentiles (τὰ ἔθνη) to live like Judeans or Jews (Ἰουδαῖς). Paul then states that both he and Peter are by nature Judeans or Jews and not sinners from the nations, the people of the nations,

254 The other 4 (5) occurrences of τὰ ἔθνη are in First and Second Corinthians, where the term is also ambiguous. To understand τὰ ἔθνη there as the people of the nations is a possibility, and not necessary just understood in an ethnic sense.
or from the gentiles (ἐξ ἐθνῶν), before he continues with the elaboration about righteousness, faith, the law, etc. So, in Gal 1:16-2:15, Paul uses the term τὰ ἔθνη also in a geographical context, not necessarily as an ethnic term only. It is more ambiguous. Similarly, the term τὰ ἔθνη occurs twice in Gal 3:8 and in 3:14, which promises that the blessings of Abraham shall be given in Christ Jesus for or into the nations, the people of the nations or the gentiles (εἰς τὰ ἔθνη). Here to it could be understood either as a geographical or an ethnic expression. Therefore, Paul’s use of the term τὰ ἔθνη ten times in Gal 1-3 should not be unequivocally translated in an ethnic sense as the gentiles, but could also be understood in a geographical sense, even though the addressees are of a gentile origin.

Thus, the meaning of the term τὰ ἔθνη is ambiguous in the context of Paul’s other letters. In the Letter to the Romans the term occurs (at least) 28 times, which indicates its significance for the message of this letter and for the identity of its addressees. Next follows a detailed study of the identity of the addressees of the letter, particularly of the references in the letter opening, the introduction, the ending, and the closing. First the letter opening.

The letter opening in Rom 1:5-6 and 1:7a

Rom 1:7a and the formal recipient part

We begin with Rom 1:7a and the recipient part proper, where the formal reference to the addressees of the Letter to the Romans appears, as it does in Paul’s other letters in accordance with the ancient letter conventions:

πᾶσιν τοῖς οὖσιν ἐν Ῥώμῃ ἀγαπητοῖς θεοῦ κλητοῖς ἁγίοις

It is interesting that the formal recipient part in Rom 1:7a is one of the shortest in all Paul’s letter.255 Paul explicitly addresses all those who are in Rome (πᾶσιν τοῖς οὖσιν ἐν Ῥώμῃ), and the determiner all (πᾶσιν) is emphatically placed first. The expression should possibly be understood as to all those addressed in Rome, whether Jews or Gentiles.256 There are two qualification of the addressees. They are the beloved of God (ἀγαπητοῖς θεοῦ) and called (to be) holy (κλητοῖς ἁγίοις). Being loved by God was an idea current throughout the Greco-Roman world, but according to many scholars the epithet has, in the words of Dunn, “the sense of a more established relation given by the

255 Only the recipient part in Galatians are shorter, ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις τῆς Γαλατίας, in all other letters longer.

256 Dunn, J. D. G. 1988, 19, states that πᾶσιν possible suggests “some tension among the different Christian groups in Rome”. This is to say too much at this stage of the analysis though. Better here is to see it more neutral, as a reference to several groups of believers with uncertain identity.
adjective [and] is more characteristically Jewish”, see e.g. Ps 60:7 (LXX 59:7); 108:7 (LXX 107:7); Jes 41:8; Dan 3:35; 47:22; and cf. Rom 11:28.

The second qualification called (to be) holy (κλητοῖς ἁγίοις) is more often regarded as a Jewish epithet. The term called, chosen, elect, or invited (κλητός) is prominent for example in LXX Isa 41:9; 42:6; 43:1; 45:3-4; 48:12, 15; 49:1; 51:2, and also the equivalent Hebrew term in the DSS, e.g. in 1QM 3:2; 4:10-11; 1QSa 1:27; 2:2, 11; CD 2:11; 4:3-4. It is reasonable to understand the epithet holy (ἅγιος) from the Jewish perspective on holiness. The term is often used to describe the entire community or Israel as chosen and set apart for God as saints, see for example Lev 19:2; 20:7, 26; Num 15:40; Deut 7:6; 14:2; 26:19; Ps 16:3 (LXX 15:3); 34:10 (LXX 33:10); Isa 4:3; Dan 7:18, 21, 22, 25; 8:24; Wisd Sol 18:9, and in the DSS, 1QS 8:4-9:12; 11:5-9; 1QH 11:21-23; CD 7:4-6. See also the use of the combination κλητὴ ἁγία (fem.) in Ex 12:16; Lev 23 (ten times); Num 28:25. It is likely that the two qualifications of the addressees are expressions of Paul’s view of the addressees as currently both beloved by God and called (to be) holy, and since the epithets are characteristically Jewish they are used by Paul with a Jewish perspective in mind. We cannot determine with any certainty whether there is any distinction indicated between the two epithets, or whether they are both applied to all the addressees. Both epithets probably relate to all the addressees who are in Rome.

In addition, Paul does not refer to the addressees with the term assembly or congregation (ἐκκλησία) in the letter opening in Romans. For Dunn this “may indicate that the number of believers in Rome were too large for them


259 Cf. Jewett, R. 2007, 114, who argues that the epithet called (to be) holy refers to “Jewish Christians, loyal to or associated with Jerusalem”. In my opinion this is to say too much based on the text given at this point.

260 Cf. the letter openings in 1 Cor 1:2a, 2 Cor 1:1b, Gal 1:2b, Phil 1:1b, 1 Thess 1:1b, Phlm 1:2c. It is only in Romans and Philippians that the addressees are not referred to as ἡ ἐκκλησία.
to meet together all at once” in the same place. However, if they were divided into several assemblies and met in several places, Paul could easily have used αἱ ἐκκλησίαι as he does in Gal 1:2b. Another possibility is that the Roman believers in Christ did not call their assembly or assembly place ἐκκλησία. They could have used different terms and they could have met in several different places with different epithets. The absence of the term ἐκκλησία in the recipient part of Romans could indicate that the addressed believers in Christ were associated with, or met in, one or several of the different synagogues in Rome.261 Several scholars understand the term ἐκκλησία as a reference to the special assembly, or the meeting place, for believers in Christ and translated as “church” or “Christian congregation”.262 The term ἐκκλησία can denote any ordinary assembly in the Greco-Roman world, and it is also and maybe more valid here one of several terms used for the Jewish assembly in the diaspora, usually translated as “synagogue”.263 However, the term ἐκκλησία is not attested in the external sources for the synagogues in Rome. Only the term “assembly, place of assembly” (συναγωγή) is attested in the catacombs in Rome, see also Ch. 2.2 for more on this.264

In summary: It is difficult to establish whether the addressees were of a Jewish or a gentile origin or both, and in what proportions, from the information given in the formal recipient part in Rom 1:7a. What can be said is that Paul addresses all (πᾶσιν) those who are in Rome, beloved by God, called to be holy. Scholars argue that information about the identity of the addressees is given already at the end of the formal sender part in Rom 1:5-6.

Rom 1:5-6
One of the remarkable feature of the letter opening in Romans is the unusually long and adapted sender part in Rom 1:1-6.265 It declares that Paul is the single sender, qualified as an apostle and set apart for the good news of God about Jesus Christ. In 1:5-6 follows a qualification of Jesus Christ as the cause or


262 For example, Jewett, R. 2007, 63-70, 941-4, 949, 958-59; Longenecker, R. N. 2016, 1055, 1064; ibid. 2011, 75.


265 For a thorough analysis of the letter opening see Ch. 3. Here is the focus on the identity of the addressees.
agent, through whom Paul and possible others, “we”, have received the gracious gift and apostleship.\textsuperscript{266} This gift and apostleship is for the hearkening of faith among all the nations or gentiles (ἐν πᾶσιν τοῖς ἐθνεσιν) for the sake of the name of Jesus, and, with a final qualification, in 1:6, among whom you too are called of Jesus Christ (ἐν οἷς ἐστε καὶ ύμεῖς κλητοὶ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ). Scholars see the two prepositional phrases ἐν πᾶσιν τοῖς ἐθνεσιν and ἐν οἷς ἐστε καὶ ύμεῖς κλητοὶ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ together as references to and identifications of the addressees. Most scholars translate the term τὰ ἔθνη, in 1:5, as the gentiles, that is, as the non-Jewish people in the Roman Empire and understand the addressees to be the non-Jewish inhabitants in Rome. The prepositional phrases with ἐν are treated more or less as telic (indicating a purpose of a goal) or partitive (indicating a part or a proportion of a larger unit) and are connected with Paul’s apostleship to the gentiles.\textsuperscript{267}

It is correct that the emphatic phrase in Rom 1:6 is a reference to the addressees in Rome, literally “you are also you!” (ἐστε καὶ ύμεῖς), just before the formal recipient part in 1:7a. Since reading or hearing a letter was and is a linear process, the readers or listeners must have noticed particularly that Paul mentions or refers to the addressees already in the sender formula, before the formal recipient part.\textsuperscript{268} However, there are a number of problems with the common interpretation that Rom 1:5-6 proves that the addressees are only or predominantly gentiles.

As discussed above, the lexical meaning of the term τὰ ἔθνη, used in 1:5, is ambiguous. In addition, there are several ways to understand and relate the third prepositional phrases with τὰ ἔθνη in 1:5c. The first phrase in 1:5a, which begins with through whom (δι’ οὗ), connects most naturally to Jesus Christ (Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ) in 1:4. It is through Jesus Christ that they (“we”) have received the gift and apostleship. The second prepositional phrase in 1:5b qualifies and points to the goal or the purpose of the apostleship. It is for the hearkening of faith. The third phrase in 1:5c, ἐν πᾶσιν τοῖς ἐθνεσιν, literally in all

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\textsuperscript{266} For a discussion of the problem of the literal (authorial) plural see e.g. Byrskog, S. 1996, “Co-Senders, Co-Authors and Paul’s Use of the First Person Plural”, \textit{ZNW}, 87.3, 230-250; Byrskog, S. 2006, 14. In his commentary Byrskog translates the first person plural with “I”, but states in the article quoted above on p. 249 that it is “not possible … to find much evidence of the literary plural in the Pauline letters. The plurals are mostly real plurals.” However, Romans is not studied in this article. See also Cranfield, C. E. B. 1975; Wolter, M. 2014; Longenecker, R. N. 2016, who understand it as “I”. Cf. Jewett, R. 2007; Dunn, J. D. G. 1988; Porter, S. E. 2015, who all understand it as “we”.

\textsuperscript{267} Jewett, R. 2007, 111; Byrskog, S. 2006, 15, 21-22; Nanos, M. D. 1996, 78; Stowers, S. 1994, 30-31; Cranfield, C. E. B. 1975, 67; Wolter, M. 2014, 94. Even if scholars translate the phrase as “among the gentiles”, they often give a more telic or partitive explanation, and connect the phrase to Paul’s work as an apostle “to” the gentiles.

\textsuperscript{268} Thorsteinsson, R. M. 2003, 105. Cf. Cranfield, C. E. B. 1975, 1:67-8, who argues, although not convincingly, that Rom 1:6 is more of a parenthetical comment and do not necessarily draw attention. I agree with Thorsteinsson that Rom 1:6 must have been noted to a great extent by the hearers and readers of the letter.
τοῖς ἔθνεσιν, is more problematic. Should it be understood as locative, among all τοῖς ἔθνεσιν, or as telic as many scholars seems to do, to all τοῖς ἔθνεσιν? The preposition ἐν has a multitude of connotations, but the basic meaning is geographical, as a reference to a location or a position, in, among (or possibly instrumental, with, but most likely not here in 1:5).269 So, the meaning should be among all τοῖς ἔθνεσιν. Further, what does the prepositional phrase qualify? It could be an adverbial attached to the verb “we have received”, but it fits better as a prepositional attribute either to “apostleship” or to “hearkening”? There is no major difference in meaning between the two choices. Following the order in the text, the meaning would be “we” have received the gift and apostleship for the hearkening of faith among all τοῖς ἔθνεσιν.270

The prepositional phrase in 1:6, ἐν οἷς ἐστε καὶ ὑμεῖς κλητοὶ Ιησοῦ Χριστοῦ, follows directly and concludes the sender part. It is common among scholars to understand ἐν οἷς as referring to τοῖς ἔθνεσιν in the third prepositional phrase in 1:5c, and thus the beginning of 1:6 is understood as ἐν “the gentiles” ἔστε. Cranfield states that Rom 1:6 is “grammatically a relative clause dependent on ἔθνεσιν”,271 I agree that this interpretation is possible. However, even if we correlate ἐν οἷς with τοῖς ἔθνεσιν, the question how to understand ἐν οἷς still remains. It is reasonable that ἐν οἷς in 1:6 should be understood as locative, in the same way as ἐν πᾶσιν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν in 1:5, that is as “in or among whom” (οἷς referring to τοῖς ἔθνεσιν). If it is suggested that the addressees should be understood more partitive, as only a part of a larger group, or only as those having their origin from πᾶσιν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν, I believe that it would have been more natural for Paul to use the preposition ἐκ, and the phrase ἐξ ὥν understood as ἐκ πάτων εθνῶν,272 instead of as it is now ἐν οἷς. But still τὰ ἔθνη is ambiguous, not only “the gentiles”.

In summary so far: In the formal receiver part in 1:7a, the addressees in Rome are given the epithets beloved by God (ἀγαπητοῖς θεοῦ) and called (to be) holy (κλητοῖς ἁγίοις). Both these expressions may have a Jewish connotation. The addressees are also qualified as called or called ones (κλητοί) in the sender part in 1:6, and they are among whom (ἐν οἷς), which refers to τοῖς ἔθνεσιν in 1:5. The term τὰ ἔθνη could refer to both the nations (i.e. as different geographical areas) or to the gentiles (non-Jewish people). The city of Rome was placed at the centre of τὰ ἔθνη, both in the geographical area of the nations, and among the non-Jewish peoples who lived in the Roman Empire. However, as discussed in Ch. 2.2, Rome also had a substantial group of Jews,

270 See also Bird, M. F. 2016, 71-74.
272 LSJ, ἐκ, I.4, III.2.3, 498-99; BDAG, ibid., 3.a, b, 4.a, 296; Thayer, J. H. 2007 (1896), ibid., I.2, II.1.2, 189-90.
who probably numbered between 40,000 and 50,000, and who lived among the gentiles, and among the nations.

There is therefore no certain conclusion from the study of the letter opening alone. We cannot be sure or assume that the addressees were exclusively or predominantly gentiles. It is a more open question. What we can say is that Paul addresses all those who are in Rome, possibly both Jewish and gentile believers in Christ. The next step is to study the introduction of the letter body in Rom 1:8-15, where scholars have found more information that the addressees consist of only or predominantly gentile believers in Christ.

The introduction of the letter body in Rom 1:8-15

The introduction of the letter body has a direct thematic connection to the letter opening and develops some of its major thoughts and themes and gives additional information. For the discussion here, the addressees are referred to directly in the introduction. The textual arrangement of the introduction is often seen as consisting of two major but connected parts, Rom 1:8-12 and 13-15, although this is debated among scholars. First the analysis of 1:8-12.

Rom 1:8-12

In Rom 1:8, Paul gives thanks to God through Jesus Christ for “all of you” (πάντων ὑμῶν). Paul is the active subject and he is thankful for all the addressees. The addressees become important already in this first line. The reason for Paul’s thanksgiving is the addressees’ faith, which is spoken about and known in the whole world. In 1:9-10, Paul explains that God, whom he serves in spirit in the good news of God’s son (Jesus Christ), is Paul’s witness that he mentions the addressees incessantly in his prayers. Paul wishes finally to succeed to visit the addressees in Rome. In 1:11-12, he repeats his desire and eagerness to come and to share some spiritual gifts with them in order to strengthen them. He clarifies that the reason is the mutual encouragement in their shared faith.

So, in the first part of the introduction of the letter body, Paul mentions the addressees and states twice his desire and eager wish to come in person in order to further develop and strengthen their relationship. There is no hint in this first part whether the addressees are of a gentile or Jewish origin. What is certain, though, is that Paul is aware of their faith, which indicates that the addressees are already believers in Christ.

Rom 1:13-15

In the second part of the introduction of the letter body, Rom 1:13-15, Paul mentions the addressees directly in a familiar way as brothers (and sisters)
(ἀδελφοί). Paul wants them to know that he has planned to come to them many times, but he has been hindered so far. He repeats the reason for coming, so that he might have some fruit or harvest also “among you” (ἐν ὑμῖν), just as among the other or the remaining nations or gentiles (ἐν τοῖς λοιποῖς ἔθνεσιν). Paul has an obligation to both Greeks and barbarians (Ἑλληνες τε καὶ βαρβάροις), to both the wise and the foolish. Therefore, he declares his eagerness to proclaim the good news also “to you” (ὑμῖν), to those (who are or who live) in Rome (τοῖς ἐν Ῥώμῃ).

What is certain is that Paul relates the addressees to the other or the remaining τὰ ἔθνη, but the term τὰ ἔθνη is as ambiguous here as it was in the letter opening. It refers to either the nations (geographical) or to the gentiles (ethnic). The prepositional phrases that begin with ἐν probably refer to a location, and should be translated “among”, since Paul refers in 1:15 to his eagerness to bring or proclaim the good news also to the addressees, to those (who live) in Rome, which is a reference to a location or a geographical statement. In addition, the reference to Greeks and barbarians (Ἑλληνες τε καὶ βαρβάροις) in 1:14, to which Paul has obligations, is significant. The word Ἑλληνες is a reference to people who speak the Greek language, or to people of Greek culture. It does not refer to people of any specific nation, but to all who came under the influence of Greek culture.274 The word βάρβαρος was (originally) used in Greek as a contrast to Ἑλληνες and the term is used for people who do not speak the Greek-language, or to people who are not of Greek culture.275 Paul’s use here in Romans is not so much a contrast as a reference to two related groups of people. Greeks and barbarians could probably be Paul’s reference to people who speak Greek as well as to those who speak Latin or other languages, but who live in the Roman Empire outside Judaea/Palestine, that is among the gentile (non-Jewish) people or the nations. In the city of Rome, Latin and Greek were common among all its inhabitants. It should be noted that the Jews in Rome were mostly Greek-speaking and some (possibly up to 25%) also spoke Latin. It is reasonable to assume that several Jews also knew Hebrew and/or Aramaic, but how many of them is uncertain, possibly only a minority.276

Hence, it cannot be decided with certainty if the addressees were of Jewish and/or gentile origin. Even if we take the view that all the addressees in Rome were included in the term τὰ ἔθνη, Rome was the centre of the nations. Rome included a substantial number of Jews, who are truly also part of those (who live) in Rome, and they are Jews in or among τὰ ἔθνη, in the diaspora. They lived among the people who spoke Greek or Latin, and most Jews in Rome spoke Greek or Latin themselves.

274 LSI, Ἑλλην, 536; BDAG, ibid., 318; Thayer, J. H. 2007 (1896), ibid., 205.
275 LSI, βαρβάρος, 306; BDAG, ibid., 166; Thayer, J. H. 2007 (1896), ibid., 95.
276 Leon, H. J. 1995, 75-92. See also Ch. 2.2 of this dissertation.
In summary: From the analysis of the letter opening, Rom 1:1-7, and the introduction, 1:8-15, there are no certain answers, especially not to the question whether the addressees consisted exclusively or predominantly of gentiles. We must therefore continue with the analysis of the end of the letter body in Rom 15:14-33 and with the personal greetings in 16:1-15.277

The end of the letter body in Rom 15:14-33 and the greetings in 16:1-16:15

Scholars generally agree that the end of the letter body is Rom 15:14-33, and the letter closing is 16:1-27. We begin with the ending in 15:14-33.

Rom 15:14-33

Several scholars argue that the information in Rom 15:14-33 supports the view that the addressees of Romans consisted of only, or predominantly, gentiles. Particularly the information in 15:16 and 18 are treated as evidence for a gentile audience. According to A. Andrew Das, “Romans 15:15-16 must be considered in connection to the evidence of Rom 1:5-6, 13-15”, where the term τὰ ἔθνη is translated ethnically as “the gentiles”.278 Runar M. Thorsteinsson argues that in these passages, “Paul addresses an audience of gentile origin”, and concludes that in the letter as a whole “(t)he letter’s most explicit references … attest an audience of gentile origin”.279 Before them Stanley K. Stowers argued for “the readers as gentiles”. For him “Paul describes himself not as the apostle who works geographically among gentiles but in no uncertain terms as the apostle responsible for the gentiles.” Stowers sees Rom 15:14-33 as one of the key texts in Romans, besides the letter opening and the introduction, and Rom 11.280 This position can be problematized in several ways.

Paul addresses the recipients directly in Rom 15:14 as my brothers (and sisters) (ἀδελφοί μου) and commends them in a number of ways. In 15:15-17, Paul states that he has written to remind the addressees in Rome (ὑμῖν) about the gift or grace that has been given to him. Paul is the servant of Christ Jesus and of the good news of God for the gentiles or into the nations (εἰς τὰ ἔθνη), and in order that the offering of the gentiles or the nations (ἡ προσφορὰ τῶν ἔθνων) might be well-pleasing and made holy, in or by, the holy spirit. Paul therefore takes pride only in Christ Jesus for everything achieved and that pertains to God. In Rom 15:18-19, Paul explains that he can speak boldly only because the source of his work is the Messiah (Χριστός) who has brought about the hearkening of the gentiles or the nations (εἰς ὑπακοὴν ἐθνῶν). Paul

277 For a detailed analysis of the ending of the letter body, Rom 15:14-33, see Ch. 5, and of the letter closing, 16:1-27, see Ch. 6.
279 Thorsteinsson, R. M. 2003, 102-113, 121.
280 Stowers, S. K. 1994, 43-44.
has worked from Jerusalem all the way to Illyricum to fulfil (his role as a servant of) the good news of the Christ, the Messiah.

The information regarding the addressees of Romans in 15:14-19 does not point with any certainty to either Jews or gentiles. They are just called brothers (and sisters) in 15:14. The term τὰ ἔθνη occurs twice in 15:16, and once in 15:18. The term is found in two prepositional phrase, first in 15:16a, εἰς τὰ ἔθνη, where the preposition εἰς indicates: to, into, or among a place or position, or of presence in an area, and in 15:18, εἰς ὑπακοὴν ἐθνῶν, where the preposition should be understood as into, to, for, or in order to, as an indication of a goal or a purpose. In addition, the term τὰ ἔθνη appears in the expression “the offering of τῶν ἔθνων” in 15:16c. This multivalent expression will be analysed in more detail in Ch. 5.2, observations (A) and (B). In short, the Greek word προσφορά can refer both to the act of offering and/or to the gift offered, and the genitive τῶν ἔθνων can be understood as a subjective, objective or a genitive of apposition. For the discussion here, the phrases and expressions that include the term τὰ ἔθνη are followed by Paul’s geographical description of his previous apostolic work in 15:19, i.e. of Paul’s missionary work from Jerusalem and the surrounding area all the way to Illyricum. Thus, the term τὰ ἔθνη in 15:14-19 can be understood as the gentiles (ethnical), or maybe better as the nations (geographical location). If Paul was inspired by Isa 66:19-20, as argued by several scholars, the offering of the nations could refer to the offering of both the gentiles and the scattered exiles of Israel. The latter would refer to the hope, expressed in Isa 66:20, where Jews in the diaspora form the eschatological offering. For further discussion on this see below. Therefore, the conclusion that the addressees of Romans was exclusively or predominantly gentiles, based on the geographical description of Paul’s serving the good news and his apostolic work into τὰ ἔθνη, from Jerusalem to Illyricum in 15:14-19, as many scholars do, is not at all certain.

In Rom 15:20-24, Paul states his ambition to proclaim the good news where (geographical place) (ὁποῦ) the Christ, the Messiah, had not been named, in order that he would not build on another’s foundation. Paul’s proclamation was intended to inform those who had not seen or heard, so that they would understand. This is the reason why Paul had been hindered for so long to come to the addressees (τοῦ ἐλθεῖν πρὸς ὑμᾶς, ὑμᾶς), but now he has no more places (left) in those (geographical) districts (ἐν τοῖς κλίμασι τούτοις) where he needs to fulfil the good news. He repeats that he has been longing for such a long time to come to the addressees in Rome (τοῦ ἐλθεῖν πρὸς ὑμᾶς, ὑμᾶς), and when he will eventually go on to Spain (a geographical place), he hopes to see (visit) them

281 LSJ, εἰς, 491-2; BDAG, ibid., 288-91; Thayer, J. H. 2007 (1896), ibid., 183-6.
283 LSJ, ὅπου, 1241-42; Thayer, J. H. 2007 (1896), ibid., 449-50, translates ὅπου as (1) “where” (geographical place), (2) “where” (circumstance or premise), or (3) “since” or “whereas” (reason). The primary meaning of ὅπου is an adv. of geographical place, “where”.

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(θεάσασθαι ὑμᾶς) on his way. He also hopes to be accompanied or helped (equipped) further by the addressees, but only after he first has had his fill of them for a time. Thus, Paul’s description of his apostolic work in 15:20-24, in places (geographically) where Christ has not been named before, can be seen as Paul’s explanation why he has been hindered for so long to come to Rome, but it does not say anything specific about whether the addressees in Rome were Jews or gentiles.

In Rom 15:25-29, Paul continues with his travel plans that now he wanders (goes) to Jerusalem (a geographical place) to serve the holy ones, there. Macedonia and Achaia (geographical areas of the nations or a reference to the people who live there) were pleased and determined, or had decided to establish a close fellowship, or relationship, with the poor of the holy ones in Jerusalem, since they were indeed their debtors. If the gentiles or the nations (τὰ ἔθνη) have a share or fellowship in the spiritual assets of the holy ones, they (τὰ ἔθνη) are indebted to serve them with their material goods. Paul concludes that when he has completed this task and sealed this fruit with the holy ones, he will leave for Spain via those in Rome (the addressees). Thus, he refers to his future geographical travel plan and he knows that when he comes to them (the addressees in Rome) he will bring with him the fullness of the blessing of Christ.

So, in 15:25-29, Paul’s reference to τὰ ἔθνη is a reference either to the gentiles, or, maybe more likely here, to those who live among the nations, since the reference to Macedonia and Achaia indicate a geographical area or nation. This is similar to the previous geographical description of the apostolic work in 15:14-19 and 20-24. However, the statement that τὰ ἔθνη have an obligation to the holy ones, possibly to the Jewish believers in Jerusalem, does not indicate per se that the addressees in Rome were of an exclusively or predominantly gentile origin. It rather means that the believers, both gentiles and Jews, who live in Macedonia and Achaia, have such obligations.

Finally, in Rom 15:30-33, the last paragraph of the end of the letter body, Paul admonishes the addressees (ὑμᾶς ἀδελφοὶ) directly to struggle together with him, through Jesus Christ and the love of the spirit, in the prayers to God that Paul will be saved from those not convinced (the non-believers) in Judaea (ἐν τῇ Ἰουδαίᾳ). He also asks them to pray that his service in Jerusalem might be well-pleasing or acceptable to the holy ones. The aim of all this is that, when Paul comes to the addressees in Rome (ἐλθὼν πρὸς ὑμᾶς) in joy and through the will of God, they will be refreshed and able to rest together. Paul ends with the wish that the God of peace may be with them all. Thus, the addressees in Rome are directly addressed as brothers (and sisters) (ἀδελφοὶ), but whether they are Jews or Gentiles is not clear.

See also Ch. 5.2, observation (B), below.
Thus, Paul repeatedly mentions the addressees in Rom 15:14-33, and his wish to come and visit them. He clarifies his plans to travel to Spain and to Jerusalem and Judaea (geographical places), but he does not mention these plans as frequently as his hope to visit Rome. Paul’s descriptions in 15:14-33 of both his previous apostolic work and his future travel plans in specific geographical terms are most importantly for the discussion here, since this is an indication that τὰ ἔθνη should be understood primarily in geographical terms rather than as an ethnic term. Once again and to elaborate some more, it is possible that Paul’s geographical travel plan was linked to Isa 66:18-21. In Isaiah a missionary outreach to the nations is envisaged, both in order to restore the scattered exiles of Israel to their homeland, and as an eschatological pilgrimage by the nations (τὰ ἔθνη) to Zion. According to Dunn, “the principal direction of travel envisaged in the nations listed in Isa 66:19 is roughly the direction of Paul’s mission.”

In summary: Neither the analysis of Rom 15:14-33, nor of 1:1-7 and 8-15 above, can establish whether the addressees of Romans were exclusively or predominantly gentiles. They could very well be a mixed group of Jewish and gentile believers who lived in Rome, at the centre of the geographical area of all the nations. Paul had previously worked in Jerusalem and the surrounding area, all the way to Illyricum, and he is now eager to come to Rome and to visit the assemblies there as part of his future apostolic work to the West, but only after he has made another visit to Jerusalem. The next step is to analyse the identity of the persons referred to in the greetings, in Rom 16:3-15.

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285 Riesner, R. 1994, 216-25, 248-73; Dunn, J. D. G. 2009, 541-44, note 84, for more references. From TLG, LXX Isa 66:18-21, ἔρχομαι συναγαγεῖν πάντα τὰ ἔθνη καὶ τὰς γλώσσας, καὶ ἔξουσιν καὶ ὄψονται τὴν δόξαν μου καὶ καταλείψω ἐπ' αὐτῶν σημεῖα καὶ ἐξαποστελῶ ἐξ αὐτῶν σεσῳσμένους εἰς τὰ ἔθνη εἰς Θαρσις καὶ Φουδ καὶ Λουδ καὶ Μοσοχ καὶ Θοβελ καὶ εἰς τὴν Ἑλλάδα καὶ εἰς τὰς νήσους τὰς πόρρω οὐκ ἀκηκόασίν μου τὸ ὄνομα οὐδὲ ἑωράκασιν τὴν δόξαν μου καὶ άρα ἐξαποστελῶ τοὺς ἀδελφοὺς ὑμῶν ἐκ πάντων τῶν ἔθνων δῶρον κυρίῳ μεθ’ ἵππων καὶ ἁρμάτων ἐν λαμπήναις ἡμιόνων μετὰ σκιαδίων εἰς τὴν ἁγίαν πόλιν Ιερουσαλημ εἰπέν κύριος ὡς ἄν ἐνέγκαισαν οἱ υἱοὶ Ισραηλ. ἐμοὶ τὰς θυσίας αὐτῶν μετὰ ψαλμῶν εἰς τὸν οἶκον κυρίου καὶ ἀπ’ αὐτῶν λήψωμαι ἔμοι ἱερεῖς καὶ Λευίτας εἰπέν κύριος.

286 Dunn, J. D. G. 2009, 542.
Rom 16:3-15
To understand the identity of the letter addressees, it is meaningful to study what can be deduced about the persons in Rome explicitly referred to in the letter closing in Rom 16:3-15. Scholarly opinions are however rather diverse how to interpret the information in the passage.

For example, Stanley K. Stowers accepts that at least five of the names (19%) in Rom 16:3-15 are Jewish, and he problematizes their impact on the identity of the addressees in Rome. According to Stowers, Prisca and Aquila could be just “plain Christians” among the gentile believers, or they could be “Jews who serve as resident sojourners among their gentile comrades”. For Stowers the addressees in Romans is regarded as “only Gentiles”.287 Robert Jewett is more ambiguous regarding the identity of the names. He suggests that seven of the named persons (27%) have a specific Jewish identity. At the same time he lists as many as sixteen of the persons (62%) as “early Christian leaders,” whom Paul had probably met during their exile due to the Edict of Claudius when the “Jewish Christian leaders” where expelled and the “house congregations” continued on their own with “Gentile leaders” (see more on the Edict of Claudius below). These sixteen persons, possibly Jewish leaders, were now back in Rome, but Jewett still believes that the addressees in Romans were “predominantly Gentile”.288 James D. G. Dunn identifies eight names (31%) as Jewish and concludes that the addresses of the letter were “predominantly Gentile”, but with the qualification that the Jewish minority was substantial, 30% or more.289 The last example is Richard N. Longenecker, who thinks that all those mentioned (100%) “were probably Jewish believers in Jesus”, who had left Rome because of the Edict of Claudius, but who had now returned, either before or just after Claudius’ death in 54 C.E. Longenecker concludes that the letter addressees “included both Jewish and Gentile believers in Jesus, though with Gentile Christians in the majority.”290 With these different scholarly views in mind, it seems meaningful to analyse the identity of these persons referred to in Rom 16 in greater detail, and to discuss their bearing on the question of the addressees of Romans.

First, according to Jewett, most Greek-speaking persons in Rome, including those with a Jewish background, were slaves or former slaves.291 This is in accordance with my analysis in chapter 2.2 above. In the mid-50’s C.E. many Jews were still slaves, freed persons, or their descendants. Several Jews were also Roman citizens.292 According to Harry L. Leon and his study of the 551

290 Longenecker, R. N. 2016, 1066 and 9.
292 For more on this, see chapter 2.2 above.
names in the inscriptions of the Jewish catacombs in Rome, there are 254 Latin names (46 %), 175 Greek names (32 %), 72 Semitic names (13 %), 35 Latin + Greek (6 %), 12 Latin + Semitic (2 %), plus 3 doubtful names. If these proportions of the names in the Jewish catacombs are characteristic for the Jews in Rome at the time of Romans in the 50’s C.E., a great majority of the Jews in Rome, possibly up to 80-90%, had Latin or Greek names and not necessarily Semitic names. Consequently, we cannot determine whether a person is a Jew or gentile by the name only.

There are the twenty-six persons in Rome who are explicitly referred to in the list of greetings in Rom 16:3-15. Andronicus, Junia, and Herodian are called by Paul “my” kinsfolk or compatriots (οἱ συγγενεῖς μου); Prisca, Aquila and Urbanus are named his co-workers (οἱ συνεργοί); Mary/Miriam, Tryphaina, Tryphosa and the beloved Persis are described as hardworking (κοπιάω); Epainetos, the first in Asia (to come) into Christ, and Ampliatus and Stachus, “my” beloved ones (οἱ ἀγαπητοί μου); Rufus and his mother are included among the chosen ones (οἱ ἐκληκτοί); Apelles, the approved one in Christ (ὁ δόκιμος ἐν Χριστῷ); Asynkritos, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas, and some others unnamed, are described as brothers (ὁ ἀδελφός); Philologos, Julia, Nereus and his sister, Olympas, and some others, are all called the holy ones (οἱ πάντες ἅγιοι).

Of these twenty-six persons explicitly referred to, and of which twenty-four are named, three and probably an additional five were Jews (that is 30 %); Andronicus, Junia and Herodian are explicitly called Paul’s kinsmen/relatives (συγγενεῖς), in Rom 16:7, 11, and, according to Dunn, Prisca, Aquila, Mary/Miriam, Rufus and his mother, in 16:3, 6, 13, were probably also Jews. Of the remaining eighteen, three had Latin and fifteen had Greek names. If the names in the Jewish catacombs above are representative, it is not possible to say whether these eighteen persons who had Latin or Greek names had a Jewish or gentile background. There is a possibility that several of them were Jews, or proselytes and thus treated as fully Jews and not regarded as gentiles anymore.

According to Jewett, all the three Latin names might be names of slaves or freed persons, and two of them, Ampliatus and Julia, are related to names found in the Jewish catacombs. In addition, thirteen of the fifteen Greek names may be names of slaves or freed persons. So, according to Jewett, sixteen of

294 Dunn, J. D. G. 2009, 869; Cf. Jewett, R. 2007, 953, who agrees with seven of eight names in Dunn’s list above, but not with Prisca, whom Jewett believes had a Latin origin; Lampe, P. & Johnson, M.D. 2003, 74-75, only clearly attest that three people had a Jewish origin.
the eighteen Latin or Greek names may possibly be names of slaves or freed persons. Whether these sixteen persons were of a Jewish or Gentile origin is not certain since many of the Jews in Rome had a background as slaves. Also, according to Dunn and BDAG, one of the two remaining Greek names – Apelles – is common among Jews.297

The five people in the group called all the holy ones (οἱ πάντες ἅγιοι) that is Philologos, Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas were probably Jews or proselytes, since, as Jewett argues, Paul does refer to Jewish Christ believers in Judaea as the saints, for example in 1 Cor 16:1; 2 Cor 8:4; 9:12. Also according to Jewett, in Rom 1:7, 11:16, 12:13, 15:25, 26, 31, the saints probably refers to the Jewish believers in Jerusalem or in Rome.298 All the five names in this group of the holy ones in Rome in 16:15, may be names of slaves or of freed persons. Julia is a Latin female, often a name of a slave. As discussed above, Roman Jews had often a background as slaves. According to Leon, “Roman Jews had accepted the Latin names of their Roman neighbors to a much greater extent than they had adopted the Latin language”, and a Jewish female “was more likely to receive a Latin name than the boys”.299 Still, Jewett concludes, particularly about these five names in 16:15 that “[t]here are no indications of Jewish background … in the names of the leaders of this group”.300 What is the difference between all the holy ones (οἱ πάντες ἅγιοι), in 16:15, and all the other holy ones mentioned elsewhere in Romans or in First and Second Corinthians? Jewett gives us no clue. It seems more probable than not for me that all these five persons named were Jewish believers.

Besides these twenty-six individuals, there are references to several groups of unnamed slaves. According to Jewett, there are “those among the slaves of Aristoboulos”, who was possibly linked to the Herodian family, the grandson of Herod the Great, who died after 45 C.E.; and “those among the slaves of Narcissus”, who was possibly “strongly Roman in outlook,” that is a gentile.301 It is not easy to determine whether these slaves were of Jewish or gentile origin. Some Jews were probably among them as well as some gentiles, which gives a more even ratio between the two ethnic groups.

All in all, there were at least eight Jews (30%) named in Rom 16:3-15, Andronicus, Junia, Herodian, Prisca, Aquila, Mary/Miriam, Rufus and his mother, and maybe an additional five (the holy ones) which would indicate that 50% were Jews. The identity of the other 50% of the names is uncertain. Some of them probably had a Jewish background, such as Apelles. Most of them had Greek or Latin names and had a slave background. It is likely that some of them were Jews. If as much as 100% had a Jewish background, as

298 Jewett, R. 2007, 114, 682-3, 764, 927-30
300 Jewett, R. 2007, 971.
301 ibid., 953.
Longenecker argues (see above), is not certain, and this is probably not the case, but it is possible that a majority were Jews. It therefore seems more than safe to say with Dunn that “one-third or more of those named [in Rom 16] […] were probably Jewish”.\textsuperscript{302} More than one-third is the most reasonable conclusion.

Furthermore, if there is some correlation between the proportions of those named by Paul in Rom 16:3-15 and the addressees in Rome, it would also be safe to say that the addressees were a mixed group of Jewish and Gentile believers. However, Thorsteinsson argues that the greetings in 16:3-15 should be considered as “an indirect salutation in which the sender wanted greetings to be delivered to someone who was not among the immediate audience.” The purpose was to enhance the credibility and authority of Paul as an apostle. Also “the addressees become his agent in establishing a communication with a third party”. But, according to Thorsteinsson, the addressees as agents do not have to be of the same group or identity as those saluted.\textsuperscript{303} This is possible, but to conclude that such a third party, of which a majority were probably of Jewish origin, would indicate per se that the addressees, who were agents, in contrast were only gentiles, is not reasonable. The conclusion must rather be that the composition of the leaders saluted should reflect in some way the composition of the addressees in Rome. If there was not a majority of Jews, there would have been at least a mixed group of Jews and Gentiles among the addressees.\textsuperscript{304}

\textit{In summary so far}: The analyses of Rom 1:1-7, 8-15, 15:14-33, and 16:1-15 have shown ambiguity about the identity of the addressees of Romans. The scholarly opinion that they were only gentiles (Stowers, Nanos, Thorsteinsson, Das, Wolter) or predominantly gentiles (Dunn, Jewett, Longenecker) is difficult to defend. The result of the analyses so far points more to a mixed group, closer to 50/50% between Jews and Gentiles.

However, the ethnic composition of the addressees in the four introductory and concluding parts should also be in line with, or at least not contradict, what can be understood by the direct references to the addressees in the letter body at large, particularly in Rom 9-11. The next step in our preparatory study will be to investigate this issue.

\textsuperscript{302} Dunn, J. D. G. 2009, 624, see also 632, 869.
\textsuperscript{303} Thorsteinsson, R. M. 2003, 99 and note 42.
\textsuperscript{304} It is possible that 16:3-15 indicates that the majority of the leaders of the believers in Christ were Jews, and not Gentiles, and also that the group of leaders differed somewhat from the composition of the addressees as a whole. However, it is not reasonable to assume that the group of leaders differed significantly from the rest of the believers addressed in Romans, and that the latter were “only” or “predominantly” gentiles.
The direct references to the addressees in the letter body at large and particularly in Rom 9-11

According to for example Das, Thorsteinsson and Stowers the direct references to the addressees in the letter body, e.g. in Rom 9-11, indicate that the audience is of gentile origin, particularly the reference in 11:13. Their basic argument is that the term τὰ ἔθνη should be understood as the gentiles. It is therefore necessary to discuss the direct references to the addressees where the term τὰ ἔθνη is used.

The term τὰ ἔθνη occurs twenty one times in the letter at large in Rom 2:14, 24; 3:29 (twice); 4:17, 18; 9:24, 30; 10:19 (twice); 11:11, 12, 13 (twice), 25; 15:9 (twice), 10, 11, 12 (twice), in addition to the occurrences in the four introductory and concluding parts studied above. For the scope of this thesis, all occurrences will be discussed briefly, but somewhat more attention will be given to the ones in Rom 9-11. For a more detailed discussion of the content in the letter body at large, see Ch. 8 below.

First, Thorsteinsson, who discusses Rom 2, states that the term ἔθνη, found in 2:14, refers to gentiles who did not have a law. In the quotation from Isa 52:5 in Rom 2:24, τὸ γὰρ ὄνομα τοῦ θεοῦ δι’ ὑμᾶς βλασφημεῖται ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν, the prepositional phrase ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν is translated as “among the gentiles”. Even though Thorsteinsson’s conclusion that Paul did not use the quotation from Isaiah as an indictment of the Jews is correct, and that Rom 2 is very much about the differences and similarities between Jews and non-Jews, the understanding of the term τὰ ἔθνη as the gentiles, i.e. as an ethnic term, is not the only available alternative. For example, in the immediate context of Isa 52:5, the prophet elaborates on the people of God in terms of the geographical places of Zion (Σιων), Jerusalem (Ιερουσαλημ), and Egypt (Αἴγυπτος), and also of the people of Assyria (Ασσύριοι). So, the term (τὰ) ἔθνη in Rom 2:14 and 2:24 could very well then be understood as the people of the nations, or just as the nations, that is as a geographical term that refers to the non-Jewish or non-Judaean people who live outside Judaea. This is particularly plausible if the previous use of the term τὰ ἔθνη in Romans is more ambiguous, as was found in the discussion above. Read in its context, the term in Rom 2 does not provide any precise information about the identity of the audience addressed in Romans.

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307 ibid., 195, 221.
Rom 3:29 and 4:17-18 are not discussed by Das or Thorsteinsson, but Stowers translates the term in these verses as “gentiles” or “people” respectively.\(^{308}\) Regarding Rom 3:29, Paul argues that a human being (ἄνθρωπος) is counted as, or made, righteous by faith and asks if God is the God only of the Jews or Judaeans, and not also the God of the gentiles or (the people of) the nations (ἔθνων), a question which he answers affirmatively. In Rom 4:17-18, Paul states that Abraham is father of many people or nations (πατέρα πολλῶν ἔθνων), including both the circumcised and the uncircumcised that is of both Jews and gentiles. Here, the term ἔθνη cannot be unambiguously translated as the gentiles. Based on the context in these two passages, the term ἔθνη refers to the people or the nations, possibly in 3:29 and most likely in 4:17-18. However, these verses do not say anything specific about the identity of the addressees in Rome.

In Rom 9-11, the term τὰ ἔθνη occurs nine times. For example in Rom 11:13, Paul speaks directly to “you”, the gentiles or the people of the nations (ὑμῖν δὲ λέγω τοῖς ἔθνεσιν), and he refers to himself as the apostle of the nations, of the people of the nations, or of the gentiles (ἔθνων ἀπόστολος). However, Thorsteinsson, Stowers and Das treat Rom 11:13 as a direct proof that the addressees consists of gentiles only.\(^{309}\) Thorsteinsson translates the two phrases as “to you gentiles I say” and the “apostle to gentiles”, and he explains that “we have [here] perhaps the clearest example of the letter’s intended audience being of gentile origin”. The question is, though, if the address in 11:13 applies to the letter’s readership as a whole or only to a portion?\(^{310}\) Thorsteinsson argues against the latter position since he believes that “this is to overestimate the function of δέ here”. He refers to Stowers, who claims that the Greek in 11:13, “does not justify the idea, ‘now at this point in the discourse’.”\(^{311}\) Das likewise argues that Rom 11:13 identifies the audience as gentiles, and “offer further proof that Paul is including the Romans as gentiles within the domain of his apostolic authority” (italic original).\(^{312}\)

However, it is not unreasonable to see a change of focus in Rom 11:13, with a direct address to “you” qualified as τοῖς ἔθνεσιν, and the contrastive particle “but” or “now” (δέ), as an indication of a shift to a particular portion

\(^{308}\) Stowers, S. K. 1994, 246. Stowers claims that one “loses the argument of chapter 1-4”, if ἔθνη is translated as nations, and that most translations of the term, e.g twenty-one times in Rom 9-16, render it as gentiles.


\(^{310}\) Thorsteinsson, R. M. 2003, 109-10.

\(^{311}\) Thorsteinsson, R. M. 2003, 110; Stowers, S. K. 1994, 287-89. Stowers paraphrases Rom 11:13-15 as “Yes, I am addressing you gentiles in this letter but you should understand that my very ministry to the gentiles has direct relevance to the salvation of my fellow Jews and their salvation to you own”, ibid., 288.

\(^{312}\) Das, A. A. 2007, 68. Cf. Sandnes, K. O. 2018, 27-35, for a critical discussion of e.g. Thorsteinsson and Das. Sandnes’ conclusion is that the audience addressed were “mixed, albeit predominantly toward Gentiles”.

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of the addressees. All the other six occurrences of the term τὰ ἔθνη in Rom 9-11 are found in a context that discusses Jews or Judaeans, Israel or the people of Israel, in relation to τὰ ἔθνη. In those instances, the term can very well be translated as the nations, the people of the nations (geographical), especially since the translation of the term is not previously equivocally understood as the gentiles (ethnic) in the letter body. Thus, the use of τὰ ἔθνη in Rom 9-11 does not say anything unambiguously about the identity of all addressees.

Finally, in Rom 15:7-13, the term τὰ ἔθνη occurs six times, of which five are found in the quotations from Ps 18:49; Deut 32:43; Ps 117:1; and Isa 11:10. The textual unit discusses how the addressees should receive one another as Christ, the Messiah, has received them. Christ has been a servant for the circumcised that is for the Jews or Judaeans, but also for τὰ ἔθνη, in 15:8-9a, which is proved by the catena (chain) of quotations in 15:9b-12. Before, in Rom 14:1-15:6, Paul has discussed how people or groups, with different belief, should behave towards one another. This may be a reference to groups of both Jewish and gentile believers in Christ in Rome. The textual unit Rom 15:7-13 however does not say anything specific about the identity of the addressees. They are addressed as “you.”

In summary: from the use of the term τὰ ἔθνη in the letter body at large, including Rom 9-11, there is no unequivocal or uniform translation of the term, such as the gentiles (ethnic) only. It can often very well be understood as the nations or the people of the nations (geographically). The use of the term in the letter body does not say anything certain about the ethnic identity of the addressees.

According to many scholars, the strongest indication that the addressees were only or predominantly gentiles is the Edict of Claudius, which caused the expulsion of all Jews from Rome in 49 C.E. and led to a (clear) separation between the Jewish believers and the gentile believers in Rome. A critical discussion of this argument follows next, before a conclusion of the position in this thesis is taken.

The Edict of Claudius and the Wiefel-hypothesis

The Edict of Claudius is central for the study of the situation of both the Jews and the believers in Christ in Rome in the first century. Since the Edict is possibly the strongest argument for the addressees in Romans being only gentiles or predominantly gentiles it is worth to repeat and elaborate some more on this topic. See the previous discussion in Ch. 2.2 for more details.

In 49 C.E. the Emperor expelled from Rome the Jews or Judaeans who were constantly making disturbances at the instigation of Chrestus, Iudaeos impulsores Chresto assidues tumultuantis Roma expulit. This is known as the
Edict of Claudius. What has become known as the Wiefel hypothesis, maintains that the movement of the Christ-believers in Rome began in the Jewish synagogues, but after the Edict of Claudius in 49 C.E. they became largely separated from the synagogues, and after that their leaders were mostly gentiles. Later, when the Jewish believers in Christ returned after the death of Claudius in 54 C.E., they created tensions within the assemblies of the gentile believers.

This hypothesis is quite a consensus opinion among many scholars today. For example, both Jewett and Longenecker argue that the event was possibly due to a conflict in the synagogues in Rome concerning Jesus as the Messiah. In addition to the Edict of Claudius in 49 C.E., scholars point to Suetonius’ and Tacitus’ reports of the persecution of Christians during the time of Nero. Thus, Longenecker, Jewett, Lampe, Hvalvik, and others conclude that there was an evident separation between the gentile Christ-believers and the Jews in Rome by the time of Paul’s Letter to the Romans. If this was the case, this is an argument in support of the view that the addressees of Romans were only or predominantly gentiles.

However, important critic from James Dunn and John M. G. Barclay of this hypothesis was presented earlier in Ch. 2.2. The conclusion is that to base a separation between the Jews and the Gentile believers in Christ on the Edict of Claudius in 49 C.E. is not certain. Instead, Nano’s view that the believers in Christ still associated with the synagogues in Rome is more credible, at least with some of the synagogues.

In summary: It is not reasonable to argue on the ground of the Edict of Claudius, on what is written in Rom 1:5-6, 7, 8-15, 15:14-33, the greetings in 16:1-15, or on the direct references to the audience in Rom 9-11 and elsewhere in the letter that the addressees consist of only gentiles. It is more reasonable that a mixed congregation was addressed. The exact proportions of Jews and gentiles is not easy to determine, but it was probably a more even mix than a predominantly gentile group.

Summary and conclusion

It is crucial for the understanding of the purpose of Romans to answer the question, to whom is Paul’s Letter to the Romans addressed? The answer affects for example our view on the passages of the letter in which Paul’s seems

315 Lampe, P. 1989, 9, for example writes “Erstes sicheres Datum ist der Römerbrief: Spätestens zu seiner Abfassungszeit in der zweiten Hälfte der 50er Jahre präsentiert sich die stadtrömische Christenheit losgelöst from Synagogenverband”; with note 22, “In einzelnen cf. z.B. Röm 16,5a; 1,5-8; in 15:24 erhofft sich Paulus von den Römern Unterstützung für seine gesetzesfreie Heidenmission in Spanien!”, the exclamation mark is original.
to address Jews directly, or the passages in which both Jews and non-Jews are in view on equal terms. Conflicts and how to handle different views between different groups of believers may possibly be considered more important as part of Paul’s reason for writing, depending on the answer.

This chapter has analysed the four introductory and concluding parts of Romans, and the letter body at large, particularly Rom 9-11, together with the discussion of the Edict of Claudius and the Wiefel-hypothesis, which are of particular interest for the identity of the addressees. The goal has not been to come to a definite conclusion, but rather to have a reasonably safe opinion as a basis for the main analysis.

The common opinion among scholars today that the addressees of Romans consisted of only or predominantly gentiles can be questioned. Even though there are no certain answers, the analysis here in Ch. 2.3 has shown that this is not the most reasonable position.

The formal recipient clause in Rom 1:7a does not give any definite information about the identity of the addressees. They are qualified through the epithets “beloved of God” and “called (to be) saints,” with a Jewish perspective in mind.

The terms τὸ ἔθνος (sg.), or τὰ ἔθνη (pl.), occur twenty-eight (or twenty-nine if 16:26 is original) times in Romans. The term τὰ ἔθνη is ambiguous and have both a geographical (where) and an ethnic (who) sense. It could be rendered as the nations or the people (the geographical area of people who live outside Judaea/Palestine), or as the gentiles (the ethnic individuals or groups of people who are not Jews). The term τὰ ἔθνη occurs in Rom 1:5-6, 1:13 and 15:16, 18, often in prepositional phrases such as ἐν πᾶσι τοῖς ἔθνεσιν. It is used in connection to Paul’s own apostolic work. The most obvious understanding of the prepositional phrases with ἐν here is that they are locative, i.e. geographical, among the (people of the) nations. Paul mostly describes his apostolic work in rather specific geographical terms, and he also repeatedly explains his eager wish to visit the addressees in Rome, on his geographical journey from Jerusalem all the way to Spain. A valid conclusion would be to understand the term in the prepositional phrases geographically, as among the nations or among the people who live outside Judaea/Palestine, or possibly among the gentiles who live outside Judaea/Palestine. The addressees are directly connected to τὰ ἔθνη in the prepositional phrases in 1:5-6 and 13, and this connection should also reasonably be understood in geographical terms, as a statement that the addresses in Rome live among τὰ ἔθνη, among the nations or people outside Judaea/Palestine. There was a substantial number of Jews, who lived in Rome, among the nations or among the people in the diaspora outside of Judaea.

At least 50% (probably more) of the prominent persons or leaders specifically named in the greetings in Rom 16:3-15 have a Jewish background. If there is any relationship between the proportion of these names and identity
of the addressees, it indicates a very large proportion of Jewish believers in Christ beside the gentile believers.

Finally, the view that the Edict of Claudius led to a separation between the gentile believers and the Jews in Rom at the time of Romans can be contested. Barclay and Dunn give important arguments against this hypothesis. With Nanos, it is more reasonable to assume that the gentile believers still associated with at least some, if not all, of the Jewish synagogues in Rome.

Therefore, the most reasonable position to take as a basis for the main analysis of the purpose of Romans is that the addressees were a mixed group of both Jewish and gentile believers in Christ. The proportions were more probably 50/50%, even if the exact figures are uncertain. Paul most certainly wrote the letter to \textit{all the Jewish and gentile believers in Christ living in Rome, beloved by God, and called to be holy.}

Next follows a study of the overall textual arrangement of Romans, as part of the preparatory analysis.

2.4 The Overall Textual Arrangement and Delineation of Romans

This chapter studies the overall arrangement and delineation of the text in the Letter to the Romans, in order to delimit the letter text for the coming detailed analysis of the letter opening in Ch. 3, the introduction of the letter body in Ch. 4, the end of the letter body in Ch. 5, and the letter closing in Ch. 6. The preliminary thesis of the purpose of Romans, formulated in Ch. 7, will be assessed and tested against the content and train of thoughts in the major parts and sections of the letter body in Ch. 8, before a concluding discussion and formulation of the final thesis will be presented in Ch. 9. For the methodological approach, see chapters 1.2.

It is generally agreed among scholars that Paul follows the ancient conventions in all his letters, with a formal letter opening, a letter body, and a letter closing. However, Paul has also changed and adapted each letter in different ways to the special needs and particular circumstances in question. This is true also for the Letter to the Romans.\footnote{Doering, L. 2012, 377-428; Porter, S. E. & Adams, S. A. 2010, “PAULINE EPISTOLOGRAPHY: AN INTRODUCTION”, in \textit{ibid.} (ed.), \textit{Paul and the Ancient Letter Form}, Brill, Leiden, 1-7; Weima, J. A. D. 2003, 17-33; Byrskog, S. 1997, 27; Jervis, L. A. 1991, 11-14, 36-55; Stowers, S. K. 1986, 41-43; Funk, R. 1970, 8; Wolter, M. 2014, 57, 76; Longenecker, R. N. 2016, 46-7; \textit{ibid.} 2011, 210-14; Longenecker refers to the pioneering work of Adolf Deissman (1908, eng. transl. 1927), Paul Wendland (1912), and Francis Exler (1923), and others.} It is unanimously understood that the formal letter opening of Romans is found in Rom 1:1-7, and it is commonly
agreed that the letter closing is located in Rom 16:1-16:27. Consequently, the letter body is in 1:8-15:33. However, there are many problems with regard to the letter body and how to arrange and delimit the text into different sections and textual units, and scholars disagree to a large extent. Therefore, here in Ch. 2.4, the two structurally uncontroversial parts, that is the formal letter opening Rom 1:1-7, and the letter closing in Rom 16:1-27, will first be shortly discussed, followed by a closer study of the more difficult letter body in Rom 1:8-15:33.

Rom 1:1-7 – the letter opening
There is consensus that the letter opening of Romans is found in 1:1-7 with a nominal paragraph with its characteristic three parts depicted in Fig 2.

![Fig. 2 The letter opening of Romans](image)

First in 1:1-6, the long sender part with the name Paul in nominative, followed by several qualifications. Second in 1:7a, the recipient part with the

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317 The text critical issues of a 16-chapter long Letter to the Romans have been discussed in Ch. 2.1 above. A majority of scholars today, if not all, agree that Rom 16 closes the letter. What is discussed is whether 15:33 is part of the letter closing, or if it ends the textual unit that began in 15:14. The position in this thesis is that the two concluding parts of Romans are found in Rom 15:14-33 and 16:1-27 respectively (see more on this below).

addressees in dative, all those who are in Rome. Finally, a characteristic wish of grace and peace in 1:7b. This overall textual arrangement of the formal letter opening is uncontested, and it is also generally agreed that the letter opening is uniquely adapted and elaborated, especially the long sender part in 1:1-6. The unique content of the letter opening in Rom 1:1-7 will be analysed in greater detail in Ch. 3 below.

Rom 16:1-27 – the letter closing

There is an abrupt change of content in Rom 16:1-2, achieved through the coordinating adversative particle “but” (δέ) and including the commendation of Phoebe. Scholars often think that this commendation of Phoebe begins the last part of the letter. Opinion differ on whether Rom 15:33, often called a peace benediction, is the last clause of the previous textual unit, or the first in the letter closing. The position taken in this work is that 15:33 is part of the end of the letter body, which will be considered in greater detail in the next sub-chapter below.

After the commendation of Phoebe in Rom 16:1-2, a series of seventeen asyndetic greeting clauses follow in 16:3-16. There is another new opening in Rom 16:17, through the adversative particle “but” (δέ), the vocative brothers (and sisters) (ἀδελφοί), and the disclosure formula or meta-propositional statement “I urge you” (παρακαλῶ δέ ὑμᾶς). This marks the beginning of a new paragraph of admonitions in 16:17-19. A prayer to the God of peace (ὁ δὲ θεὸς τῆς εἰρήνης), including a wish that God may act, follows in Rom 16:20a with a distinct eschatological expectation. This both heightens the intensity and attracts attention, and together with the following prayer for grace (ἡ χάρις) in 16:20b, the entire verse is a strong marker of the close of the textual unit.

However, Robert Jewett treats Rom 16:17-20 as an interjection, in contrast to most others, who regard it as an original textual unit of the letter closing. Jewett’s arguments are not convincing. His arguments are based entirely on internal evidence. See the text critical analysis in Ch. 2.1, and the detailed analysis of Rom 16 in Ch. 6.

319 A similar clause with a wish for grace and peace is found in 1 Cor 1:3; 2 Cor 1:2; Phil 1:2; Phlm 1:3; a shorter version in 1 Thess 1:1c; and finally there is also a much longer and significantly adapted one in Gal 1:3-5.

320 A similar prayer-wish to the God of peace is found in Paul’s other letters, 2 Cor 13:11; Phil 4:9a; and with major adaptations also in 1 Thess 5:23 and Gal 6:16. Paul’s characteristic wish for grace occurs also in the other letters in 1 Cor 16:23; Gal 6:18; Phil 4:23; 1 Thess 5:28; Phlm 25; and a more adapted one in 2 Cor 13:13.

321 Jewett, R., 2007, 6, 986-88, who also gives more scholarly references in page 986 note 5.

Therefore, Rom 16:17-20 should be considered as a separate textual unit with final exhortations. It is reasonable to assume that this unit functions as a closing marker at a high level, indicating that the letter will soon come to an end. This view is strengthened when 16:20 is compared and related to the last part of the letter opening in Rom 1:7b. The opening also includes a wish for grace (χάρις) and peace (εἰρήνη), but in 16:20 the peace and grace appear in the reverse order. The final asyndetic greetings from Paul’s associates and co-workers follow in Rom 16:21-23.\(^{323}\)

There is a wish for grace clause in Rom 16:24, but, as was argued in Ch. 2.1, it is probably not original. Instead, Rom 16:25-27 is regarded as the final closing marker at the highest level, and the doxology both heightens the intensity and attracts attention. This is the last clause of the letter.\(^{324}\)

The textual arrangement of the letter closing is summarised in fig 3 below.

![Fig. 3. The letter closing of Romans](image)

The letter closing begins in Rom 16:1, consists of five textual units and ends with the final doxology in 16:25-27. The content of the letter closing will be studied in greater detail in Ch. 6. If we regard Rom 1:1-7 as the formal letter opening and 16:1-27 as the letter closing, the letter body begins in 1:8 and ends in 15:33. The next step is to study the letter body Rom 1:8-15:33 and the textual arrangement at the highest textual level.

**Rom 1:8-15:33 – the letter body**

Scholars generally agree, with some differences, that the letter body consists of three main parts, a more doctrinal or indicative part in Rom 1:8-11:36, a

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\(^{323}\) Similar greetings from Paul’s associates and co-workers are found in 1 Cor 16:19-20; 2 Cor 13:12; Phil 4:21-22; Phlm 23-24.

\(^{324}\) Rom 11:33-36 has a similar hymn or doxology as a closing marker on the highest level (see below). Cf. the clauses after the wish for grace in 1 Cor 16:24; 2 Cor 13:13, but Rom 11:33-36 and 16:25-27 are unique features and especially significant for the Letter to the Romans.
more hortatory or imperative part in 12:1-15:13, and the end of the letter body in 15:14-33. This overall arrangement is strengthened by opening and closing markers that clearly signal the breaks between these three major parts of the letter body.

First, after the formal letter opening in Rom 1:1-7, there is a new opening in 1:8a, with the adverb first (πρῶτον) and the preparatory particle μέν (often not translated), followed by a meta-propositional statement “I give thanks to God … that” (εὐχαριστῶ τῷ θεῷ ... ὅτι). Since it is the opening of the first textual unit after the formal letter opening, it is an opening at the highest textual level of the first main part of the letter body. Rom 11:25-36 is commonly understood to conclude this first more doctrinal or indicative part. Paul begins his concluding argument in 11:25-32, with the meta-propositional statement “for I want you to know, brothers (and sisters), about this mystery that” (οὐ γὰρ θέλω ὑμᾶς ἀγνοεῖν ἀδελφοί τὸ μυστήριον τοῦτο ἰνα). Paul further explains what he has just discussed and writes that this is part of God’s plan to show mercy and to bring salvation to all believers, both Jews and gentiles. Then, in Rom 11:33-36 Paul concludes with a hymn and a doxology on the majesty of God and his mysterious ways. This conclusion is similar to the final hymn and last paragraph of the entire letter in Rom 16:25-27, discussed above. The two hymns are unique features of Romans and form emphatic ends of the sections to which they belong.325

So, Rom 11:33-36 closes the first main part of the letter body, which is not contested by scholars. This closing is confirmed by the strongly marked new opening in 12:1. Together, Rom 11:33-36 and 12:1 form a transition from the first part, to the second part of the letter body.

The second main part of the letter body is found in 12:1-15:13. Rom 12:1a opens with the conclusive or inferential particle “so, therefore, consequently” (οὖν), the vocative brothers (and sisters) (ἀδελφοί), and the disclosure formula or the meta-propositional statement, “So, I urge you” (παρακαλῶ οὖν ὑμᾶς), and is followed by Paul’s direct admonitions of the addresses in 12:1b and forward.326 Scholars find two candidates for the closing paragraphs of the second part of the letter body, either 15:5-6 or 15:13.327 For the discussion here, the prayer in Rom 15:5-6 to the God of endurance and encouragement (ὁ δὲ θεὸς τῆς ὑπομονῆς καὶ τῆς παρακλήσεως) is regarded as the closing marker of the textual unit that begins in 15:1, and maybe also of the entire paranetic

325 See the previous note above.
327 Besides clauses that heighten the intensity and attract attention, other characteristics of possible closing paragraphs in Romans are prayers or wishes, attestations and request formulas, and summaries, recapitulations, conclusions, and interferences of different kinds. For more on opening and closing markers in ancient letters including Paul’s, see Ch. 1.2.
section that began in 14:1. \(^{328}\) Then follows the closing textual unit in Rom 15:7-13, which ends with another prayer in 15:13 to the God of hope (ὁ δὲ θεὸς τῆς ἐλπίδος). Next, in Rom 15:14 there is a new opening with a break in the text at the highest level (see below). Thus, it is plausible that the second part of the letter body concludes with the prayer in Rom 15:13, and the third part, the end of the letter body, begins in 15:14. This is not disputed among scholars. For further details, see Ch. 8.

The third part, which is the end of the letter body, is found in Rom 15:14-33. It begins with an opening in 15:14a, achieved through the coordinating adversative particle but (δὲ), the vocative my brothers (and sisters) (ἀδελφοί μου), and the disclosure formula or the meta-propositional statement “I am convinced … regarding you that” (πέπεισμαι … περὶ υμῶν ὅτι). A change of content and an indicative section follows in 15:14b and forward up to the final paragraph in 15:30-33. The last clause in 15:33 includes Paul’s wish that the God of peace (ὁ δὲ θεὸς τῆς εἰρήνης) may be with them all. Amen (ἀμήν). This is a closing marker at the highest level, which concludes the end of the letter body. \(^{329}\) However, scholars regard 15:33 as either the last clause of the letter body or the first of the formal letter closing. \(^{330}\) In both cases Rom 15:33 has a transitionary function at a high level, and as such it is important. The balancing adversative particle “but” (δὲ) indicates a connection to what have just been discussed. The concluding “Amen” (ἀμήν) gives emphasis to the clause and is a closing rather than an opening marker. Thus, 15:33 closes the paragraph in 15:30-33, \(^{331}\) which is a summary discussion and the closing unit of the end of the letter body in 15:14-33. This section will be analysed in Ch. 5 below.

Scholars commonly agree that the letter body in Rom 1:8-15:33 consist of three major parts, a dogmatic first part, a hortatory second part, and finally the end of the letter body. For this thesis, both the introduction and the end of the letter body are most important for understanding Paul’s purpose and occasion for writing Romans. The introduction indicates Paul’s personal concerns and his purpose for writing, as well as what to expect in the message in the rest of the letter body. The end of the letter body summarises and recapitulates some

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\(^{329}\) The final ἀμήν is missing in for example P46, which includes the doxology Rom 16:25-27 here instead. Even so, the ἀμήν is regarded as original because of stronger external evidence found in X, B, C, D. For more on the doxology in Rom 16:25-27, see the text criticism in Ch. 2.1, and the analysis in Ch. 6.

\(^{330}\) Scholars often refer to Rom 15:33 as Paul’s peace benediction. Longenecker, Weima, Jervis regard it as the first clause of the letter closing; Jewett, Wölter, Fitzmyer, Dunn regard it as the last clause of the end of the letter body. Cranfield regard the whole 15:14-16:27 as the conclusion of the epistle, and 15:33 as the end of the paragraph in 15:30-33.

\(^{331}\) Compare with previous similar clauses in 15:5-6 and 13; and before that in 11:33-36; 8:38-39; 7:25; and possibly in a minor way also 6:23; 5:21. See also the prayer wish in the letter closing in Rom 16:20.
of the important themes and thoughts previously discussed. Scholars have paid particularly extensive attention to where the introduction of the letter body begins and ends, how to arrange it into different textual units, and where the first argument of the first section of the letter body begins. The end of the letter body, in Rom 15:14-33, is less problematic. Therefore, in order to conclude the study of the overall textual arrangement and delineation of the text for the detailed analyses in Chs. 3-6, there is a need to analyse the introduction in greater detail.

The introduction to the letter body

A number of solutions have been proposed by scholars for the textual arrangement of the introduction of the letter body: (A) Rom 1:8-15 is the introduction or thanksgiving unit, with 1:16-17 as the central theme or thesis statement for the letter; (B) 1:8-16a is the introduction, and 1:16b-17 is the theme; (C) 1:8-9 is the thanksgiving clause, followed by a short introduction or proem in 1:10-15, and 1:16-17 the theme; (D) 1:8-12 is the introduction, 1:13-15 is a (brief) body opening, and the theme is in 1:16-17; and (E) 1:8-17 is one unit, the introduction. A major issue concerns how to understand Rom 1:13-15. Should the verses be closely connected to what immediately precedes them in 1:8-12, or to what follows in 1:16-17? A majority of scholars read Rom 1:18 as the beginning of the first section and argument of the letter body. Consequently, there is a need to study the introduction to the letter body some more. Here, in Ch. 2.4, it is for the sake of establishing the overall textual arrangement. For the detailed analysis of the introduction with its content and flow of argument for understanding the purpose of Romans, see Ch. 4 below.

Rom 1:8a is the opening of the first textual unit, 1:8-12, that follows the formal letter opening. Paul expresses his thankfulness to God for the Romans, followed by a number of explanations and elaborations. The opening marker, in 1:8a, πρῶτον μὲν, is unique among Paul’s letters. The use of the adverb first (πρῶτον) together with the affirmative or preparatory particle μὲν leads to the expectation of a corresponding clause beginning with second or next. Scholars notice this but usually conclude that, for some reason, Paul did

332 See Ch. 1.2. Approach and Methods.
334 Longenecker, R. N. 2016, 101, 127-30, who gives further references to many scholars.
335 Most scholars agree that the first textual unit after the letter opening is in Rom 1:8-12.
336 It is common in Paul’s letter to open in a positive way with a thanks giving to God, εὐχαστίω τῷ θεῷ, 1 Cor 1:4; Phil 1:3; 1 Thess 1:2; Filem 1:4; or with a blessing of God, εὐλογητὸς ὁ θεός, 2 Cor 1:3; but by contrast, the Galatians opens with a clause of astonishment, θαυμάζω ὅτι, Gal 1:6-10.
not write a directly corresponding clause. They consider this as an anaclu-
thon, an incomplete concessive clause. There is agreement that the first tex-
tual unit ends in 1:12. Their major arguments are that Rom 1:13 marks the
beginning of a new textual unit (see below), and 1:12 is a clarification of
1:11. This view is further strengthened by the repeated use of the word faith
(πίστις) in 1:12, which is also found in the initial thanksgiving clause in 1:8.

In Rom 1:13a, there is a new opening with the balancing adversative parti-
cle but (δέ), the vocative brothers (and sisters) (ἀδελφοί) in combination with
the disclosure formula or meta-propositional statement, “I do not want you to
be ignorant” (οὐ θέλω ὑμᾶς ἀγνοεῖν). This is an opening of the next textual
unit at the same high textual level as Rom 1:8-12. The explanation of precisely
what Paul wants them to know follows in 1:13b, and in 1:14 an asyndetic
clause about Paul’s responsibility to different categories of people. In 1:15,
there is a distinct and accentuated statement, which begins with thus, there-
fore, or as follows (οὕτως) and expresses Paul’s eagerness to proclaim the
good news to the addressees in Rome.

The particle δέ in Rom 1:13 may correspond to the preparatory particle μέν
in Rom 1:8, as will be claimed in Ch. 4 below. The choice is not decisive
though. Even if the particle δέ in 1:13 does not correspond to the particle μέν
in 1:8, all the transition markers in 1:13 open a new textual unit at a high
textual level and in parallel to 1:8-12. The first textual unit in Rom 1:8-12 has
a substantial connection to the content of 1:13-15 and forward.

Most scholars argue that the adverb οὕτως in Rom 1:15 refers to what pre-
cedes it, and that the following 1:16-17 is a separate textual unit that states
the central thema or thesis of the letter. Consequently, Rom 1:13-15 and 1:16-
17 are regarded as two separate textual units that follows the first unit in Rom
1:8-12. Most scholars also read 1:18 as the beginning of the first main section
in the (rest of the) letter body.

However, this solution is not altogether clear-cut. It is most important to
note the close connection and the smooth progress in the line of thought in

337 Longenecker, R. N. 2016, 102-3; Jewett, R. 2007, 118; Dunn, J. D. G. 1988, 27; Cranfield,
C. E. B. 1975, 74.
338 Longenecker, R. N. 2016, 101-2; Jewett, R. 2007, 117-18; Dunn, J. D. G. 1988, 27; Cran-
field, C. E. B. 1975, 74.
339 Note the verb εὐαγγελίσασθαι, emphatically placed last in the sentence.
340 It is not necessary that a clause, which corresponds to one with πρῶτον μέν, must begin with
“second”, “next” etc. Frequently, the corresponding clause only has the particle δέ, see LSJ,
πρότερος, B III.3a, 1535.
341 Longenecker, R. N. 2016, 140; Jewett, R. 2007, 133; Wölter, M. 2014, 112; Cranfield, C. E.
B. 1975, 85.
342 For a division of 1:16-17 and 1:18ff with some variants, see Longenecker, R. N. 2016, 155-
7, 200-5; Calhoun, R. M. 2011, 104, 148, 167; Campbell, D. A. 2009, 543; Jewett, R. 2007,
135-6, 148; Byrskog, S. 2006, 32, 40; Mayordomo, M. 2005, 172, 174, note 382; Fitzmyer, J.
A. 1993, 253, 255, 269; Dunn, J. D. G. 1988, 37-8, 54; Cranfield, C. E. B. 1975 1979, 27, 87;
1:13, 14, and 15, and forward, where Paul gives successive insights into his reasons for writing and into his overall purpose for the Letter to the Romans. Grammatically, the adverbial conjunction οὕτως in Rom 1:15 can be either (i) anaphoric, a reference to what precedes, “thus” or “so”, or maybe inferential, “therefore”, or (ii) cataphoric, referring to what follows, “as follows”. Here, it is probably an anaphoric connection between the content of 1:15 and what has been discussed before. Most scholars see next a clear break in 1:16-17, and another new contrasting break in Rom 1:18. As was described in the introduction in Ch. 1 above, there are problems with such a division between Rom 1:15, 1:16-17, and 1:18, due to the four successive coordinating confirmatory sentences, all with the γάρ-particle, “for”. The particle is commonly used to exclaim the explanation or reason for what has just been stated, and the use of γάρ in NT conforms to the classical Greek use, or with Blass/Debrunner/Rehkopf, it “stimmt zum Klassischen”. The arguments by scholars for seeing Rom 1:16-17, and 1:18 and forward, as separate paragraphs vary but they are generally based on logical, rhetorical, or substantive (content or thematic) reasons, even though scholars agree that it is against the most common understanding and usage of the particle “for” (γάρ). Some scholars even argue that throughout Romans γάρ should be regarded more or less like the copulative particles “and” (καί), or “and” or “both and” (τέ). Denniston (1950) does not mentioned this latter option at all for the particle γάρ in his extensive work on the Greek Particles. If Paul wanted to express the connection as καί or τέ, he would probably have written καί or τέ explicitly, rather than γάρ. That must at least be our basic first assumption. In addition, there are evident connections in terms of content between the successive four γάρ-sentences, see further details in Chs. 4 and 8 below.

All these points are strong indications for a connection, rather than a major even an antithetical break between the verses. There are four γάρ-clauses in

343 LSJ, οὕτως, 1276-7; BDAG, ibid., 741-42; Beale, G. K., Brendel, D. J. and Ross, W. A. 2014, 77-78.
345 Cranfield, C. E. B. 1975, 87, uses logical reasons; Jewett, R. 2007, 135, rhetorical reasons; Wölter, M. 2014, 101-2; Mayordomo, M. 2005, 172, 174, note 382; Dunn, J. D. G. 1988, 37-38, 54; all three gives substantive (content or thematic) reasons. According to Dunn “γάρ, ‘for’, can express simply connection or continuation of thought without specifying what precisely the connection is”. He concludes that to argue “that vv 16, 17, and 18ff. are grammatically subordinate to v15 … is to overload the significance of γάρ, which may denote lighter connections of thought”.
346 Denniston, J. D. 1950 (1934), 56-114.
347 Some scholars, for example Dunn, Mayordomo, Campbell, see an antithetical distinction between the wrath of God (ὀργὴ θεοῦ) and the righteousness of God (δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ), and
a series in 1:16-18, and there is nothing special with the first or the last γάρ-clause, in 1:16 and 1:18 respectively, to indicate a major break. It is not unusual with a series of 3, 4, or more casual, confirmatory and explanatory γάρ-clauses in Paul’s letters and elsewhere, including in Classical Greek literature, e.g. in Plato’s Apol., 39E-40A, and Herodotus, Hist., iv, 1. If it is problematic to understand Rom 1:16-18 as connected to 1:15 and to find a new paragraph in 1:15-18, it is better to keep the entire 1:13-18, or even 1:8-18, together because of the close connection of the verses in 1:13-15 and 1:8-12 discussed above.

Rom 1:18 is followed by phrases in 1:19 and 1:21 that begin with the conjunction διότι. These phrases have a causal connection and a sub-ordinate relationship to 1:18. Most scholars affirm this view, which also is also embraced for this thesis. See Ch. 4 below, which will also consider the contrastive position of P. B. Fowler. However, the change from γάρ to διότι must have been very much noted by the addressees of the letter. See also the discussion in Ch. 8. For the aim and scope of this thesis, the analysis of the introduction of the letter body will be delimited to Rom 1:8-18.

The textual arrangement of the introduction of the letter body and forward is summarised in fig 4 below.

therefore Rom 1:18 cannot be part of the thesis-statement in 1:16-17. See references in note 342 above, and the discussion in Ch. 4 below.

348 A series of confirmatory and explanatory γάρ-clauses (3, 4, or more) occur, for example, in Rom 2:11-14; 8:18-22; 10:2-5; 10:13; 1 Cor 9:15-17; 2 Cor 3:9-11; in Mark 8:35-38 (+par.); in LXX Wis 9:13-15; 14:27-29; but also in classical Greek, see the references in Denniston, J. D. 1950 (1934), 58; also BDAG, γάρ, 189.


351 Fowler, P. B. 2016, 175 and note 33.
There are many problems regarding the textual arrangement and delineation of the first textual units of the introduction to the letter body. There are two openings at a high level in both Rom 1:8 and 1:13. Rom 1:15 is probably a conclusion of what has been expressed earlier in 1:13-14, or even 1:8-14, but 1:15 can also refer to what comes after. There are problems in seeing a new major break and opening in 1:16, and similarly in 1:18. Grammatically it is reasonable to see a close connection between 1:16-18 and 1:15 and the preceding text. There is a change of conjunction in 1:19 and 1:21, which gives an explanation, and which is subordinated to what is stated in 1:18.

So, the introduction of the letter body begins in 1:8 and follows by a new opening in 1:13, and possibly in 1:15. The introduction develops in rather smooth and successive steps, with close substantial connections between each step into the first textual unit of the first section of the letter body. The four γάρ-clauses in 1:16-18, not only 1:16-17, have an important function in the introduction, which will be elaborated in Chs. 4 and 8. The content and arguments in 1:8-12 and 1:13-15 together with 1:16-18 are equally important for understanding of Paul’s message in the introduction of the letter body. Thus, the introduction of the letter body in Rom 1:8-18, with its flow of argument(s) and train of thought, gives crucial information about the purpose of Romans.

The overall textual arrangement of the entire letter is summarised in fig 5 below.
Summary and conclusion

The overall textual arrangement can thus be summarised as:

--- the letter opening Rom 1:1-7 ---

(1:1) παῦλος δοῦλος Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ κλητὸς ἀπόστολος ...  
(1:7b) χάρις ὑμῖν καὶ εἰρήνη ἀπὸ θεοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν καὶ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ

--- the letter body Rom 1:8-15:13 ---

(the introduction of the letter body)

(1:8) πρότων μὲν εὐχαριστῶ τῷ θεῷ ...  
(1:13-14) οὐ θέλω δὲ ὑμᾶς ἁγνοεῖν, ἀδελφοί, ὅτι ...  
(1:15) οὕτως τὸ κατ’ ἐμὲ πρόθυμον καὶ ὑμῖν τοὺς ἐν Ῥώμῃ εὐαγγελίσασθαι

(1:16a) οὐ γὰρ ἐπαισχύνομαι τὸ εὐαγγέλιον  
(1:16b) δύναμις γὰρ θεοῦ ἐστίν ...  
(1:17) δικαιοσύνη γὰρ θεοῦ ...  
(1:18) ὁποκαλύπτεται γὰρ ὁργὴ θεοῦ ...  

(the rest of the first main part of the letter body)

(11:33-36) οὐ κατὰ πλοῦτον καὶ σοφίας καὶ γνώσεως θεοῦ ... αὕτω δὲ δύο ἑξίδες εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας, ἀμήν.

(12:1) παρακαλῶ οὖν ὑμᾶς, ἀδελφοί ...  

(the second main part of the letter body)

(15:13) ὁ δὲ θεὸς τῆς ἐλπίδος πληρώσαι ὑμῖν ... ὁ δὲ θεὸς τῆς εἰρήνης μετὰ πάντων ὑμῶν ἀμήν.

(15:14) πέπεισμαι δὲ ἀδελφοῖ μου καὶ αὐτοῖς ἐγγὺς περί ὑμῶν ὃτι ...  

(the end of the letter body)

(15:33) ὁ δὲ θεὸς τῆς εἰρήνης μετὰ πάντων ὑμῶν ἀμήν.

--- the letter closing Rom 16:1-27 ---

(16:1) συνιστήμεν δὲ ὑμῖν Φοίβην τὴν ἀδελφὴν ἡμῶν ...  
(16:25-27) ὁ δὲ δυναμικὸν ὑμᾶς στηρίζει ... μόνον σοφὸς θεὸ διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ὁ δὲ δύο ἑξίδες εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας ἀμήν.

Fig 5. The overall textual arrangement of the Letter to the Romans

The letter opening is found in Rom 1:1-7. The introduction of the letter body is found in 1:8-18, which proceed smoothly from 1:8, via 1:13, 14, through 15:18, and into the rest of the first main part of the letter body. The letter opening and the introduction of the letter body will be analysed in detail in Chs. 3-4. The first main part of the letter body is more doctrinal and indicative. It ends in 11:36. The second main hortatory and imperative part begins in 12:1 and ends in 15:13. The letter body ends with a third indicative part in 15:14–33, followed by the letter closing in Rom 16. The end of the letter body and the letter closing will be studied in Chs. 5-6. Next follows a detailed analysis of the letter opening in Rom 1:1-7 in Ch. 3.
As we saw in Ch. 1.2 and 1.3, there is a consensus today that Romans is a letter, written to be read aloud with the objective to communicate, persuade and have an effect on the addressees in Rome. It is therefore both common and reasonable to study the way in which the ancient epistolary and rhetorical conventions are used in combination with the thematic content of the letter.

According to these conventions, the beginning and the end were important for communicating the purpose of the letter. Scholars generally agree today that the beginning and the end of the Letter to the Romans include both Paul’s personal concerns and indicate his purpose(s) for writing. There is a tendency in previous research, see Ch. 1.3, that either the introductory parts or the concluding parts of the letter take priority in the establishment of the purpose of Romans. However, the entire message and content of the beginning must be considered in combinations with the end of the letter as much as possible. It is therefore of major importance for this thesis to analyse in detail the letter opening (Rom 1:1-7), the introduction of the letter body (1:8-18), the end of the letter body (15:14-33), and the letter closing (16:1-27).

In this chapter the letter opening will be studied in order better to understand why Paul wrote Romans. This will be done in two steps, first a detailed analysis of the textual arrangement and the content in Ch. 3.1, and then, in Ch. 3.2, an analysis of any observations of the text that give information about the purpose of Romans.

3.1 The Textual Arrangement

The letter opening, Rom 1:1-7, follows the ancient letter opening formula, with the sender part in 1:1-6, the recipient part in 1:7a, and the greetings or salutation in 1:7b.

In the sender part in 1:1, Paul (Παῦλος) in nominative is described as the only sender of the letter, with a threefold qualification as the servant or slave of Christ Jesus (δοῦλος Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ), called to be an apostle (κλητός

ἀπόστολος), and set apart or appointed into or for the good news of God (ἀφωρισμένος εἰς εὐαγγέλιον θεοῦ). Most scholars, for example Cranfield, Fitzmyer, Dunn, Byrskog, Longenecker, understand all three clauses as appositions and qualifications of Paul.354 Jewett is however of a somewhat different opinion. He reads the participial phrase with ἀφωρισμένος as an elaboration of ἀπόστολος, which seems to follow the punctuation of GNT and NA28, with the omission of a comma between the κλητὸς ἀπόστολος and ἀφωρισμένος, and translates “an apostle called [and] set apart for God’s gospel”.355 The decision is however not decisive for this thesis, and regardless of which decision is accepted, it qualifies both Paul and his apostleship directly or indirectly.

In Rom 1:2-4, the good news of God (εὐαγγέλιον θεοῦ) is then described and summarised, beginning in 1:2 with a relative clause (ὅ), which states that it was promised or announced beforehand (προεπηγγείλατο) through the prophets of God in the holy scriptures (ἐν γραφαῖς ἁγίαις). In Romans, Paul uses extensively direct quotations from or allusions to the scriptures (LXX), more than in any of his other letters.356 The scriptural quotations and allusions are therefore essential parts of Paul’s flow of argument throughout Romans. In Rom 1:2, the importance of the scripture for understanding the good news of God is explicitly expressed. Then, follows a long prepositional phrase in 1:3-4 stating that the message is about God’s son, Jesus Christ our Lord (περὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ … Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν). The prepositional phrase can be understood either as a qualification of the previous relative clause, i.e. as an adverbial to the verb προεπηγγείλατο in 1:2, or as a qualification of the good news of God (εὐαγγέλιον θεοῦ) in 1:1d. Scholars usually argue that in 1:3-4, Paul defines the content of the good news, by using or adapting an early pre-Pauline “Christian creed” or “hymn”.357 It is exegetically possible that the prepositional phrase is an elaboration of what is promised in the scriptures.358 Scholars usually consider the choice to be an either-or question, and claim that if it is an early “Christian creed”, it cannot allude to an interpretation of the

356 Of eighty nine (89) scripture quotations in Paul’s letters, fifty one (51) are in Romans. The first direct quotation is from Hab 2:4, in Rom 1:17 (see Ch. 4), and direct scripture quotations are prominent, in e.g. Rom 3:10-18, 4:1-25, particularly in Rom 9-11, also in the more hortatory part, in 12:19-20, 13:9, 14:11, and in the end of the letter body, in 15:3, 9-12, and 21. See also Hays, R. B 1989, Echoes of Scripture in The Letter of Paul, Yale University Press, New Haven, CT; Caulley, T. S. & Lichtenberger, H. 2011 (Ed.), Die Septuaginta Und Das Frühe Christentum: The Septuagint and Christian Origins, WUNT 277, Mohr Siebeck, Tübingen.
Jewish scriptures, and if it alludes to an interpretation of the Jewish scriptures, it cannot be an early “Christian creed”. I do not see this as a conflict. It can be both. Rom 1:3-4 could even be Paul’s own creation, based on his experience and belief in Jesus as the Christ, the Messiah, and a summary of his messianic interpretation of for example 2 Sam 7, Ps 2, and Isa 11.\textsuperscript{359} Whether or not this suggestion is the case is impossible to know. It is therefore better to regard Rom 1:3-4 as an interpretation that Paul had in common with other believers in Christ. The Son of God, Jesus Christ, is depicted in greater detail by two participial constructions. First in 1:3b, as the one who came into being or was born from the seed of David according to the flesh (τοῦ γενομένου ἐκ σπέρματος Δαυὶδ κατὰ σάρκα). Second in 1:4, as the one who was appointed Son of God (τοῦ ὄρισθέντος υἱοῦ θεοῦ) in power according to the spirit of holiness (ἐν δυνάμει κατὰ πνεῦμα ἁγιωσύνης) from the resurrection of the dead (ἐξ ἀναστάσεως νεκρῶν). That there should be a strong, or even antithetical, tension between the first part, 1:3b with κατὰ σάρκα, originating from “primitive Palestinian Christianity” or from “Jewish Christianity”, and the second part, 1:4 with κατὰ πνεῦμα ἁγιωσύνης, originating from the more radical (and more Pauline) “Hellenistic Christianity”, as Jewett argues,\textsuperscript{360} is to read too much into the text. It is not reasonable to assume, with Jewett, that Paul used or adapted an earlier hymn in order to seek common ground with the group(s) of Jewish believers in Rome. Longenecker’s view\textsuperscript{361} that Rom 1:3-4 is something that Paul had in common with (most) other early believers in Christ is more likely. The whole of Rom 1:2-4 should therefore be read together as a compact summary and a general description of the good news of God regarding Jesus Christ.

In Rom 1:5, Paul’s own and possibly other’s apostleship is elaborated in greater detail. In 1:5a the initial prepositional phrase δι’ οὗ is an adverbial to the verb ἐλάβομεν, and the relative pronoun οὗ correlates to Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is the agent, through whom “we have received” grace and apostleship (δι’ οὗ ἐλάβομεν χάριν καὶ ἀποστολὴν).\textsuperscript{362} The apostleship is further explained through three additional prepositional phrases in Rom 1:5b, c,

\textsuperscript{359} Whitsett, C. G. 2000, 672-78, refers to a number of Jewish messianic interpretations of 2 Sam 7, Ps 2 and Isa 11, roughly contemporary with Paul, e.g. in 4QFlor 1:10-13, 18-19; Pss. Sol. 17:4, 23; 1 Enoch 46:3-6; 48:2-5; 49:1-4; Sir 47:11; and other Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha. In Rom 1:3-4, Paul uniquely identifies Jesus as the Son of God and the Messiah. See also Collins, A. Y. & Collins, J. J. 2008, King and Messiah as Son of God – Divine, Human, and Angelic Messianic Figures in Biblical and Related Literature, Wm. B. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, MI.

\textsuperscript{360} Jewett, R. 2007, 104-8.

\textsuperscript{361} Longenecker, R. N. 2016, 64, 68

\textsuperscript{362} The phrase ἐλάβομεν χάριν καὶ ἀποστολὴν is often understood as a reference to Paul’s grace and apostleship which he has received. The “we” of the verb is then understood as a literary or epistolary plural, idiomatically used for the singular “I”. See Longenecker, R. N. 2016, 78. In contrast Jewett, R. 2007, 108-9; Dunn, J. D. G. 1988, 16-17, understands “we” as the plural “we” with reference to other apostles as well.
d. It is for the purpose of, or leading to, the hearkening of faith (εἰς ὑπακοὴν πίστεως) among all the nations (ἐν πᾶσιν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν) for the sake of Christ’s name (ὑπὲρ τοῦ ὀνόματος αὐτοῦ). There are several ways to understand these three prepositional phrases. The prepositional phrase in 1:5b, εἰς ὑπακοὴν πίστεως, probably modifies either the predicate to have received (ἐλάβομεν), or the noun apostleship (ἀποστολὴν), but there is not much difference in meaning and the choice is not decisive. The prepositional phrase points to the goal or gives the purpose of Paul’s (and others) apostleship. The next prepositional phrase in 1:5c, ἐν πᾶσιν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν, modifies either ἀποστολὴν or ὑπακοὴν πίστεως, i.e. either the place for the apostleship or the hearkening of faith is among all the nations. The two alternatives however do not lead to any very different interpretation. The hearkening of faith among the nations is still the goal, and the nations are also the place for Paul’s apostolic mission. The last phrase in 1:5d, ὑπὲρ τοῦ ὀνόματος αὐτοῦ, could be understood to modify either the verb ἐλάβομεν or the nouns ἀποστολὴν or ὑπακοὴν. From the order of the phrases, it is likely that we should understand that the hearkening of faith among the nations is for the sake of the name of Jesus.

The prepositional phrase in 1:6, among whom you too are (the) called of Jesus Christ (ἐν οἷς ἐστε καὶ ὑμεῖς κλητοὶ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ), is commonly understood as a reference to τοῖς ἔθνεσιν in 1:5c, which means that the addressees are also among τοῖς ἔθνεσιν. Another alternative is that the phrase in 1:6 is connected to the expression, we have received the gracious gift and apostleship in 1:5a. The only alternative for the correlate to οἷς besides τοῖς ἔθνεσιν is the implicit subject “we” of the verb ἐλάβομεν. This could suggest that the addressees somehow are, or will be, part of the gracious gift and the apostleship, the sending given to Paul. This gracious gift and apostleship may include several people besides Paul, who would all work together as a team, some as apostles (cf. 16:7) and others with other kinds of responsibilities. They are all called of Jesus Christ (κλητοὶ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ). The subject “we” in 1:5a is however not stressed in the same way as “you” (ὑμεῖς) are in 1:5c, and it is placed much further away than τοῖς ἔθνεσιν in 1:5c. Both 1:5c and 1:6 are preceded by the preposition ἐν. This might make it more appropriate to connect 1:6 with 1:5c. It is a fact that the city of Rome is geographically placed among the nations (ἐν πᾶσιν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν).

The emphatic inclusion of the addressees already in the sender part must have been very obvious to the audience, placed as it is just before the formal
recipient part in Rom 1:7a. The recipient part states that the addressees are all (πᾶσιν) those who are in Rome (τοῖς οὖσιν ἐν Ῥώμῃ), called (to be) loved by God (ἀγαπητοῖς θεοῦ), called (to be) holy (κλητοῖς ἁγίοις). The determiner all (πᾶσιν) is emphatically positioned first, which means that all the addressees in Rome, both of Jewish and gentile origin, are included. The syntactic connections between the three expressions after πᾶσιν are unclear, with the result that scholars translates it with some variations as – “all in Rome, beloved by God, called to be holy”;

“all God’s beloved in Rome, those that are called holy”; or “all God’s beloved, called saints, who are in Rome”. It should be noted that both all (πᾶσιν) and those who are in Rome (τοῖς οὖσιν ἐν Ῥώμῃ) are emphasised through their unusually prominent first positions. This is best expressed in the first translation of the recipients as (to) all those who are in Rome, beloved by God, called to be holy.

The final greetings in 1:7b, grace to you and peace from God our father and (the) Lord Jesus Christ (χάρις ὑμῖν καὶ εἰρήνη ἀπὸ θεοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν καὶ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ), is Paul’s traditional wish for grace and peace. There is a similar phrase in most of his other letters. Scholars agree that Paul’s greeting is a unique adaptation of both the Jewish epistolary greeting and the common ancient Greek greeting. Instead of using verbs such as χαίρειν, ἔρρωσθαι, or εὐτυχεῖν, Paul has χάρις ὑμῖν καὶ εἰρήνη and the verb is implicit, possibly the optative εἴη or some other form of εἰμι. Paul refers explicitly to the addressees by the pronoun you (ὑμῖν) in dative. This transforms the common Greek letter greeting into Paul’s characteristic wish for grace (χάρις) and peace/shalom (εἰρήνη) for the benefit of the addressees. The source is specified. Grace and peace come from God our father (ἀπὸ θεοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν) and the Lord Jesus Christ (καὶ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ).

367 Some text witnesses omit ἐν Ῥώμῃ, but it is probably original due to the stronger external evidence, see Ch. 2.1 Text Critical Analysis.
368 For more on the identity of the addressees see Ch. 2.3.
372 In 1 and 2 Corinthians and Philippians the corresponding geographical location of the addresses comes after the more theological or doctrinal expression(s). 1 Cor 1:2 tῆ ἐκκλησία τοῦ θεοῦ [ἡγιασμένου ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ] τῇ ὑμῶν ἐν Κορίνθῳ; 2 Cor 1:1b tῆ ἐκκλησία τοῦ θεοῦ τῇ ὑμῶν ἐν Κορίνθῳ; Phil 1:1b πᾶσιν τοῖς ἁγίοις ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ τοῖς ὑμῶν ἐν Φιλ. 1:1b tῆ ἐκκλησία τῆς Εἰρήνας, and 1 Thess 1:1b tῆ ἐκκλησίας ἑσπευματικῶν ἐν θεῷ πατρὶ καὶ κυρίῳ Ἱησοῦ Χριστῷ.
373 Only 1 Thess 1:1 and Gal 1:3-5 are significantly different.
374 Doering, L. 2012, 410-12; Jewett, R. 2007, 115; Longenecker, R. N. 2016, 86-9; e.g. in 2 Mac 1:1, “χαίρειν ... καὶ ... εἰρήνην ἐγαθήνυ”; and 2 Bar 78:3, “Grace (mercy) and peace be to you”, which only exists in a Syriac text, translated from Greek, translated from Hebrew, according to Charlesworth, J. C. (ed.) 1983, The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha, vol 1, Hendrickson, Peabody, Ma, 616, 648. Whether the Greek equivalent of the Syriac “Grace (mercy)” is “ἔλεος” or “χάρις” is debated. The Jewish greetings may be inspired by Num 6:25-6.

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The textual arrangement of the letter opening of Romans is summarised in fig 6 below.\textsuperscript{375}

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{l}
(1:1) Παῦλος  \\
δοῦλος Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ  \\
κλητὸς ἀπόστολος  \\
ἀφορισμένος εἰς εὐαγγέλιον θεοῦ  \\
(1:2) ὁ προεπηγγείλατο διὰ τῶν προφητῶν αὐτοῦ ἐν γραφαῖς ἁγίαις  \\
(1:3) περὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ  \\
τοῦ γενομένου ἐκ σπέρματος Δαυὶδ κατὰ σάρκα  \\
(1:4) τοῦ ὀρισθέντος υἱοῦ θεοῦ ἐν δυνάμει κατὰ πνεῦμα ἁγιωσύνης  \\
εξ ἀναστάσεως νεκρῶν  \\
Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν  \\
(1:5) δι’ οὗ ἐλάβομεν χάριν καὶ ἀποστολὴν εἰς ὑπακοὴν πίστεως  \\
ἐν πάσιν τοῖς ἐνδέχεσθαι ὑπὲρ τοῦ ὄνοματος αὐτοῦ  \\
(1:6) ἐν ὅις ἐστε καὶ ὑμεῖς κλητοὶ Ιησοῦ Χριστοῦ  \\
(1:7a) πᾶσιν τοῖς ὑδάτις ἐν Ῥώμῃ ἄγαπητοῖς θεοῦ κλητοῖς ἁγίοις  \\
(1:7b) χάρις ὑμῖν καὶ εἰρήνη ἀπὸ θεοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν καὶ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ

Fig 6. Rom 1:1-7
\end{tabular}
\end{center}

The letter opening consists of the sender part in Rom 1:1-6, the recipient part in 1:7a, and the grace and peace wish in 1:7b. If the letter opening is significant, what can we say regarding the purpose of Romans? What information and observations can be gained by studying the letter opening?

\textsuperscript{375} See also Byrskog, S. 1997, 29, for a similar arrangement of the Greek text, with minor differences.
3.2 Observations Relevant for the Purpose of Romans

The following five (A) – (E) observations give important information about the purpose of Romans.

(A) The focus is on Paul and his apostleship for the good news of God.

All Paul’s letter openings are characteristically elaborated and expanded to indicate the concern and purpose of the letters. The openings are adapted in different ways, probably because the various letters were written for special occasions, matters and contexts. In this respect, Romans is unique in comparison with both other known ancient Greek letters and within the Pauline corpus itself.\(^{376}\)

\[\text{Fig 7. Paul’s letter openings. } s = \text{ the sender, } r = \text{ the recipient, } g = \text{ the greetings.}\]

The letter opening in Romans is significantly longer than in all Paul’s other letters, illustrated in fig 7 above. Compared to the shortest opening in First Thessalonians, it is almost five (5) times longer in Romans. Galatians and First Corinthians, the second and third longest letter openings, are much shorter as well. The opening in Romans is 24% longer than in Galatians and 69% longer.

\(^{376}\) Jewett, R. 2007, 96.
than in First Corinthians. At the same time the greeting Rom 1:7b is Paul’s usual and special wish for grace and peace, and interestingly the recipient part 1:7a is one of the shortest. Only Galatians is shorter. By contrast, and most unique and substantial, is the unprecedentedly long sender part in 1:1-6.

In the sender part, Paul (Παῦλος), 1:1a, is described as the only sender of the letter. This is even more notable, since Rom 16:21-23 refers to others that could be considered Paul’s co-senders or co-working associates. From the very beginning, the focus is on Paul, the sender of the letter, who is described by the next threefold qualifications. First, Paul is characterised as a slave or servant of Christ (δοῦλος Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ) in 1:1b. To be a servant is a significant characteristic used also for other people throughout the letter. To be a servant (δοῦλος) of God is often used for the Hebrew (יהוה עבד), in LXX e.g. Ps 77 (HB 78):70; 104 (105):6, 25-26, 42; 2 Sam 7:5, 8; Amos 3:7; Zech 1:6; Jer 7:25; Isa 49:5, 7. In the translations of עבד, e.g. in Isa 41:9; 42:1; 43:10; 44:1-2; 49:6, παῖς is used with a similar connotation of slave or servant. To be the servant of God is an epithet for the people of God, as well as for various leaders, such as Moses, Joshua and David, and for God’s prophets. These servants, who spoke and enacted God’s message, were specially elected by God for the purpose of his plan of salvation and rescue. The qualification of Paul as a servant probably include the connotation of being called to some important duty as part of God’s plan to save the world.

Second, in Rom 1:1c, Paul is explicitly called to be an apostle (κλητὸς ἀπόστολος). Both terms with their cognates occur throughout the letter; κλητός etc. in Rom 1:1, 6, 7; 4:17; 8:28, 30 (twice); 9:7, 12, 24, 25, 26; 11:29; and ἀπόστολος etc. in Rom 1:1, 5; 10:15; 11:13; 16:7. Paul’s apostleship is...
significantly elaborated here in the opening, but also in the introduction of the letter body (see Ch. 4), and at the end of the letter body (see Ch. 5). The predicate adjective κλητός is used together with the noun ἀπόστολος in Rom 1:1c, and the whole expression is best translated as called to be an apostle. The term ἀπόστολος, with its cognate ἀποστολή in 1:5a, is derived from the verb to send out (ἀποστέλλω). The terms are probably related to the Hebrew terms נְשָׁח, נֵיחֶשָׁח, to send, sending. The noun ἀπόστολος has the basic meaning of an authorised agent or representative, an emissary, a messenger, the one sent out.\textsuperscript{383}

The call and assignment to the one sent out is for those who are given a special status, mandate, or responsibility, such as the apostles, the leaders and the missionaries in the early movement of Christ believers, cf. Gal 1:17-19; 1 Cor 15:3-11.\textsuperscript{384} The meaning of both the terms called and apostle in Rom 1:1c probably also has a background in the LXX/HB, see e.g. Isa 6:8-9; 42:6; 48:12-16; 49:1; 51:2; Hos 11:1; Gen 12:1-3; Exod 3:10. In the LXX/HB it is God’s special call to individuals as well as to the people of God. So, in Rom 1:1c these terms denote the extraordinary status of Paul, indicated by the English word apostle. Scholars are however divided on whether Paul’s special commission as an apostle comes from Jesus Christ or from God.\textsuperscript{385} Based on the previous epithet, the servant of Christ Jesus (δοῦλος Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ) in 1:1b, and with reference to Paul’s statements elsewhere, for example in 1 Cor 1:1, 17, the answer could be from Jesus Christ. However, in Romans, called (κλητός) with its cognate terms are mostly related to God (see the discussion under observation (E) below), which would imply that it is God, who has called Paul to be an apostle. The answer is not definite and Jesus Christ is often depicted as the agent of God, e.g. in Rom 1:5a (ὁ ὁθ, that is διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ).\textsuperscript{386} So, a probable conclusion is that Paul is called by God through Jesus Christ to be an apostle.

The third qualification, in Rom 1:1d, describes Paul and his apostleship as set apart (ἀφωρισμένος) for (the purpose of) the good news of God (εἰς εὐαγγέλιον θεοῦ).\textsuperscript{387} It is a special assignment and bears similarities with the prophetic assignments, for example in Isa 49:1-7; Jer 1:5. The verb ἀφορίζειν is used also for Israel, who was separated as God’s special possession, and associated with the adjective holy (ἅγιος), i.e. separated as God’s holy people, see in LXX Lev 20:26; Isa 52:11.

So, all the three epithets in Rom 1:1 should be understood as Paul’s own self-identification, rooted in Paul’s prophetic consciousness, also expressed in

\textsuperscript{383} LSJ, ἀπόστολος, 220; BDAG, ibid., 122; Thayer, J. H. 2007 (1896), ibid., 68.

\textsuperscript{384} Cranfield, C. E. B. 1975, 51; Longenecker, R. N. 2016, 53.

\textsuperscript{385} For Cranfield, C. E. B. 1975, 51; Dunn, J. D. G. 1988, 9; the apostleship is a commission from Jesus Christ. Cf. Longenecker, R. N. 2016, 54-55; Jewett, R. 2007, 101; Byrskog, S. 2006, 18, all understand it to be a commission from God.

\textsuperscript{386} Besides in Rom 1:5; also in 2:16; 5:1, 11, 17, 21; and 7:25.

\textsuperscript{387} Jewett, R. 2007, 102; Longenecker, R. N. 2016, 56-60; Byrskog, S. 2006, 18.
Paul’s special mandate and responsibility as an apostle is for the good news of God regarding Jesus Christ. The focus on Paul and his apostleship is further stressed in Rom 1:5, where Paul’s and possibly also the apostleship of others is developed in greater detail. Jesus Christ is described as the agent, through whom grace (χάρις) and apostleship (ἀποστολή) are received for, or leading to, the hearkening of faith (ὑπακοὴ πίστεως) among all the nations (ἐν πᾶσι τοῖς ἔθνεσιν) for the sake of Christ’s name (τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ). Exactly what Paul means by this long statement is much discussed by scholars. The terms χάρις and ἀποστολή are associated, and both have been received through Jesus Christ, see also 1 Cor 15:8-11. How χάρις and ἀποστολή are related is uncertain. For many scholars χάρις καὶ ἀποστολή make a hendiadys, an expression of one and the same idea by two words, one of which specifies the other. Here, understood as the special grace of apostleship given to Paul. Other scholars understand χάρις to refer to “the divine acceptance of persons with limitations and failures”, which in this context would mean Paul’s limitations in his former life as a persecutor of believers in Christ. However, there is more to it than these two options. The term graceful gift (χάρις) is the essence of what Christ gives freely and gracefully to humanity as a whole, for example in Rom 3:24; 5:2, 15, 17, 21; Gal 2:20-21; 1 Cor 1:4; 2 Cor 5:21-6:1, and the manifestation of God’s love and favour revealed in Christ. It is the foundation for all those who are “in Christ”. The term ἀποστολή (like ἀπόστολος above) relates to the verb to send out (ἀποστέλλω) and has the basic meaning of sending forth or out-sending. It is usually translated as apostleship. If the indirect subject in first person plural of ἐλάβομεν in Rom 1:5a is understood as “I” and refers to Paul, it should be understood as the apostleship graciously given to Paul. However, it is possible to read the subject “we,” with Dunn, as in fact the plural “we”, which would indicate the inclusion of the apostleship or out-sending of others

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388 Cf. e.g. Gal 1:15-16 οτὲ δὲ εὐδόκησεν ὁ ἀφορίσας με ἐκ κοιλίας μητρός μου καὶ καλέσας διὰ τῆς χάριτος αὐτοῦ ἀποκαλύψαι τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ ἐν ἐμοὶ ἵνα εὐαγγελίζωμαι ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν. See also Longenecker, R. N. 2006, 57; and Sandnes, K. O. 1991, 68-69, 146-153, for an elaboration of Paul’s prophetic consciousness.

389 See the discussion about the meaning of “we” in Ch. 3.1 above, including note 362.

390 For the translation of ἐν πᾶσι τοῖς ἔθνεσιν as “among all the (gentile) nations”, see Ch. 2.3.


393 Besides in Rom 1:5, χάρις occurs twenty-three times, in 1:7b; 3:24; 4:4, 16; 5:2, 15 (twice), 17, 20, 21; 6:1, 14, 15, 17; 7:25; 11:5, 6 (three times); 12:3, 6; 15:15; 16:20.

394 Jewett, R. 2007, 115; Longenecker, R. N. 2016, 88; understand the term χάρις in Rom 1:7b in this was, but this is not their understanding of 1:5a. It seems more reasonable to me to understand χάρις in a similar way both in 1:5a and 1:7b. For a thorough analysis of χάρις in Paul’s letters, see Barclay, J.M.G. 2015.

395 LSJ, ἀποστολή, 220; BDAG, ibid., 121; Thayer, J. H. 2007 (1896), ibid., 68.

as well. This makes it conceivable to understand 1:5a as a description of several people, who have received two things through Jesus Christ, both the graceful gift and the apostleship. If Paul meant the plural we, it would be in line with his strategy to work together with others, see Ch. 2.2. The next three prepositional phrases, in 1:5b, c, and d, express the aim and goal of the graceful gift and apostleship, and they relate directly to the good news of God regarding Jesus Christ. See further the discussion under observation (B) and (C) below.

**In summary**, the sender part of the letter opening, with Paul as the only sender of the letter and three qualifying epithets for Paul, in Rom 1:1, together with the elaboration of the apostleship in 1:5, sets the focus on Paul, and on his apostleship for the good news of God regarding Jesus Christ from the very beginning. This is significantly more emphasised in Romans than in Paul’s other letters. This is the first observation (A) related to the purpose of Romans.

(B) The good news of God is about Jesus as the Messiah and the risen Lord.

The second observation (B) with important information about the purpose of Romans is the short summary and general description in Rom 1:2-4 of the good news of God regarding Jesus as the Messiah and the risen Lord.

As discussed above under observation (A), Paul was set apart for the good news of God (εἰς εὐαγγέλιον θεοῦ), Rom 1:1d. The term the good news (τὸ εὐαγγέλιον) is prominent in all Paul’s letters, but it is only highlighted in Romans as early as in the letter opening. This is an important observation for the purpose of Romans. The good news with the genitive “of God” (τοῦ θεοῦ) is found only in 2 Cor 11:7, besides here in Rom 1:1. The term the good news (τὸ εὐαγγέλιον) and its cognate verb to bring or to proclaim the good news (εὐαγγελίζομαι) most probably derive their meaning from the LXX translation of the Hebrew verb בשר, the participle בשר, and the noun בשרה, used especially in LXX Ps 39:10; 95.2; Isa 40:9; 41:27; 52:7; 60:6; 61:1; Nah 2:1. According to Longenecker and others, the terms have to do with the in-breaking

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398 All other letters have fewer qualifications of Paul in the sender part; 1 Cor 1:1 κλητὸς ἀπόστολος Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ διὰ θελήματος θεοῦ; 2 Cor 1:1 the same without κλητὸς; Phil 1:1 δούλως Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ; Phlm 1:1 δέσμιος Χριστοῦ Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ. In 1 Thess 1:1 there is no qualification of Paul. Cf. Gal 1:1 where the apostleship is elaborated further, ἀπόστολος οὐκ ἀπ’ ἀνθρώπων οὐδὲ ἀπὸ ἀνθρώπων υἱῶν ἀνθρώπων ὑπάρχουσιν ἐν πάσῃ ἐκκλησίᾳ ἡμῶν. In 1 Cor 1:2 Paul calls himself άποστόλος Χριστοῦ. The term the apostleship (ἀποστολή) is prominent in all Paul’s letters, but it is only highlighted in Romans as early as in the letter opening. This is an important observation for the purpose of Romans. The good news with the genitive “of God” (τοῦ θεοῦ) is found only in 2 Cor 11:7, besides here in Rom 1:1. The term the good news (τὸ εὐαγγέλιον) and its cognate verb to bring or to proclaim the good news (εὐαγγελίζομαι) most probably derive their meaning from the LXX translation of the Hebrew verb בשר, the participle בשר, and the noun בשרה, used especially in LXX Ps 39:10; 95.2; Isa 40:9; 41:27; 52:7; 60:6; 61:1; Nah 2:1. According to Longenecker and others, the terms have to do with the in-breaking

399 The noun (τὸ) εὐαγγέλιον occurs nine (9) times in Romans, eight (8) in 1 Cor and 2 Cor respectively, seven (7) in Gal, nine (9) in Phil, and once (1) in Phlm. Similarly, the related verb εὐαγγελίζομαι occurs three (3) times in Romans, six (6) in 1 Cor, two (2) in 2 Cor, and seven (7) times in Gal.
of God’s reign, the advent of his salvation, vengeance and vindication.\footnote{For a more thorough discussion of the meaning of term \textit{εὐαγγέλιον} etc., see Longenecker, R. N. 2016, 58-61; Dunn, J. D. G. 1988, 10; Cranfield, C. E. B. 1975, 54-5; TDNT (1), Friedrich G., \textit{εὐαγγέλιον κτλ.}, 707-737.} In the Greco-Roman world, the term τὰ \textit{εὐαγγέλια} (pl.) was associated with the Emperor-cult. If the addressees had associated Paul’s use of τὸ \textit{εὐαγγέλιον} with this cult, the good news would have been a direct contrast or antithesis to the worship of the Emperor. In the Letter to the Romans, it is more probable that the meaning of the term was derived from Jewish thought, already current at the time of Paul, for example the messianic interpretations of LXX Isa 40-66; Pss. Sol. 11:1; and in the DSS 1QH 23:14 (DSSHU 1QH 18:14); 11Q13:18 (DSSHU 11QMelch 18).\footnote{Longenecker, R. 2016, 56-61; Dunn, J. D. G. 1988, 10; Cranfield, C. E. B. 1975 (1979), 54-5. The DSS references is to Martínez, F. G. & Tigchelaar, E. J. C. 1997/98, \textit{The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition}, Brill, Leiden; while Longenecker and Dunn refer to DSSHU, Sukenik, E. L. 1955, \textit{The Dead Sea Scrolls of the Hebrew University}, Magnes Press, Jerusalem.} The believers in Christ, including Paul, ascribed a special messianic and eschatological flavour to the good news through their interpretation of Jesus as the Messiah.

The good news of God is summarised in the letter opening, Rom 1:2-4, in a significant way through a compact and general description. First in 1:2, the good news was announced or promised beforehand (προεπηγγείλατο) through God’s prophets (διὰ τῶν προφητῶν αὐτοῦ) in the holy scriptures (ἐν γραφαῖς ἁγίαις), which most probably refers to all the scriptures either in Greek (LXX) or in Hebrew (HB). It is also proper to understand God’s prophets as a reference, not only to “prophets” such as Isaiah, Jeremiah, Habakkuk etc., but also other prominent figures, such as Moses, David, and Solomon.\footnote{Jewett, R. 2007, 103; Longenecker, R. 2016, 62-3.} For Paul, the good news of God do not stand in contrast to the Jewish scriptures, but are rather the fulfilment of its promises,\footnote{Sandnes, K. O. 1991, 149; Byrskog, S. 2006, 13-14, 18-20.} see Rom 3:21, 31.

Second in Rom 1:3-4,\footnote{Whether Paul uses an early “Jewish Christian Hymn” in Rom 1:3-4, either in its entirety or in parts, is debated. See Jewett, R. 2007, 103-8; Longenecker, R. N. 2016, 63-77; Byrskog, S. 2006, 16. It could be both an early hymn and a summary of the content of what was promised beforehand in the scriptures. It is not an either-or question.} Paul explains that the good news is the message about Jesus Christ our Lord, the Messiah, and gives a summary and a general description of the content of the good news. It is a description Paul reasonably fully agrees with.\footnote{Paul gives additional summaries of the good news of God, but in somewhat different ways in Rom 1:16-18 (see Ch. 4); and in Rom 15:7-13 (see Ch. 8); 16:17-20, 25-27 (see Ch 6.). See also Whitsett, C. G. 2000, 661-681.} In greater detail,\footnote{Longenecker, R. N. 2016, 63-77, discusses many exegetical problems with an overview of the interpretative options; Also Jewett, R. 2007, 103-8; Dunn, J. D. G. 1988, 11-16; Cranfield, C. E. B. 1975, 57-65.} Paul declares that the good news of God focus on Jesus Christ. Jesus is the Jewish Messiah (ὁ Χριστός), promised beforehand and long expected, born of the seed and lineage of (King) David.
(ἐκ σπέρματος Δαυὶδ) according to the flesh (κατὰ σάρκα). Jesus is also the appointed Son of God (υἱὸς θεοῦ) in power (ἐν δυνάμει) according to the spirit of holiness (κατὰ πνεῦμα ἁγιωσύνης) from the resurrection of the dead (ἐξ ἀναστάσεως νεκρῶν), that is Jesus is the risen Lord (κύριος). In this passage, Paul has brought together thoughts and ideas from contemporary Judaism based on the messianic interpretations of the scriptures, both about the royal Messiah as the true descendant of David, and about the Messiah as the Son of God. The expression κατὰ πνεῦμα ἁγιωσύνης may refer to the spirit of holiness who dwells in Jesus, that is Jesus own spirit of holiness, and as such refers to his complete obedience and faithfulness to God. The expression ἐν δυνάμει can be understood either adverbially or adjectivally, that is either as a reference to the power of God, who appoints Jesus as Son of God and raises him from the dead, or to the power of the risen Son of God. Because of the parallelism of the three expressions with the prepositions ἐν, κατὰ, and ἐκ, of which the phrases introduced by κατὰ and ἐκ are most probably intended as adjectives that refer to Jesus himself, it is reasonable to believe that ἐν δυνάμει also refers to the power of the risen Son of God according to his spirit of holiness. The final apposition, the very common Pauline expression Jesus Christ our Lord (Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν), expresses more or less the same – Jesus is the royal Davidic anointed one (ὁ Χριστός) that is the Messiah, and the risen Lord (ὁ κύριος) that is the Son of God in power.

It should further be noted that besides the importance of God for Paul’s message, where the Greek θεός is the most frequent theological word/term (153 times) in Romans, the significance of Jesus Christ (65 times) is also obvious, but maybe often taken for granted. Here, in the letter opening, Jesus Christ is referred to nine times (five times directly and four indirectly), while God only occurs five times (three directly and two indirectly). Jesus Christ, God’s long-awaited messiah, the risen Lord, is particularly significant and prominent in the opening of Romans, and more so here than in Paul’s other letter openings. Jesus Christ is the main subject of the good news of God.

407 Paul is probably in agreement with most (if not all) of his contemporary believers in Jesus as the Christ. Collins, A. Y. & Collins, J. J. 2008, gives an overview of Messianic interpretation at the time.
408 Ps 2:7-8; 89:3-4; 2 Sam 7:12; Isa 11:1, 10; Jer 23:5-6; 30:9; 33:5; Ezek 34:23-24; 37:24-5; Pss. Sol. 17:21, 23.
409 2 Sam 7:14; Zech 3:8; 6:2; See also 4Q Flor 1:12-13; 1 En. 105:2.
410 For more on the term πνεῦμα ἁγιωσύνης see observation (D) below.
412 By comparison, Jesus Christ is referred to in the letter openings of 1 Cor four times, 2 Cor two times, Gal five (or six times if Gal 1:5 refers to Jesus Christ), 1 Thess once, and Phlm two times. So even though God is important for the message of Romans, the prominence of Jesus Christ in the opening is most significant.
Finally, under this observation (B), there is good reason to discuss the prepositional phrase ὑπὲρ τοῦ ὀνόματος αὐτοῦ in 1:5d. Most commentators translate the phrase as for the sake of [Jesus] name. At the time of Paul, a name, besides being the name or epithet of a person, also manifested something of self, according to James Dunn. For Robert Jewett, who compares the phrase with for example Ps 102:16; Mal 1:1, “the name ‘of God’ denotes the personal rule and work of Yahweh”, and could “be used as an alternative term for Yahweh himself”. God’s name dwells among humans, is present in the temple, and extends divine Lordship over the world. God’s name is an acting subject worthy of honour in his own right, for example in Ps 20:1, 5; 44:5; 54:1; 118:10-12; Jer 10:6; Prov 18:10. Here, in the letter opening in Rom 1:5d, the name of Jesus should be understood as the foundation of the proclamation in a missionary context, similar to Rom 15:20; see also Acts 9:15. According to Longenecker, a person’s name “connotes his or her true character and significance”. Regarding Jesus as the Lord (ὁ κύριος), for example in Phil 2:9-11, the name is above every other name, and all tongues shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the father. So, the last prepositional phrase in Rom 1:5d, for the sake of the name of Jesus, refers to the foundation and reason for Paul’s apostleship, aimed for the hearkening of faith among all the people of the nations. Both Paul’s apostleship and the hearkening of faith among the nations are for the sake of Jesus, the Messiah and the risen Lord.

To conclude, the second observation (B) significant for the purpose of Romans is Paul’s summary and compact general description in Rom 1:2-4 of the good news of God. It is the message about Jesus as the Messiah and the risen Lord, promised beforehand by the holy scriptures. This indicates that the good news of God will be a crucial part of the coming letter message.

(C) Paul has been sent to change the behaviour of the people of the nations.

We have seen under observations (A) and (B) above that the focus in the letter opening is on Paul, and his apostleship for the good news of God regarding Jesus as the Messiah and the risen Lord. Paul’s out-sending is for the hearken-
ening of faith (εἰς ὑπακοὴν πίστεως) among the nations. Most scholars translate ὑπακοὴ πίστεως as obedience of faith with some variations.\(^{417}\) Scholars usually see that Paul’s apostolic responsibility is to proclaim the good news that leads to an increase in the number of people who believe in the message and respond with faith in Jesus as the Christ and with hope in the promise of salvation.\(^{418}\) This is reasonable, but it is not the only purpose for which Paul is sent out. As will be demonstrated below, the expression ὑπακοὴ πίστεως, which in this thesis is translated as “hearkening of faith”, also has an ethic connotation and implication.\(^{419}\) Consequently, the third (C) observation in the letter opening is that Paul has also been sent to change the behaviour of the people of the nations.

In Rom 1:5, the expression ὑπακοὴ πίστεως states the aim and goal of the received grace or graceful gift (χάρις) and the apostleship or out-sending (ἀποστολή). But how ὑπακοὴ πίστεως should be interpreted is debated among scholars.\(^{420}\) The exact terms in combination is unique and only found in Rom 1:5; 16:26.\(^{421}\) The noun ὑπακοή is found once in the LXX, 2 Sam 22:36, about God’s ὑπακοή, and it is not attested in other ancient Greek texts before Paul’s letter. Its cognate verb ὑπακούω occurs 40 times in the LXX, and more than 4000 times in the ancient Greek texts.\(^{422}\) The noun ὑπακοή is translated in lexica as obedience or answer (to prayer).\(^{423}\) It is however worthwhile to look a little deeper for the meaning of the term. A feminine verbal noun with the suffix-η, such as ὑπακοή, formed from its cognate verb, in this case from ὑπακούω, expresses the implication, the realization (fruition), or the result of the cognate verb.\(^{424}\) The verb ὑπακούω has the lexical meaning to hearken, to give ear, to answer, to listen to, to heed, to obey, to submit to, or to yield.\(^{425}\) It


\(^{419}\) Some scholars allude to a more ethical connotation of ὑπακοὴ πίστεως. Dunn, J. D. G. 1988, 18, talks about a “lifestyle determined by … faith”; Fitzmyer, J. A. 1993, 238, “a commitment to the service of God in Christ”; and Longenecker, R. N. 2016, 80, about “a lively faith that results in a life of obedience”.


\(^{421}\) See, though, the akin expression ἐξ ἀκοῆς πίστεως in Gal 3:2, 5.

\(^{422}\) My TLG search confirms the statement in Longenecker, R. N. 2016, 79; Jewett, R. 2007, 110, about the difficulty to interpret the expression.

\(^{423}\) LSJ, ὑπακοή, 1851; BDAG, ibid., 1028; Thayer, J. H. 2007 (1896), ibid., 637.


\(^{425}\) LSJ, ὑπακοκοῆς, 1851; Thayer, J. H. 2007 (1896), ibid., 638; Cf. BDAG, ibid., 1028-9, which has a different order – to obey, to follow, be subject to, hear, answer.
is a composite verb based on ἀκούω, which is similar to διακούω, εἰσακόυω, ἐπακούω, παρακούω etc., which all occur frequently, ca 900 times in the LXX, and 312 times in the NT. These verbs all have both similarities and differences of connotation, but it seems that the quintessential meaning of the composite verbs in general are rather close to the basic verb to hear (ἀκούω), although with a connotation of a more active or responsive hearing. The verbs ὑπακούω and εἰσακόυω are very close in meaning, almost synonyms, and παρακούω is more of an opposite term. In Paul’s other letters apart from Romans the words ἀκοή, ἀκούω, εἰσακόυω, ἐπακούω, paraκοή, ὑπακοή, and ὑπακούω occur. The verb εἰσακόυω, ἐπακούω are very close in meaning, almost synonyms, and παρακούω is more of an opposite term. In Paul’s other letters apart from Romans the words ἀκοή, ἀκούω, εἰσακόυω, ἐπακούω, paraκοή, ὑπακοή, and ὑπακούω occur. The verb εἰσακόυω, ἐπακούω are used once each in direct quotations of Isaiah. In Romans only ἀκοή, ἀκούω, paraκοή and ὑπακοή, ὑπακούω occur. The verb εἰσακόυω, ἐπακούω are used once each in direct quotations of Isaiah. In Romans only ἀκοή, ἀκούω, paraκοή and ὑπακοή, ὑπακούω occur. Most scholars agree that the term ὑπακοή should be understood against Paul’s Jewish background. In the LXX, the terms based on ἀκούω are used as translations of Hebrew terms with the stem שמע, with the basic meaning to hear the voice, the word, the law, or the commandments of God. The term שמע, to hear, does not only refer to passive listening, but has the synonymous meaning of to heed, to listen to, to hearken to, and to obey, which implies an active hearing and a proper response to what is heard. Therefore, to fully understand the meaning of ὑπακοή in Rom 1:5 there is a need to analyse first Paul’s use of ἀκούω, ὑπακούω etc., in Romans, and then the use of the terms and their close equivalents in the LXX.

In Romans, the terms based on ἀκούω, ὑπακούω etc. occur both in the opening in Rom 1:5, and in the last parts of the letter in Rom 15-16 (to be

426 The meaning of ἀκούω is to hear, to know by hearsay, hearken, give ear, listen to, obey, hear and understand; διακούω, to hear out (or to the end), hear (or learn) from another; εἰσακόυω, to hearken, give ear to, give way, yield (to a request), hear, perceive; ἐπακούω, to hear (about), answer, over hear, give ear, listen, perceive, understand; paraκούω, to hear beside, overhear, misunderstand, take no heed of, disobey, pretend not to hear; See LSJ, 53-4, 399, 493, 605, 1314; BDAG, 37-8, 231, 293, 358, 767; Thayer, J. H. 2007 (1896), 22-3, 138, 187, 228, 484.

427 The word ἀκοή, in Rom 10:16, 17 (two times); 1 Cor 12:17 (two times); Gal 3:2, 5; 1 Thess 2:13; ἀκούω, in Rom 10:14 (two times), 18; 11:8; 15:21; 1 Cor 2:9; 5:1; 11:18; 14:2; 2 Cor 12:4, 6; Gal 1:13, 23; 4:21; Phil 1:27, 30; 2:26; 4:9; Phlm 5; εἰσακόυω, in 1 Cor 14:21 (Is 28:12); ἐπακούω, in 2 Cor 6:2 (Is 49:8); paraκοή, in Rom 5:19; 2 Cor 10:6; ὑπακοή, in Rom 1:5; 5:19; 6:16 (two times) 15:18; 16:19, 26; 1 Cor 7:15; 10:5, 6; Phlm 21; and ὑπακούω, in Rom 6:12, 16, 17; 10:16; Phil 2:12.

428 Longenecker, R. N. 2016, 82; Jewett, R. 2007, 110; Garlington, D. B. 1991, The Obedience of Faith: A Pauline Phrase in Historical Context. WUNT II/38, Mohr, Tübingen, 10-14; Nanos, M. D. 1996, 218-38. Even though Garlington and Nanos differ in opinion in many ways, both argue that ὑπακοή πίστεως should be understood from a Jewish background, and with not only a doctrinal but also with a strong obrigating ethical connotation.

429 The terms ἀκούω, ὑπακούω, and εἰσακόυω occurs in e.g. LXX Isa 1:19-20; 3:3; 6:9-10; 42:2; 51:1, 4, 7; 55:2; Jer 40:3; Ps 106:24-25; Gen 22:18; 26:5; Deut 9:23-24; 1 Sam 12:14; Dan 9:9-14. The term the nations (τὰ ἔθνη) also appears in God’s call for an obedient/hearkening people, in Isa 34:1; 49:1; Mic 1:2.

430 BDB, פָּנָשׁ, 1033-35.
discussed more in Ch. 5 and 6). In addition, the terms are found in two particular passages of the letter body, in Rom 5-6 and in Rom 9-11.

Regarding Rom 5-6: After God’s promises to Abraham and his seed in Rom 4, where Abraham is the proper example of faith for both the uncircumcised and the circumcised, Paul develops his thought and argument further in Rom 5:1-11. Since they have been made righteous or justified (δικαιωθέντες) from faith (ἐκ πίστεως) the believers have peace (εἰρήνη) with God through Jesus Christ. They have access to the gracious gift (χάρις) and take their pride in the hope (ἐλπίς) of the glory of God (ἡ δόξα τοῦ θεοῦ). This will involve hardship and sufferings, but the love of God (ἡ ἀγάπη τοῦ θεοῦ) has been poured into the believers’ hearts through the holy spirit (διὰ πνεύματος ἁγίου). Christ (Χριστός) died for their sins, and they will be saved by, or in, the life of Christ (σωθησόμεθα ἐν τῇ ζωῇ αὐτοῦ). It is through Christ that they have this reconciliation or changed relation (νῦν τὴν καταλλαγὴν ἐλάβομεν) with God. Then, in 5:12-21, Paul compares Adam with Christ. Previously they all died through Adam’s transgression and his disobedience, or maybe better, through his unwillingness to hearken (παρακοήν). Now, through one person, Jesus Christ, they have access to the gracious gift (χάρις) that through Jesus’ obedience, or better, through his willingness to hearken (ὑπακοή) and his righteous deeds they are made righteous, which leads to eternal life. Next, in 6:1-23, Paul describes and develops the thought of a new life in Christ, which means to be dead to sin and alive for God. They are now slaves (δοῦλοι) and hearken (ὑπακούω) into righteousness (εἰς δικαιοσύνην). Finally, serving God (δουλωθέντες τῷ θεῷ) they will have their fruit into holiness (ἔχετε τὸν καρπὸν ἡμῶν εἰς ἁγιασμὸν), and the gracious gift of God (τὸ χάρισμα τοῦ θεοῦ) is eternal life in the Messiah, Jesus, the risen Lord (ζωὴ αἰώνιος ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ τῷ κυρίῳ ἡμῶν). So, from Paul’s argument in Rom 5-6, it is reasonable to understand ὑπακοή, besides as hearing and believing the good news of God regarding Jesus Christ, also as an ethical concept with a demand for the righteous behaviour of the believers in their new life in Christ.

Second, in Rom 9-11, Paul discusses Israel’s unbelief in Jesus as the Christ, the Messiah, and this unbelief in relation to God’s everlasting promises to Israel. Paul argues in 10:9-13 that everyone who believes will be saved. This refers to those who have the word, the good news which Paul proclaims, in their mouths and hearths. There is no distinction between a Jew and a Greek. In 10:14-21, Paul explains that not all (Jews and gentiles) have hearkened to

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431 In Rom 15:18, 21; 16:19, 26. Sufficient is for now to say that the observations made here in Ch. 3 are not contradicted by the discussion later in Ch. 5 and 6 of this thesis.
432 More precisely in Rom 5:19; 6:12-17; and in 10:14-18; 11:8. For more on Rom 5-6, 10-11 see Ch. 8.
433 The text critical problem in Rom 5:1 with either ἔχομεν or ἔχωμεν is not decisive for the discussion here, but if the choice is the verb in subjunctive, it gives an even stronger exhortative interpretation of the passage.
the good news (οὐ πάντες ὑπήκουσαν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ). In 11:1-36, Paul continues to explain the fact that (most of) Israel have not responded (so far) with faith to the message they have heard, but this is actually in accordance with God’s (mysterious) plan. It is for the purpose of salvation or the rescue of the people of the nations (ἡ σωτηρία τοῖς ἔθνεσιν). However, this is only a temporary situation. In the end all Israel will be saved and God will have mercy on all (human beings). So, what is evident from Paul’s use of ἀκούω, ὑπακούω, etc., in Rom 9-11, is that hearing and hearkening is related to believing in the good news of Jesus as the Christ, and to responding accordingly. Exactly what that response should be and what Paul means by the statement about having the word both in the mouth and the hearth is not obvious. However, with the previous discussion of Rom 5-6 in mind, it is not unreasonable to think that the term ὑπακούω in Rom 9-11 also has the same or a similar ethical connotation.

In addition, Paul uses references to the scriptures extensively in this letter, and especially in his argument in Rom 9-11. It is therefore justified to think that the proper understanding of ὑπακοή in Romans should relate to the meaning of the terms ἀκούω, ὑπακούω, and εἰσακόυω in the LXX. Four examples are sufficient. First (1), Deut 6:4-5; 11:13, with the important Jewish “Shema”, uses both ἀκούω and εἰσακόυω. Second (2), Gen 26:4-5 (see also 22:18) uses ὑπακούω in relation to Abraham as an example to imitate. Third (3), Isa 51:1-8 uses ἀκούω also related to Abraham and Sarah. Paul quotes and alludes to the prophet Isaiah extensively, particularly in the Letter to the Romans.

Fourth (4), Deut 9:7-10:11 has the synonym εἰσακόυω but throws some light of the term in relation to conviction and faith. First, in Deut 6:4-5, Israel is urged to hear (ἀκούει) the Lord, your God, the only God! They shall love (ἀγαπήσεις) God, with all their heart (ἐξ ὅλης τῆς καρδίας σου) soul or life (τῆς ψυχῆς) and power (τῆς δυνάμεώς). The words of God (τὰ ῥήματα ταῦτα) shall be in their heart (ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ σου) and in their soul or life (ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ σου). In the literary context in Deut 6:1-25, Israel is urged to fear (φοβηθήσετε) God and to watch, observe or bear in mind (φυλάσσεσθαι) God’s commandments (αἱ ἐντολαί) his righteous deeds or ordinances (τὰ δικαίωματα) his decrees or judgments (τὰ κρίματα) and his testimonies or proofs (τὰ μαρτύρια). In addition, they are admonished to serve (λατρεύσεσθε) God and to join, unite, or devote, even to glue or cement themselves (κολληθήσεται) to God, and to swear, take an oath on or to invoke (ὄμη


435 For a thorough study of Paul’s quotations of the prophet Isaiah, see Olson, R. C. 2016.

436 LXX Deut 6:4-5 ἄκουε Ισραήλ κύριος ὁ θεός ἡμῶν κύριος εἴς ἄστιν καὶ ἀγαπήσεις κύριον τὸν θεόν σου εξ ὅλης τῆς καρδίας σου καὶ εξ ὅλης τῆς ψυχῆς σου καὶ εξ ὅλης τῆς δυνάμεώς σου.
(ὁμνυμί)) God’s name. They should do or carry out the acceptable and the pleasing (τὸ ἀρεστὸν), the beautiful and the useful (τὸ καλὸν), in the sight of God (ἐναντίον τοῦ θεοῦ), but they should not invoke the burning anger of God (μὴ ὀργισθῇ κύριος ὁ θεός) in or with them (ἐν σοί), since that might utterly destroy or exterminate them (ἐξολεθρεύσῃ σε). If they accomplish this and hearken to what is heard (ἐὰν ἀκοῇ εἰσακούσῃ τε), in Deut 11:13, they will instead fare well and receive what God has promised. So, in the first example, the verbs ἀκούω and εἰσακόυω have the connotation, not only to hear and to believe or trust in God, but also to hearken to or to heed, that is to observe, to serve, and to carry out the will of God. The hearkening thus implies, at least indirectly, to strive for a proper moral behaviour by those who hear God’s message.437

Second, in Gen 26:4-5 (see also Gen 22:18), God promises to Abraham and his seed (τὸ σπέρμα σου), that all the people or nations of the earth (πάντα τὰ ἔθνη) will be blessed (ἐνευλογηθήσονται) in or through Abraham’s seed (ἐν τῷ σπέρματί σου). The reasons for God’s promises and blessings are important for the discussion here. They will be given in return for which or because (ἀνθ’ ὧν) Abraham hearkened (ὑπήκουσεν Αβρααμ) to the voice of God (τῆς ἐμῆς φωνῆς) and because he observed and bore in mind (ἐφύλαξεν) the orders or ordinances (τὰ προστάγματα) of the commandments (τὰς ἐντολὰς) and the righteous deeds (τὰ δικαιώματα) and the laws or customs (τὰ νόμιμα) of God. In this second example Abraham hearkened the word and will of God and actively responded to it. For this reason, the promises were given to Abraham and to his seed (sg.).

In the third example, in Isa 51:1-8, Isaiah (with the voice of God) urges – hear me (ἀκούσατέ μου) you who run for or pursue the righteous thing (οἱ διώκοντες τὸ δίκαιον) and seek or strive for the Lord (ζητοῦντες τὸν κύριον)! The hearers are urged to look at or to consider Abraham their father (ἐμβλέψατε εἰς Αβρααμ τὸν πατέρα ὑμῶν) and Sarah who suffered birth pangs for them (εἰς Σαρραν τὴν ὠδίνουσαν ὑμᾶς). God called (ἐκάλεσα) blessed (εὐλόγησα) loved (ἠγάπησα) and multiplied (ἐπλήθυνα) Abraham and Sarah. But, according to Isaiah, God will even now admonish, encourage and comfort (παρακαλέσω) Sion, and God will come to her aid. Isaiah proclaims a second time – hear me (God), my people hear (ἀκούσατε μου ἀκούσατε λαός μου)! From God shall (the) law (νόμος) come, and God’s right or judgment (ἡ κρίσις) shall be a light for the nations (φῶς ἐθνῶν). God’s righteousness (ἡ δικαιοσύνη μου) and his salvation or rescue (τὸ σωτηρίμου μου) is imminent.

437 Isa 1:19-20 expresses the same idea of consent to and hearken the will of God – if you will (with consent) (ἐὰν θέλητε) and you hearken me (my will) (εἰσακούσῃτε μου) you will eat the good things of the earth (τὰ ἀγαθὰ τῆς γῆς φάγεσθε). If you do not will (with consent) (ἐὰν δὲ δὲ θέλητε) and you do not hearken me (my will) (μηδὲ εἰσακούσῃτε μου) you will eat up or devour the sword (μάχαιρα ὑμᾶς κατέδεται). For the tongue of (the) Lord has spoken these things (τὸ γὰρ στόμα κυρίου ἐλάλησεν ταῦτα).
Nations (ἔθνη) shall hope for or put their hope in (ἐλπιοῦσιν) God’s might and power. Even if much of the creation is about to perish, God’s people shall hear God (ἀκοῦσατε μου), that is those who have God’s law in their heart (ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ ὑμῶν). Do not fear the reproach and contempt from other people. God’s righteousness (ἡ δικαιοσύνη μου) shall last forever, and his salvation (τὸ σωτήριόν μου) for generations of people to come. Abraham and Sarah are the examples to imitate because they hearken God’s will. Those of the nations, who follow their example will be saved as well.

In the scriptural examples above it is difficult to distinguish between, on the one side, faith and trust in God, and on the other, hearing and hearkening of God’s will. This is also valid in the fourth and last example in Deut 9:7-10:11 in the story of Moses on mount Horeb, where Israel had left the way of God, and had sinned or turned away from God (ἡμάρτετε) by creating the golden calf in front of God (ἐναντίον τοῦ θεοῦ). So, Moses reproaches the people and reminds them of several other cases when they did not follow the will of God. In 9:23b-24, Moses exclaims that they were not persuaded or convinced (ἠπειθήσατε) by the word of God (τῷ ῥήματι τοῦ θεοῦ), and they did not believe, have faith, or trust in God (οὐκ ἐπιστεύσατε αὐτῷ), and they did not hear or hearken his voice (οὐκ εἰσηκούσατε τῆς φωνῆς αὐτοῦ). This is the reason why they sinned. Moses here obviously implies the reverse to be the proper way – to be persuaded by the word of God, to believe and have faith, and to hearken the voice of God.

These four examples from the scriptures (LXX) describe the proper faith and trust in God, but also the personal commitment to the will of God, practised by hearing and hearkening, which is manifested in the believers’ way of life, particularly by showing love and doing the good and the pleasing and the righteous. It is therefore a legitimate understanding that the terms based on hearing and hearkening have an ethical connotation and implication in the LXX. Likewise, the expression ὑπακοὴ πίστεως in Rom 1:5 is the goal, or the result, expected from Paul’s apostolic work for the good news of God. It relates to people, who hear the proclamation of God’s action in and through Jesus Christ and should result in faith in the hope and promise of the good news. It also implies an ethical obligation for those who hear the good news. It should be manifested in the believer’s new way of life.

To conclude: the third observation (C) in the letter opening is that Paul is sent for the good news of God. The good news is the message of God’s action, in and through Jesus Christ, for the hope and promise to save all who believe. It must lead to and imply a changed way of life in relation to God, and proper

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ethical behaviour towards other human beings according to God’s will. This is part of Paul’s apostolic responsibility among the people of the nations, and it includes the Romans as well. The Romans live in the geographical centre of the nations, which will be elaborated further in the next observation (D) below.

(D) The addressees in Rome live in the geographical centre of the nations.

The purpose of Paul’s apostleship is to bring the good news of God for the hearkening of faith ἐν πᾶσιν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν, in Rom 1:5. Most scholars understand τὰ ἔθνη as the gentiles, the ethnic group(s) of non-Jews. In Ch. 2.3 above, it was argued instead that τὰ ἔθνη can refer to the nations in the sense of the geographical area(s) outside Judaea and Palestine. What is most significant, though, is that the addressees in Rome live among (the people of) the nations (τὰ ἔθνη), and in the geographical centre of the world (the Roman Empire). This is the fourth observation (D) for the purpose of Romans.

Already in the sender part of the opening, Paul includes and mentions the addressees in Rome. By the prepositional phrase among whom you are too (ἐν οἷς ἐστε καὶ ὑμεῖς) in Rom 1:6, the addressees are directly related to Paul, the apostle of the good news of God for the hearkening of faith among all the nations. The phrase literally “also you!” (καὶ ὑμεῖς) refers to the addressees and is highlighted. The addressees are qualified as called, or the called ones, of Jesus Christ (κλητοὶ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ).

To repeat the conclusion from the important discussion above, which is significant for the issue here, it is not entirely clear whether the prepositional phrase in 1:6 qualifies all the nations (πᾶσιν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν) in 1:5c, or if it is related to the apostleship given through Christ in 1:5a. See the discussion by Samuel Byrskog that Paul was “thinking and labouring together with a group of close associates during most of his career,” which can be pointing to the given apostleship. This notion will be discussed further in the analysis of Rom 16, in Ch. 6. However, the inclusion of the addressees already in the sender part must have been very obvious to the hearers/addressees, especially as this comes before the formal recipient part in 1:7a. Further, the recipient part proper in Rom 1:7a states explicitly that the addressees in dative are all

440 Longenecker, R. N. 2016, 45; Jewett, R. 2007, 95; Fitzmyer, J. A. 1993, 227; Cranfield, C. E. B. 1975, 48; all translate ”among all the Gentiles”; Wölter, M. 2014, 75, as ”unter allen Heiden”; Cf. Dunn, J. D. G. 1988, 4; who translates ”among all the nations”;
441 Or possibly as the people of the nations that is the people who live in the geographical area(s) outside Judaea and Palestine, see Ch. 2.3.
442 See Ch. 3.1. Most reasonably, the prepositional phrase in 1:6 qualifies 1:5c.
those who are in Rome (πᾶσιν τοῖς οὖσιν ἐν Ῥώμῃ). They are loved by God and called (to be) holy. The particularly emphatic placement of the determiner all (πᾶσιν) first is significant. Paul includes all the addressees, both Jewish and gentile believers in Rome. Both all (πᾶσιν) and those who are in Rome (τοῖς οὖσιν ἐν Ῥώμῃ) are in focus, through their prominent first positions in the Greek text. In First and Second Corinthians and in Philippians, the corresponding expression of the geographic origin of the addressees comes after the more theological expression(s). In comparison to the long sender part, the descriptions of the recipients are conspicuously short but still significant. The geographical epithets of the addressees are thus in focus in both Rom 1:6 and 7a. This is an important observation, which indicates that Paul’s aim is to relate the addressees in Rome closely to himself and his apostleship for the good news of God about Jesus Christ among the nations. The city of Rome is the geographic centre of all the nations in the Romans Empire.

To conclude: the fourth observation (D) shows that the addressees in Rome, both Jews and gentiles, live among the people of the nations. This is reasonable, since the addressees in Rom 1:6 are related to the term τὰ ἔθνη in 1:5, and the addressees are ἐν Ῥώμῃ in 1:7a, and both τὰ ἔθνη and ἐν Ῥώμῃ are geographical terms and expressions. This observation is vital for the purpose of Romans.

448 (E) The addressees are called to belong to Jesus Christ and to be holy.

The epithet (to be) called (κλητός) is repeated three times in the letter opening, once for Paul, in Rom 1:1c, who is called (to be an) apostle (κλητὸς ἀπόστολος), and twice for the addressees, first in 1:6, where they are called, or the called ones, of Jesus Christ (κλητοὶ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ), and second in 1:7a, where they are called (to be) holy (κλητοὶ ἁγιοί). The call of Paul was discussed above under observation (A). Here, under the fifth observation (E), the

445 Some minor text witnesses omit ἐν Ῥώμῃ, but its inclusion is probably original due to the stronger external evidence, see Ch. 2.1 for the text critical analysis.
446 Cranfield, C. E. B. 1975, 68, sees the addressees as a more even mix of Jewish and Gentile believers; Jewett R. 2007, 112, also speaks of a mix but understands the addressees as predominantly Jewish. For more on the identity of the addressees see Ch. 2.3. This emphasis on all of the addressees is repeated in Rom 1:8, see Ch. 4.
447 1 Cor 1:2 τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ τοῦ θεοῦ [ἡττασαμένους ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ] τῇ οὐσίᾳ ἐν Κορίνθῳ etc; 2 Cor 1:1b τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ τοῦ θεοῦ τῇ οὐσίᾳ ἐν Κορίνθῳ etc; Phil 1:1b πᾶσιν τοῖς ἁγίοις ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ τοῖς οὖσιν ἐν Φιλίπποις etc. Cf. Gal 1:2b ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις τῆς Γαλατίας, and 1 Thess 1:1b τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ Θεσσαλονίκεων ἐν θεῷ πατρί καὶ κυρίῳ Ἰησοῦ Χριστῷ, who differ from the other letters.
448 It is not only Paul’s way of being polite. His references to the addressees both at the end of the sender and in the recipient phrase, and with the particular qualifications, are an adaptation with a purpose. This is further developed by Paul in 1:8 and forward, in the introduction of the letter body, see Ch. 4.
double call of the addressees to belong to Jesus Christ and to be holy will be analysed in greater detail.

The first characterisation of the addressees as called of Jesus Christ (κλητοὶ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ), Rom 1:6, should be understood as a call into the domain of Jesus Christ. The genitive of Jesus Christ can be seen as either a subjective genitive, i.e. that Jesus is calling or that they are the called ones of Jesus, or a genitive of origin, i.e. that this call originated from Jesus.\(^{449}\) Alternatively it could be a possessive genitive to indicate that it is a call to belong to Jesus or to be the called ones who belong to Jesus.\(^{450}\) I agree with Longenecker on the last alternative. In Paul’s letters, it is God who ultimately calls, e.g. in Rom 4:7; 8:28, 30; 9:24; 1 Thess 5:24; Gal 1:6, 15; 5:8; 1 Cor 1:9; 7:17-18, 20-22, 24. According to Longenecker, God’s call of the addressees here in Rom 1:6 is similar to God’s call of Israel, in e.g. (LXX) Isa 43:1; 48:12-16. In Romans, the call to all the addressees is to belong to Jesus Christ. Through Jesus, the gentile believers are also brought into association with God’s people.\(^{451}\)

Other expressions followed by the genitive “of Jesus Christ” (Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ) and with a reference to the addressees occur in Rom 8:9 and 14:8. Beginning with 8:9, in the immediate context, in 8:1, Paul discusses the new life in Christ Jesus (ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ). In 8:6, Paul contrasts a life in the flesh (ἐν σαρκὶ) that leads to death, with a life in the spirit (ἐν πνεύματι) that leads to life and peace, shalom, (ζωὴ καὶ εἰρήνη). Then, in 8:9-10, Paul states that the addressees are not in the flesh (ἐν σαρκὶ) but in the spirit (ἐν πνεύματι), if indeed (εἴπερ) the spirit of God (πνεῦμα θεοῦ) dwells or lives in them (οἰκεῖ ἐν ὑμῖν). If someone (εἰ δὲ τις) does not have the spirit of Christ, the Messiah (πνεῦμα Χριστοῦ), this person is not of him (of Christ), or does not belong to him (οὐκ ἔστιν αὐτῷ). However, if Christ, the Messiah, is in the addressees (εἰ δὲ Χριστὸς ἐν ὑμῖν), the body is dead because of sin, but the spirit is alive because of (the) righteousness (τὸ δὲ πνεῦμα ζωὴ διὰ δικαιοσύνην). A similar train of thought is expressed by Paul, in 1 Cor 15:22b-23, Gal 3:28-29, and also in Gal 5:22-25, with an explicit ethic connotation.\(^{452}\)

The next occurrence of the genitive “of Jesus Christ”, in Rom 14:8, is part of the more exhortative sub-section in Rom 14:1-15:6. Paul gives advice to

\(^{449}\) Cranfield, C. E. B. 1975, 68.

\(^{450}\) Byrskog, S. 2006, 13, 21-22; Longenecker, R. N. 2016, 83. Longenecker understands it as a possessive genitive, as “a ‘predicative genitive’ that signals possession”.

\(^{451}\) Longenecker, R. N. 2016, 84.

\(^{452}\) 1 Cor 15:22b-23, οὕτως καὶ ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ πάντες ζωοποιηθήσονται ἐκαστὸς δὲ ἐν τῷ ιδίῳ τάγματι ἀπαρχή Χριστοῦ ἐστιν, ὁ δὲ καρπὸς τοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐν τῇ παρουσίᾳ αὐτοῦ; Gal 3:28-29, οὐκ ἔνι Ἰουδαῖος οὐδὲ Ἕλλην οὐκ ἔνι δοῦλος οὐδὲ ἐλεύθερος οὐκ ἔνι ἁρμαν καὶ θῆλυ πάντες γὰρ ὑμεῖς εἰς ἐστε ἐν Χριστῷ Ιησοῦ, εἰ δὲ ὑμεῖς Χριστοῦ, ἀρα τοῦ Αβραὰμ σπέρμα ἐστέ, κατ’ ἐπαγγελίαν κληρονόμοι; Gal 5:22-25, ὁ δὲ καρπὸς τοῦ πνεύματος ἐστιν ἀγάπη χαρά εἰρήνη μακροθυμία χρηστότης ἀγαθωσύνη πίστις πραΰτης ἐγκράτεια κατὰ τῶν τοιούτων οὐκ ἔστιν νόμος; 1 Cor 15:22b-23, οὐκ ἔνι Ἰουδαῖος οὐδὲ Ἕλλην οὐκ ἔνι δοῦλος οὐδὲ ἐλεύθερος οὐκ ἔνι ἁρμαν καὶ θῆλυ πάντες γὰρ ὑμεῖς εἰς ἐστε ἐν Χριστῷ Ιησοῦ, εἰ δὲ ὑμεῖς Χριστοῦ, ἀρα τοῦ Αβραὰμ σπέρμα ἐστέ, κατ’ ἐπαγγελίαν κληρονόμοι; Gal 5:22-25, ὁ δὲ καρπὸς τοῦ πνεύματος ἐστιν ἀγάπη χαρά εἰρήνη μακροθυμία χρηστότης ἀγαθωσύνη πίστις πραΰτης ἐγκράτεια κατὰ τῶν τοιούτων οὐκ ἔστιν νόμος; 1 Cor 15:22b-23, οὐκ ἔνι Ἰουδαῖος οὐδὲ Ἕλλην οὐκ ἔνι δοῦλος οὐδὲ ἐλεύθερος οὐκ ἔνι ἁρμαν καὶ θῆλυ πάντες γὰρ ὑμεῖς εἰς ἐστε ἐν Χριστῷ Ιησοῦ, εἰ δὲ ὑμεῖς Χριστοῦ, ἀρα τοῦ Αβραὰμ σπέρμα ἐστέ, κατ’ ἐπαγγελίαν κληρονόμοι; Gal 5:22-25, ὁ δὲ καρπὸς τοῦ πνεύματος ἐστιν ἀγάπη χαρά εἰρήνη μακροθυμία χρηστότης ἀγαθωσύνη πίστις πραΰτης ἐγκράτεια κατὰ τῶν τοιούτων οὐκ ἔστιν νόμος; 1 Cor 15:22b-23, οὐκ ἔνι Ἰουδαῖος οὐδὲ Ἕλλην οὐκ ἔνι δοῦλος οὐδὲ ἐλεύθερος οὐκ ἔνι ἁρμαν καὶ θῆλυ πάντες γὰρ ὑμεῖς εἰς ἐστε ἐν Χριστῷ Ιησοῦ, εἰ δὲ ὑμεῖς Χριστοῦ, ἀρα τοῦ Αβραὰμ σπέρμα ἐστέ, κατ’ ἐπαγγελίαν κληρονόμοι; Gal 5:22-25, ὁ δὲ καρπὸς τοῦ πνεύματος ἐστιν ἀγάπη χαρά εἰρήνη μακροθυμία χρηστότης ἀγαθωσύνη πίστις πραΰτης ἐγκράτεια κατὰ τῶν τοιούτων οὐκ ἔστιν νόμος;
the believers in Christ on proper behaviour towards one another, regardless of differences in beliefs and convictions (πίστις) about food and day (calendar) regulations. Paul urges them not to judge one another but instead to accept each other, because in the end, believers do not live or die for themselves but for the Lord (τῷ κυρίῳ). Regardless of whether they live or die, the believers are of the Lord or belongs to the Lord (τοῦ κυρίου ἐσμέν), 14:8. The reason that Christ (the Messiah) (Χριστός) has died and lived (aor.ind) is that he might be Lord of both dead and living (νεκρῶν καὶ ζώντων κυριεύσῃ), 14:9. There is a similar argument by Paul in 1 Cor 3:21-23. Therefore, it is probable that κλητοί Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ in Rom 1:6 is a call of the addressees to belong to Jesus Christ that is to be “in Jesus Christ”. And it is reasonable to assume that for Paul to belong to Christ presupposes a proper moral behaviour towards other people. The theme of ἐν Χριστῷ, σὺν Χριστῷ etc. with an ethical message is a major theme, especially in Rom 6; 8; 12-14; and 15:1-13. More on this in the following chapters.

The second characterisation of the addressees in Rome as called (κλητοί) is found in Rom 1:7a. The addressees (in dative) are depicted as both (be)loved by God (ἀγαπητοῖς θεοῦ) and called (κλητοῖς ἁγίοις) holy. As we saw in Ch. 2.3, both qualifications are characteristically Jewish epithets. They signify Paul’s high esteem for the addressees. The two expressions beloved by God and called (to be) holy are not restrictive, but apply to all Jewish and gentile believers in Christ in Rome. They do not indicate separate groups, for example that the beloved of God are gentile believers and the called (to be) holy are Jewish believers. The epithet called to be holy means to be “holy” in the sight of God. In Jewish scriptures, the term holy ones (ἅγιοι) in plural frequently refers to angels or celestial beings, often to the eschatological people of God and sometimes to God’s redeemed people in the present. The two terms called (κλητοί) and holy (pl.) (ἅγιοι) in combination may refer to a

453 In 1 Cor 3:21-34, Paul closes the discussion in 1 Cor 3 about the unity in the assembly of believers. There should be no split between those of Paul, of Apollos, etc. There is no ground except Jesus Christ. The addressees are the temple of God; the spirit of God dwells in them and they are holy. Paul concludes in 1 Cor 3:23 that the addressees are of Christ, but Christ is of God (ὑμεῖς δὲ Χριστοῦ Χριστὸς δὲ θεοῦ).


455 Cranfield, C. E. B. 1975, 69-70; Dunn, J. D. G. 1988, 19-20; Jewett, R. 2007, 113-4; Longenecker, R. N. 2016, 85; See also Wischmeyer, O. 1986, 476-480. The expression loved by God is probably related to God’s steadfast love and loving kindness, in e.g. (LXX) Ps 59:7; 107:7, and it expresses God’s love for the addresses. See Ch. 2.3 for more on this.


457 E.g. Deut 33:2; Job 5:1; 15:15; Ps 34:9; 89:5; 7; Dan 4:13, 17, 23; 7:27; 8:13; Wis 5:5; 10:10; 18:9; Jub. 2:24; 17:11; 31:14; 33:12; Pss. Sol. 17:49; 1 En. 1:9; 9:3; 12:2; 14:3; 25:3; 93:6; 99:16; 100:5;
holy assembly or to people of holiness. The term holy, in the sense of being set apart, elected, marked of, and dedicated to God, is derived principally from a cultic setting, which means from God himself. God is the one who is holy and the one who makes holy, and it is also God’s demand that his people should be holy e.g in Lev 17-26. The concepts of holy and holiness have an ethical sense as well, whereby the supreme standard is God himself, whose essence is the creative love that saves. This is often contrasted to humans and their creaturely nature, for example in Isa 40:25; 41:14, 20; Hos 11:4, 8-11. According to František Ábel, this is part of Paul’s eschatological message in preparation for the parousia of Christ and the last judgment. Paul stresses the necessity to be the holy ones of God, which for Ábel means to be blameless and to live a life worthy of God. Paula Fredriksen thinks that this ethical demand by God is valid and true for all the Jewish believers as part of God’s people, but since the gentile believers in Christ have also received the spirit, they too should live as the holy ones. So, the ethical demands apply to them as well.

The cognate ἁγιωσύνη, translated as holiness, is closely related. It was used earlier, in the letter opening in 1:4, where Jesus is set apart or appointed Son of God, according to the spirit of holiness (κατὰ πνεῦμα ἁγιωσύνης). In Romans, holy/holiness is often connected to the spirit (of God) (πνεῦμα) and used in relation to Christ, as in 1:4, but also as a reference to all the believers, as in Rom 5:5 et.al. According to Longnecker, the meaning of the expression πνεῦμα ἁγιωσύνης in 1:4 is “(t)he most difficult question regarding the exegesis of 1:3b-4”. The exact expression does not occur anywhere else in Paul’s letters, nor in the LXX. Even though πνεῦμα ἁγιωσύνης could be a literal translation of the Hebrew שׁקדروح (spirit of holiness), it is rendered τὸ πνεῦμα ὁ ἀγιος (the holy spirit) in e.g. LXX Isa 63:10-11 and Ps 50:13. However, in T.Levi 18:11 πνεῦμα ἁγιωσύνης signifies the spirit of holiness. The expression שׁקדروح (holy spirit) occurs frequently in the Dead Sea Scrolls

458 Cf. e.g. Exod 12:16; Lev 23:2, 4, 7; with κλητὴ ἁγία, and Deut 7:6; 14:2; with λαὸς ἅγιος. Cf. Qumran texts e.g. 1QS 8:5-7, 20-21; 9:3-7; CD 2:11-13; 4:3-4; 1QM 3:2-5; See also the scholarly references in note 258.
460 For more on the meaning of ἅγιος in the HB/LXX, see e.g. TDNT (1), Procksch O., ἅγιοι κτλ.; 88-97.
461 Ábel, F. 2016, 263.
463 See also Rom 14:17; 15:13, 16.
464 Longenecker, R. N. 2016, 69-75, gives a good overview of different interpretations.
Also in the scrolls, the holy spirit is often related to a proper and changed human behaviour in accordance with the will of God, for example in 1 QS 4:20b-23a.\(^{467}\) The noun ἁγιωσύνη is formed from the adjective ἅγιος, and is a quality term, that means holiness, rather than a state. The genitive indicates that the spirit (πνεῦμα) belongs to or is part of the domain of holiness, or more precely of God’s holiness. The depiction of Jesus in other NT-text including Paul’s letters, is important for understanding πνεῦμα ἁγιωσύνης, in Rom 1:4. For example in Phil 2:6-11, Jesus is the one who shows complete obedience and unswerving faithfulness to God, both during his life and in his death, and who was raised and declared Son of God.\(^{468}\) We should therefore understand ἁγιωσύνη as a quality term of the spirit who dwells in Jesus or, with Longenecker, as Jesus’ spirit of holiness.\(^{469}\) Jesus Christ is the first of God’s new creation, which finds expression according to the principle of the πνεῦμα ἁγιωσύνης. In this respect, Jesus Christ is the one whom the addressees should imitate and follow in their new way of life. Paul’s second characterisation of the addressees in Rom 1:7a as κλητοὶ ἅγιοι is a call to become and to be part of God’s holy assembly, his people of holiness, both in a cultic and in an ethical sense. It is a call to all the addressees, both the Jewish and the gentile believers in Christ.

Further, Longenecker connects the call of the addressees in Rom 1:6 with Paul’s call to be apostle to the gentiles in 1:1c. Therefore he places the addressees “within the sphere of his apostolic mandate to the gentiles”.\(^{470}\) It is fair to connect the call of Paul with the call of the addressees, but it is not necessary to think that the addressees are under Paul’s “apostolic mandate”. The view depends on what you mean by the term. First, the addressees are already believers in Christ. Other apostles have most probably been in Rome earlier, and the distinguished apostles Andronicus and Junia were currently in Rome, Rom 16:7.\(^{471}\) Second, as I argued in Ch. 2.2 and 2.3, the believers in Christ were a tiny minority in Rome, and the addressees were probably an even mix of both Jewish and gentile believers in Christ. Even if Paul was an apostle to the nations, his mission was not primarily directed to those who were already believers, but, more reasonably, primarily to other unbelieving

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\(^{466}\) Martinez, F. G. & Tigchelaar, E. J. C. 1997/98.

\(^{467}\) In 1 QS 4:20b-23a, “God will refine all man’s deed with his truth, אמתו אל, and cleanse humans from every wicked deed by the spirit of holiness, שׁקדב רוח, and sprinkle them with the spirit of the truth, אמרת רוח, in order to instruct the upright ones with knowledge of the Most High and the wisdom of the sons of heaven, to those of perfect behaviour. For those God have chosen for an everlasting covenant, and to them shall belong all the glory of Adam”, in Martinez, F. G. & Tigchelaar, E. J. C. 1997/98, 79.

\(^{468}\) Longenecker, R. N. 2016, 83.

\(^{469}\) ibid., 74-5; Byrskog, S. 2006, 19-20; See also TDNT (1), Procksch O., ἁγιωσύνη, 114-15.

\(^{470}\) Longenecker, R. N. 2016, 72, 74.

\(^{471}\) Dunn, J. D. G. 1988, 9, 16.
people in Rome and elsewhere in the Western part of the Empire, all the way to Spain. The call of the addressees is connected to Paul’s apostolic call, but it does not necessarily place them under Paul’s mandate. This does not exclude obligation towards addressees on Paul’s part. Quite the opposite. As will be discussed more below in Ch. 4 on Rom 1:8-18, Paul wanted to share some spiritual gift with them and strengthen them so that they might enjoy mutual benefit. Paul wanted to reap some fruit among them and to proclaim the good news among them as well. So, the addressees’ and Paul’s calls are connected in some other way, which will be discussed below. The calls in 1:6 and 1:7a are closely related to each other.\footnote{Longenecker, R. N. 2016, 83; ibid., 83-6; Cranfield C. E. B. 1975, 69.} God’s call, both to belong to Jesus and to be holy, refers to God’s will and action, and should be the foundation for the lives of the people of God, cf. (LXX) Isa 49:1; 50:2; 51:2; 65:12; 66:4; Jer 7:13.\footnote{Jewett, R. 2007, 112.} Robert Jewett is however of a different opinion regarding the call in 1:6 and 1:7a.\footnote{Ibid., 111-12.} He understand κλητοί in 1:6 to be a predicate adjective related to ἐστε, “you are”. It is the call to existing believers, who use “Jesus Christ as a personal name, rather than as a peculiar messianic title, natural for the gentile Christian majority in Rome”. The epithet κλητοὶ ἁγιοὶ in 1:7a is for Jewett, a “self-identification”, such as in 1 Q28a 1:27; 2:2, 11; 1 QM 2:7; CD-A 2:11; 4:3-4. Jewett understands the expression to refer to “called saints” or “elect saints” rather than “called to be holy”, since the latter “implies a moral agenda for salvation rather than the assured status implied by the title”. According to Jewett, the epithets in 1:6 and 1:7a refer to different groups, the latter to the minority of Jewish believers in Rome. Jewett therefore states that Paul is simply “claiming diplomatic legitimacy in eliciting their assistance in (the) apostolic project to complete the circle of the gentile world by missioning in Spain.”\footnote{Besides in Rom 1:7b, εἰρήνη occurs in 2:10; 3:17; 5:1; 8:6; 14:17, 19; 15:13, 33; 16:20. See the expressions with the terms καταλλάσσω/καταλλαγή in 5:10-11; 11:15 as well; and the explanations in 1:23, 25-26, for the enmity (or non-εἰρήνη) between God and human beings by the use of the terms ἀλλάσσω/μεταλλάσσω.} Even if much of Jewett’s arguments above can be disputed, his conclusion that, in Romans, Paul expresses the call to the addressees in terms of his own apostolic mission is to some extent valid, and he wants their help. What kind of help will be discussed in Chs. 4-7 below.

Finally, and in addition, the wish for peace (εἰρήνη) in 1:7b\footnote{Besides in Rom 1:7b, εἰρήνη occurs in 2:10; 3:17; 5:1; 8:6; 14:17, 19; 15:13, 33; 16:20. See the expressions with the terms καταλλάσσω/καταλλαγή in 5:10-11; 11:15 as well; and the explanations in 1:23, 25-26, for the enmity (or non-εἰρήνη) between God and human beings by the use of the terms ἀλλάσσω/μεταλλάσσω.} can also bring some light on the understanding of the call of the addressees. Their call to belong to Jesus Christ, to be holy in Jesus Christ, and to live in the spirit (of Christ), makes the new life that will lead to peace (εἰρήνη). The term εἰρήνη relates to the reconciliation and restored peaceful relationship with God. The use of εἰρήνη in 1:7b is similar to the greeting shalom, which is common in
Jewish letters, and which refers to a life in wholesome communion and salvific relationship with God and other human beings. The meaning of the term stems from the HB/LXX, for example Lev 26:6; Num 6:26; Judg 6:24; Ps 29:11; Isa 26:12; Jer 6:15. In Romans, it may be a wish for the restoration of the fallen created order to its former perfection and glory. The term thus represents the sum of all the blessings of the good news and the eschatological salvation, including the necessary and correlated moral behaviour among all the Jewish and gentile believers in Rome. See also Rom 2:10; 5:1; 8:6; cf. Gal 5:22.

In summary, under the fifth observation (E), it is fair to understand κλητοὶ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ in Rom 1:6 as a call to the addressees to belong to Jesus Christ, to be in Christ and in the spirit. This call presupposes a proper moral behaviour by the believers towards other people. The characterisation of the addressees in Rome as κλητοὶ ἁγίοι in Rom 1:7a is a call to become or to be part of God’s holy assembly or people of holiness, both in a cultic and an ethic sense. It is a call to all the addressees, both Jewish and gentile believers in Christ. The call of the addressees, in 1:6 and 7a, and the call of Paul, in 1:1c, express God’s call of them all for a particular goal and purpose. Their calls are closely related but not necessary the same. Equally, both for Paul and for the addressees, the call is a call to be “in Christ” (ἐν Χριστῷ) and “with Christ” (σὺν Χριστῷ), God’s Messiah and the risen Lord, and include an ethic connotation to serve, and a demand for proper moral behaviour. This is a major theme in Rom 6; 8; 12-14; 15:1-13. See also in Paul’s other letters, 1 Cor 1:9; 15:22-3; Gal 3:26-29; 5:22-26; and Phil 2:1-11; 3:17-4:1. This theme is discussed further in later chapters.

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Summary of the observations from the letter opening

The following five observation (A) - (E) are relevant for the purpose of Romans:

(A) The focus is on Paul and his apostleship for the good news of God
(B) The good news of God is about Jesus as the Messiah and the risen Lord
(C) Paul has been sent to change the behaviour of the people of the nations
(D) The addressees in Rome live in the geographical centre of the nations
(E) The addressees are called to belong to Jesus Christ and to be holy

These observations are signals to the addressees, the hearers and readers that the Letter to the Romans is about Paul and his apostleship for the good news of God. The good news is about Jesus as God’s Messiah and the risen Lord in power. The good news is about God’s action in and through Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection, but an ethical message is also included, with admonitions to believers to live a new changed life in Christ. Paul has therefore been sent to change the behaviour of the people of the nations. The addressees in Rome, both Jews and gentiles, live among the nations, and in the geographical centre of the Roman Empire. They are called to belong to Jesus Christ and to be holy.

These five observations must be kept in mind, when studying the introduction to the letter body in Ch. 4, as well as the ending and closing of the letter in Ch. 5, and 6. These observations will be elaborated, some will be strengthened. Some will be adapted. Some additional observations for the purpose of Romans may be added. The next step is the close reading and analysis of the introduction to the letter body in Rom 1:8-18 in Ch. 4.
4. The Introduction of the Letter Body in Rom 1:8-18

Scholars agree that the letter body begins in Rom 1:8, but the textual arrangement and delineation of the first part, the introduction of the letter body, is problematic and very much discussed. The introduction of the letter body provides however information about the content and topics discussed in the letter at large, and the reason why Paul wrote the letter, but how to interpret the information is disputed.

The introduction will be studied in greater detail below to see what information can be found about the content and flow of argument that indicates the reason for Romans. First, in Ch. 4.1, a detailed analysis will be made to establish the textual arrangement. Second in Ch. 4.2, there will be an examination of what observations can be perceived from Rom 1:8-18 that give information about the purpose of the letter.\(^{479}\)

4.1 The Textual Arrangement

Rom 1:8a contains opening markers that begin with the adverb first (πρῶτον), the preparatory particle μέν, and a meta-propositional statement. Paul thanks his God (εὐχαριστῶ τῷ θεῷ μου) through Jesus Christ (διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ) regarding all the addressees (περὶ πάντων ὑμῶν).\(^{480}\) The reason is, 1:8b, that (ὅτι) the addressees’ faith (ἡ πίστις ὑμῶν) is announced in the whole world (καταγγέλλεται ἐν ὅλῳ τῷ κόσμῳ).

In Rom 1:9-10, a long complex sentence with the explanatory particle γάρ and with many parallel thoughts and themes follows. Paul explains in 1:9a that God is Paul’s witness (μάρτυς γάρ μού ἐστιν ὁ θεός), and by a relative clause in 1:9b that God is the one whom Paul serves with devotion (ὁ λατρεύω) in, or with, his spirit (ἐν τῷ πνεύματί μου) in, or with, the good news of God’s Son (ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ). Paul states, in 1:9c-10a, precisely what

\(^{479}\) For more on the approach and methods, see Ch. 1.2.

\(^{480}\) It is common among Paul’s letter to start the letter body in a positive way with a thanks giving to God, εὐχαριστῶ τῷ θεῷ, in 1 Cor 1:4; Phil 1:3; 1 Thess 1:2; Filem 1:4; or with a blessing of God, εὐλογητὸς ὁ θεός, in 2 Cor 1:3; but the Galatians in contrast opens with a clause of astonishment, θαυμᾶζω ὅτι, in Gal 1:6-10.
God is witnessing: that (ὡς)\(^{481}\) Paul constantly does or, maybe better, expresses a remembrance of the addressees (ἀδιαλείπτως μνείαν ὑμῶν ποιοῦμαι) always in his prayers (πάντοτε ἐπὶ τῶν προσευχῶν μου). In Rom 1:10b, Paul describes what he prays for in a participial phrase, asking (δεόμενος) if somehow now at last (εἴ πως ἤδη ποτέ) he will succeed (εὐοδωθήσομαι) by the will of God (ἐν τῷ θελήματι τοῦ θεοῦ) to come to the Romans (ἐλθεῖν πρὸς ὑμᾶς).

Next, in Rom 1:11a, Paul explains (γάρ) that he even has a strong desire (ἐπιποθῶ) to see or visit the addressees (ἰδεῖν ὑμᾶς). In 1:11b, he gives the reason for his eagerness to come and visit them, that (ἵνα) he wants to share or give some, or a certain, spiritual gracious gift to the addressees (τι μεταδῶ χάρισμα ὑμῖν πνευματικὸν) in order to strengthen them (εἰς τὸ στηριχθῆναι ὑμᾶς). In 1:12, Paul clarifies that this is or means (τοῦτο δὲ ἐστιν) to mutually encouraged with the addressees (συμπαρακληθῆναι ἐν ὑμῖν) through the faith among or in each other (ὅτα τῆς ἐν ἀλλήλοις πίστεως), both the faith of the addressees and the faith of Paul (ὑμῶν τε καὶ ἐμοῦ).

To repeat from Ch. 2.4 and to elaborate further, the opening marker in 1:8a, πρῶτον μέν, is unique among all Paul’s letters and indicates two things. The use of first (πρῶτον) leads to the expectation of a corresponding clause or sentence, which would begin with second (δεύτερον), next (ἔπειτα) or something similar. The affirmative or preparatory particle μέν may introduce a concessive clause where the corresponding clause should begin with the balancing adversative particle “but” (δέ). Scholars have concluded however that Paul did not write a direct corresponding clause, neither one with the word second nor one with the adversative particle δέ. They have considered this to be an anacoluthon, an incomplete concessive clause, or that πρῶτον μέν should be viewed as an emphatic confirmation “first indeed”.\(^{482}\)

Paul does not begin a sentence with second or next, but frequently the corresponding clause to one with πρῶτον μέν only has the particle δέ.\(^{483}\) There are two possible alternatives for a clause that begin with the particle δέ, in 1:12 and 1:13. However, Rom 1:12, which begins with τοῦτο δέ ἔστιν, is not the corresponding clause to 1:8 with the preparatory μέν but an explanation, clarification or expansion of the immediately preceding statement in 1:11,\(^{484}\) either only of Rom 1:11c (εἰς τὸ στηριχθῆναι υμᾶς) or of the entire clause in 1:11.\(^{485}\)

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\(^{481}\) LSJ ὡς, B.I, 2039, that, to express a fact; BDAG, ibid., 5, 1105, (the fact) that; Thayer, J. H. 2007 (1896), ibid., I.6 and I.8, 681-82, that, how.


\(^{483}\) LSJ, πρῶτος, B III.3a, 1535.

\(^{484}\) Longenecker, R. N. 2016, 117; Jewett, R. 2007, 125-26; Dunn, J. D. G. 1988, 31; Cranfield, C. E. B. 1975, 80;

\(^{485}\) Cranfield, C. E. B. 1975, 80, for references to different opinions. I follow Cranfield, Dunn, Jewett and Longenecker that Rom 1:12 should be seen as a complementary explanation of what is expressed in all of 1:11.
Regardless of which, the particle δέ in 1:12 does not correspond to the μέν in 1:8, but the clause is part of the textual unit that began in 1:8.

In Rom 1:13, another opening of a new textual unit follows, marked by the adversative particle δέ and the vocative brothers (and sisters) (ἀδελφοί) in combination with a disclosure formula and meta-propositional statement, “I [Paul] do not want you to be ignorant” (οὐ θέλω ὑμᾶς ἄγνοεῖν). Thus, Rom 1:12 marks the closing of the textual unit that began in 1:8. This is strengthened by the use and repetition of the word faith (πίστις) in 1:8 and 1:12. The first textual unit thus consists of an opening sentence in 1:8, followed by two explanations in 1:9-10 and 1:11, and with a clarification of 1:11 in 1:12.

The opening in Rom 1:13a is the beginning of a new textual unit in the introduction of letter body. Paul wants the addressees to know in 1:13b that (ὁτί) he has intended or set before himself to come to the addressees many times (πολλάκις προεθέμην ἐλθεῖν πρὸς ὑμᾶς), but (καὶ, literally “and”) he has been hindered until now (ἐκωλύθην ἄχρι τοῦ δεῦρο). In 1:13c, Paul gives the reason why he wants to come: in order to/that (ἵνα) he shall have some or a certain fruit even among the addressees (τινὰ καρπὸν σχῶ καὶ ἐν ὑμῖν), (such as) as also (καθὼς καὶ) (he has or will have) among the other or the rest of the nations (ἐν τοῖς λοιποῖς ἔθνεσιν). In 1:14 follows Paul’s asyndetically statement of his responsibilities as an apostle. He is in debt or has obligations to both Greek-speaking and non-Greek-speaking people, to both wise and unwise (Ἑλληνικὸς τοις σοφοῖς καὶ βαρβάροις ἀνοήτοις ὀφειλέτης εἰμί). In 1:15, Paul declares that therefore the eagerness according to him or better his eagerness (οὕτως τοῦ κατ’ ἐμὲ πρόθυμον) is to bring or to announce the good news to the addressees, those who are or live in Rome, as well (καὶ ὑμῖν τοῖς ἐν Ῥώμῃ εὐαγγελίσασθαι). The adverb οὕτως in 1:15 is either a reference to (i) what precedes, “so, thus”, or possibly to (ii) what follows, “as follows”.

Most scholars argue that οὕτως in 1:15 refers to what precedes, which seems reasonable in this case, if it does not refer to both.

In contrast to the majority of scholars, I believe that the particle δέ in Rom 1:13 should be read as corresponding to the preparatory particle μέν in 1:8. There are four reasons for this. First, as we saw above, the corresponding clause to πρῶτον μέν must not necessarily begin with second, next etc. The corresponding clause frequently has only the particle δέ, and the δέ in 1:13 is the only alternative besides 1:12, but, as was discussed above, 1:12 is not likely. Second, there is a parallel both in structure and content between 1:8-12 and 1:13, (a) two new opening markers, in 1:8 with μέν, and in 1:13 with δέ; (b) the focus is on Paul and his apostleship in both clauses, (c) the importance

486 LSJ, οὕτως, 1276-77; BDAG, ibid., 741-42; Beale, G. K., Brendel, D. J., and Ross, W. A 2014, 77-78.
488 LSJ, πρῶτος, B III.3a, 1535.
of the addressees in both clauses, (d) Paul’s eager wish to visit Rome, and (e) the reason why expressed in the two ἵνα-clauses in Rom 1:11b and 1:13c.\footnote{This will be elaborated in greater detail below.}

Third, the two initial meta-propositional statements in 1:8, εὐχαριστῶ τῷ θεῷ μου … περὶ πάντων ὑμῶν ὅτι, and in 1:13, οὐ θέλω ὑμᾶς ἀγνοεῖν ὅτι, match one other, but are different in character. They match in the sense that in each Paul expresses his concern for, and the significance of, the addressees. In 1:8, Paul expresses his thanks to God for the addressees and their well-known faith. In 1:13, Paul wants the addressees to know about his previous eagerness to come, but he has not been able to visit them yet. There are also differences in character between the two. With the first statement, Paul praises the addressees for their faith, a faith that he wants to help them to nurture and to keep strong. In the second, Paul informs the addressees that he, as an apostle has previously been prevented from visiting them, but the situation has changed, which involves the addressees in his future mission. Thus, we have a first clause with praise and a corresponding clause with information. If Paul wanted to express both the similarity and the differences between these two clauses, a πρῶτον μὲν … δὲ construction would be a reasonable choice. Fourth, such a solution, treating the particle δὲ in 1:13 as corresponding to the preparatory μὲν in 1:8 was suggested as a possible exegesis by Origen in his commentary on Romans.\footnote{Origen & (transl.) Scheck, T.P. 2001, 78, states “to the word ‘first’ he does not relate anything like, ‘and in the second place’ … Possible, however, it may be complete when he says later, ‘Now, I want you to know, brothers’”; the latter is a reference to Rom 1:13. So, this exegesis should not be excluded as an alternative.}

The choice is not decisive. Even if the particle δὲ is not regarded as corresponding to the particle μὲν in 1:8, the transition in 1:13 marks the opening of a new textual unit in parallel, and with a close connection both structurally and substantively to the textual unit in 1:8-12. The progress of thought then continues smoothly in 1:14 and 1:15, and with further explanations in 1:16-18 and forward.

In Rom 1:14, Paul’s asyndetically states his responsibilities as an apostle. The expression “both Greeks and barbarians (non-Greek speaking people), both wise and foolish” is usually taken by scholars as the object to “I am in debt to” (ὀφειλέτης εἰμί).\footnote{Longenecker, R. N. 2016, 137-39; Wolter, M. 2014, 111-12; Jewett, R. 2007, 130-33; Bryskog, S. 2006, 24; Dunn, J. D. G. 1988, 32-33; Cranfield, C. E. B. 83-85. Rom 1:13-14 can be seen as a chiastic-like argument – in short 1:13 (A) Paul’s apostolic responsibility to (B) τὰ ἔθνη, 1:14 (B’) the Ἑλλήνες and βαρβάρος (A’) to which Paul has responsibilities. Another solution though that involves Rom 1:13-15 will be proposed in Ch 4.2, observation (B).} It is to those people that Paul is in debt or has obligations to, and they are related to the previous phrase “also among you as among the other nations” in 1:13. In 1:15, Paul therefore declares his eagerness to bring the good news of God about Jesus Christ to the addressees in Rome as well (οὕτως τὸ κατ’ ἐμὲ πρόθυμον καὶ ὑμῖν τοῖς ἐν Ῥώμῃ
εὐαγγελίσασθαι). The expression τὸ κατ’ ἐμὲ πρόθυμον can be understood in different ways. It is probably best to take it as the eagerness according to me or just as my eagerness, expressing Paul’s eager desire to spread the good news.\footnote{Longenecker, R. N. 2016, 140; Cranfield, C. E. B. 1975, 85.}

Paul J. Achtemeier has proposed an alternative view on the relationship between Rom 1:13, 14, and 15. He understands the asyndeton in 1:14 as an opening of something new, where the introduction to the letter body closes in 1:13. Rom 1:14 and forward marks the beginning of a new paragraph with a progress in the line of thoughts.\footnote{Achtemeier, P. J. 1985, 19, 34; Cf. the asyndeton in Rom 9:1; 13:1; 16:3, which begin a new line of thoughts too.}

Yet another alternative is proposed by Runar Thorsteinsson. His view is based on a different punctuation in 1:13-15 than in NA28.\footnote{NA28 has a full stop after 1:13, and a comma after 1:14 and a fullstop after 1:15.} In this alternative, 1:13-14b is seen as one sentence, and 1:14c-15 as a separate sentence. The latter is an asyndeton with a grammatical connection between “I am in dept” (ὀφειλέτης εἰμί) and “to proclaim the good news” (εὐαγγελίσασθαι).\footnote{Thorsteinsson, R. M. 2002, “Paul’s Missionary Duty Towards Gentiles in Rome: A Note on the Punctuation and Syntax of Rom 1.13–15”, NTS 48.4, Cambridge University Press, 531–547. According to Thorsteinsson, this accords with “Paul’s use elsewhere of the word ὀφειλέτης” with an infinitive in Rom 8:12; Gal 5.3. He also understands τὸ κατ’ ἐμὲ πρόθυμον adverbially as an accusative of respect, and πρόθυμον as equivalent to προθυμία. The adverb οὕτως is more problematic, but Thorsteinsson suggests that it contributes “to the text’s natural flow by reducing the need for a connecting particle in the sentence,” and should be understood in an absolute inferential sense. The proposed sentence 1:14c-15 is translated “I am bound, then, to announce the gospel with goodwill to you also who are in Rome”. See also Thorsteinsson, R. M. 2003, 43–4.}

In my opinion, such a solution requires a more unusual positioning of the adverb οὕτως as the third word in the phrase. The adverb οὕτως, without a connecting particle or conjunction, usually occurs first in Paul’s letters.\footnote{E.g. in Rom 4:18; 6:11; 12:5; 15:20; 1 Cor 2:11; 4:1; 6:5; 9:24; 14:9, 12; 15:42, 45; Gal 3:3; 4:3.}

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important aspect of the message in the entire introduction (see Ch. 4.2 observation (B) below).

In this thesis the usual punctuation is followed, with one sentence in 1:13, and another asyndetic sentence in 1:14, and finally a third in 1:15 with an inference of what precedes in 1:13-14. The choice is not crucial for this thesis. What is important, though, is the successive and closely related progress of thought in Rom 1:13-15 and forward, where Paul expresses his eager intent.499

To repeat once again some of the discussion in Ch. 1 and 2.4 and to elaborate further, a majority of scholars argue for a major break in 1:16-17 after 1:15, and for another new contrastive break in 1:18.500 The reason is that 1:16-17 is regarded as the central thesis-statement (πρόθεσις or proposittio), which governs the message of the entire letter.501 A new break follows in 1:18, which begins the main argument(s) of the letter-body. In Ch. 2.4, I argued against such a division between 1:15, 1:16-17, and 1:18 because of the four successive sentences with the coordinating causal γάρ-particle, which give the reason, cause, or explanation for what has just been stated.502 The position in this thesis is therefore that there is no major break between Rom 1:15/16, nor an antithetical break between 1:17/18. It is better to treat 1:16-18 as the cause, explanation, and reason for what has just been stated. Further, the central verb to proclaim the good news (εὐαγγελίσασθαι) in 1:15, and the noun the good news (τὸ εὐαγέλιον), explicit in 1:16a and implicit in 16b and 17a, indicate a close connection between the verses. Similarly, the repetition of the verb to reveal, to disclose (ἀποκαλύπτω) in both 1:17 and 18, and the emphatic placement of the verb first in 1:18, are strong indications in favour of a connection.

499 It is often the case in the introductory parts of Paul’s letters that successive new openings have no corresponding closings. This gives a successive progress of the arguments and the line of thought in the introduction of the letter. For example, the introduction of the letter body in 1 Thess has an opening in 1:2, a closing in 1:10, four openings in 2:1, 8, 9, and 10, a closing in 2:12, an opening in 2:13, a closing in 2:16 etc.; Holmstrand, J., 1997, 71-2. Philippians has an opening in 1:3, 9, a closing 1:11, openings in 1:12, 15, 18a, and a closing in 1:18c, openings in 1:18d, 19, 21, 25, a closing in 1:26; ibid., 127-8. Galatians has openings in 1:6, 9, a closing in 1:10, openings in 1:11, 13, 15, 18, closing in 1:20, opening in 1:21, closing in 1:24 etc.; ibid., 196-7. This is also the case here in Romans, with a new opening in 1:8, a closing in 1:12, followed by three new openings in 1:13, 14, and 15, etc.


501 Martin Luther suggested that the thesis statement is found in Rom 1:17. Most scholars today find it in Rom 1:16-17 and a minority of scholars Rom 1:16b-17 or some other solution to be the thesis.

rather than a major break between the verses. There is a series of four γάρ-clauses in Rom 1:16-18. There is nothing special about the first in 1:16a and the last in 1:18 that indicate a major break in the text. It is not unusual to find a series of 3, 4, or more casual, confirmatory and explanatory γάρ-clauses in Paul’s letters and elsewhere. If it is problematic to regard Rom 1:15 as the beginning of a new paragraph, it is more plausible to keep together the entire passage 1:13-18 or even better 1:8-18.

The problems are however not over yet regarding the textual arrangement. Rom 1:18 is followed by a clause in 1:19a that begins with the conjunction διότι, which has a causal and sub-ordinate connection to 1:18. By contrast, Paul B. Fowler understands διότι to be a “much stronger casual conjunction” than γάρ, and he thinks that 1:19 should therefore not to be understood as subordinate to 1:18. According to Fowler, it is the introduction to a new line of thought. However, according to grammars, διότι has a causal and sub-ordinate relationship to what have just been stated. Lexica give priority to either (I) because, for the reason that, like διὰ τοῦτο ὅτι, or (II) explain why something is valid, for, that, like ὅτι. It is also problematic to see an analogy, as Fowler does, between the sub-ordinate causal διότι, the inferential διό in Rom 2:1, and οὕτως in 1:15. The latter two are more of co-ordinating conjunctions. Further, the prepositional part of the sub-ordinate conjunction διότι indicates that 1:19 should be connected and subordinate to 1:18 with the finite verb ἀποκαλύπτεται. It qualifies and gives the cause of what have just been stated.

503 Some scholars, e.g. Dunn, Mayordomo, Campbell, see an antithetical distinction between ὀργὴ θεοῦ and δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ. Therefore 1:18 cannot be part of the thesis-statement in 1:16-17. See note 500 above for different suggestions of scholars.
504 A series (3, 4, or more) of casual and explanatory γάρ-clauses occurs elsewhere e.g. in Rom 2:11-14; 8:18-22; 10:2-5, 10-13; 15:25-26; 1 Cor 9:15-17; 2 Cor 3:9-11; in Mark 8:35-38 (+par.); in LXX Wis 9:13-15; 14:27-29; and in classical Greek, e.g. in Plato’s Apologia 39E-40A, see Denniston, J. D. 2002 (1934), 58; BDAG 189.
506 Fowler, P. B. 2016, 175 with note 33. According to Fowler, the particle γάρ is used to give further explanation of what is just stated, and gives as an example Rom 2:1, where the inferential clause with the conjunction διό is followed by two γάρ-sentences as explanations. This is similar, according to Fowler, to 1:15 with οὕτως followed by four γάρ-sentences in 1:16-18, and to 1:19a where the διότι phrase is followed by two γάρ-sentences in 1:19b-20. The conjunctions διό and διότι are both compound words with the preposition διά (διά + ὅ and διά + ὅτι respectively). Therefore, Fowler argues that διότι “is a much stronger casual conjunction” than γάρ, and he concludes that 1:19 begins a new sentence after 1:18.
508 LSJ, διότι, 435; Thayer, J. H. 2007 (1896), ibid., 152; both have (I) “because, for the reason that” like διὰ τοῦτο ὅτι, or (II) explains why something is valid “for”, “that”, ὅτι. Cf. BDAG, διότι, 251, that also has a third meaning (III) as an inference “therefore” as διὰ τοῦτο, but only gives two examples for this in Acts 13:35; 20:26. It seems that the third alternative in BDAG is more uncertain than alternative (I) and (II).
The content of 1:19a and forward is best seen as the reason and explanation why the wrath of God is revealed in 1:18. However, with the διότι-clause in 1:19a and forward, we are already discussing the first argument of the letter body, which will be studied and assessed in Ch. 8 below. Hence, the four γάρ-sentences in Rom 1:16-18 should be regarded as a causal or explanatory “unit” of what have been expressed before, and probably with a special function for what comes later in the letter. This special function will be discussed in greater detail in Ch. 4.2 below and in Ch. 8.

The textual arrangement of the introduction of the letter body in Rom 1:8-18 can thus be summarised as in fig 8 below.

The progress of thought develops smoothly and gradually throughout Rom 1:8-18, and then onwards into the letter body. It begins with an opening sentence in 1:8, and is followed by two explanatory sentences in 1:9-10 and 1:11.
and a complementary explanation in 1:12. Then, in 1:13, follows a new opening, which corresponds to 1:8, with an elaboration in 1:14, and an inference in 1:15 of what has been expressed before. The four γάρ-sentences in 1:16a, b, 17, and 18, are best understood as stating the cause, the successive explanation and/or the reason for the statement in 1:15. So, Rom 1:8-18 is closely related, both in terms of structure and content. The progress of thought continues further into the first main section of the letter body, discussed further in Ch. 8. There is no indication that only Rom 1:16-17 is the special thesis-statement for the message of the letter at large. Significant information for the purpose of Romans is given gradually throughout the entire introduction to the letter body in Rom 1:8-18.

4.2 Observations Relevant for the Purpose of Romans

What significant information is given in the introduction of the letter body in Rom 1:8-18? What observations can be made for understanding the purpose of Romans? There are five observations (A) – (E) found in the introduction of the letter body described below.

(A) The focus is on Paul, on his serving and work as an apostle for the good news

Immediately after the letter opening in Rom 1:1-7, follows what most scholars regard as Paul’s characteristic thanksgiving, in 1:8, which forms part of the introduction to the letter body.509 Paul usually begins all his letters in a positive way with a thanksgiving to God (εὐχασιστῶ τῷ θεῷ) for the addressees, as in 1 Cor 1:4; Phil 1:3; 1 Thess 1:2; Phlm 1:4; or with a blessing (eulogy) of God (εὐλογητὸς ὁ θεός) as in 2 Cor 1:3. The only exception is Gal 1:6, which begins with an expression of astonishment or wonder (θαυμάζω). Following this characteristic start, the introduction of all Paul’s letters is uniquely adapted for the specific purpose of each individual letter. So too the Letter to the Romans. Paul expresses his thanks to God for the well-known faith (πίστις) of the addressees, in Rom 1:8, a faith that Paul reasonable wants them to keep, and which he wants to help nurture and strengthen. The focus in 1:9-15 is, besides on the addressees, on Paul and his apostolic work. In Paul’s other letters, the focus is somewhat different, either on the addressees and their situation, or on all the believers, that is on the addressees, Paul himself and his co-workers.510

510 The thanksgiving in 1 Cor 1:4-9 is for the addressees and their positive situation, the gift of God they have received in Christ Jesus, the witness of Christ that is established in them, so that they do not lack any gracious gift while they await the revelation of Jesus Christ, with whom
The focus on Paul, on his serving and work as an apostle, stated in the introduction of the letter body of Romans, is the first observation (A).

In the introduction, some points should be noted. It is only in Rom 1:8-9 that Paul expresses his thanks to God through Jesus Christ (διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ), and that God is the one whom Paul serves (λατρεύω) with his spirit (ἐν τῷ πνεύματί μου) in the good news of the Son of God (ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ). The stress on Paul’s serving is repeated from the letter opening, where it was serving as a slave (δοῦλος) of Christ Jesus. Here, in the introduction of the letter body it is about serving God with devotion (λατρεύω), and this service is expressed in relation to the spirit (τὸ πνεῦμα) and the good news (τὸ εὐαγγέλιον) of the Son of God. As discussed previously regarding the letter opening (see Ch. 3 observation A), the concept of serving, and to serve, is an important theme throughout Romans, and it is part of the calling of both Paul himself and the addressees. Several different Greek words for serving are used with different connotations. It is fair to understand that, in essence, the serving throughout Romans refers to the total commitment to the call by God and Jesus Christ, and here particularly to Paul’s call as an apostle for the good news.

Paul states, in Rom 1:11b, 11c, 12, that he wants to share or give some or a certain spiritual gracious gift to the addresses to strengthen them. This is for mutual encouragement or counsel for them all. Paul further expresses, in 1:13, 14, and 15, that he wants or expects in return to receive some or a certain fruit from the Romans, as from the other nations. Paul has responsibilities to both Greek-speaking, and non-Greek-speaking people, to both wise and unwise, and therefore he is eager to bring or to proclaim the good news to the addressees in Rome also. Several of these terms and expressions will be elaborated and explained in greater detail in the following observations below. However, under the first observation (A) it is valid to conclude that Paul, his serving and work as an apostle for the good news of God regarding Jesus Christ is in focus in the introduction of the letter body. It should also be noted that Paul desires a close relationship with the addressees, and he plans to visit Rome as part of his future apostolic work. This is the second observation (B) which will be described next.

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they are called to communion. In Phil 1:3-11, Paul praises the addressees, their communion and good work for the good news. Similarly, in 1 Thess 1:2-10 and Phlm 1:4-7, Paul’s praises the addressees. In 2 Cor 1:3-7, the focus is on all the believers, both Paul and the addressees, and their blessings, compassion, and comfort in God’s rescue that is to come. In Gal 1:6-9, Paul negatively expresses his astonishment of the addressees’ behaviour and their understanding of the good news.
(B) Paul wants to establish a relationship with the addressees and plans to visit them in Rome

The addressees are central, and they become directly related to Paul and his apostolic work in the introduction of the letter body, as was also the case in the letter opening (see Ch. 3.2 observation D and E). In Rom 1:8, Paul gives thanks and praise to God for all their faith (ἡ πίστις ὑμῶν). The determiner all (πάντες) in 1:8a is repeated from 1:7a. The good news has the power to save all, in Rom 1:16b, each one who believes (παντὶ τῷ πιστεύοντι). This includes all the addressees in Rome, and more broadly, everyone else who believes, both Jew and Greek (non-Jew) (Ἰουδαίως τε πρώτον καὶ Ἑλληνικῶς), 1:16c. Further, the addressees (ὑμεῖς) are part of Paul’s constant prayers in 1:9c-10a. The personal pronoun you, which refers to the addressees, is mentioned another five times in 1:11-12 alone. Paul wishes to share some spiritual gift and to strengthen them, so that they might be mutually encouraged. In 1:13, the pronoun you occur three times. Paul expects to reap or receive some fruit from the addressees. In total, the personal pronoun you (ὑμεῖς) with reference to the addressees is mentioned thirteen (13) times in 1:8-15, in only eight verses. The addressees in Rome are explicitly part of Paul’s future plans in 1:10-11, 13, and Paul wants to proclaim the good news also to them in 1:15. This indicates how central a close relationship to all the addressees is for Paul, and for his future work for the good news. This theme stands out and is most significant in the introduction of the letter body.

Paul expresses explicitly four times his earnest expectation and strong desire to come and visit the addressees in Rome, in Rom 1:10b that now at last he will succeed (ἤδη ποτέ εὐοδωθήσομαι); in 1:11a that he desires (or yearns after) (ἐπιποθῶ); in 1:13b that he has intended (or set before himself) (προεθέμην); and in 1:15 about his eager desire (οὕτως τὸ κατ’ ἐμὲ πρόθυμον).

In more detail, first in 1:10b Paul prays that if it is the will of God he will succeed (εὐοδωθήσομαι) to come to the Romans.512 The future passive verb εὐοδωθήσομαι stems from εὐοδῶ with the literal meaning in the passive voice “to have a prosperous journey”.513 In 1:10b, in the context of the phrase to come to you (ἔλθεῖν πρὸς ὑμᾶς), it is reasonable to understand that εὐοδωθήσομαι is directly related to a successful journey.514 So, the combined

511 LSJ, ἤδη, 2, 762; and ibid., ἐπιποθέω, 652.
512 The verb εὐοδωθήσομαι, in 1:10b, is often translated as “I may succeed”, treating the future passive as a subjunctive, Longenecker, R. N. 2016, 113; Dunn, J. D. G. 1988, 26; Cranfield, C. E. B. 1975, 73, 78. Alternatively and better is to translate “I will (or shall) succeed”, expressing an action that will take place, a general truth, or the present intention, see Smyth, H. W. 2010 (1915), §1106-1110.
513 LSJ, εὐοδῶ, 724, with the first and literal meaning, to have a prosperous journey; Cf. BDAG, ibid., 410, with only the metaphorical sense of prosper, succeed.
514 Jewett, R. 2007, 122, translates εὐοδωθήσομαι as “I may be granted good passage”; Dunn, J. D. G. 1988, 30, has it as a possible interpretation in context. See also 1 Thess 3:10-11.
expression ἤδη ποτὲ εὐδοκίσσομαι … ἐλθεῖν πρὸς ὑμᾶς gives emphasis to Paul’s successful travel to Rome. The expression in the same verse, if somehow … with the will of God (εἰ ποτὲ ἐν τῷ θελήματι τοῦ θεοῦ) may point to the uncertainty that Paul will be able to travel to Rome. Cf. Rom 15:30-32 to be discussed further in Ch. 5. It is possible that here in 1:10b, the phrase rather expresses Paul’s submission to God’s will in his call and work as an apostle, including his desire to come to Rome.\(^{515}\) Second, Paul underlines his eagerness in 1:11a, with the phrase “I” (Paul) am eager to see (or visit) “you”. So, in the two γάρ-clauses in 1:9-11, Paul twice expresses his eager wish to come and visit the addressees in Rome, and he takes God as his witness (μάρτυς γάρ μού ἐστιν ὁ θεὸς … ὡς) in 1:9 that this is the truth. Third, the use of the verb to have intended (or to have set before oneself) (προεθέμην) in 1:13b,\(^{516}\) with the adverb many times (πολλάκις), expresses Paul’s previous sincere intent to come to the addressers (ἐλθεῖν πρὸς ὑμᾶς). Here in 1:13b, Paul repeats the expression from 1:10b, but also explains that he has been prevented by someone or something all the time until now.\(^{517}\) In addition, the last expression, until now or thus far (ἄχρι τοῦ δεῦρο), indicates that from now on, Paul expects that his intent or goal can finally be realised. Fourth, after Paul has expressed his obligation to the people of the nations, he states that, therefore, his eager desire (οὕτως τὸ κατ’ ἐμὲ πρόθυμον) is to bring or to proclaim the good news (εὐαγγέλισασθαι) also to the addressees in Rome (ὑμῖν τοῖς ἐν Ῥώμῃ) in 1:15. The adjective πρόθυμον expresses Paul’s eagerness, and the verb εὐαγγελίσασθαι is emphatically placed last.\(^{518}\) Together, they signify Paul’s sincere eagerness to proclaim the good news also in Rome. Thus, in Rom 1:8-15, Paul states his real intent to come to Rome four times explicitly, and all four times in a resolute and eager way.

Further, in the two ἵνα-clauses in 1:11-12 and 1:13, and in the οὕτως-clause in 1:15, Paul explains the reason for his eagerness to come to Rome. The exact meaning of the expressed reasons will be elaborated more under the next observation (C) below, but for the discussion here, under observation (B), Paul’s message in these verses indicates Paul’s wish to establish a close relationship with the addressees. To achieve this, he must come to Rome. This is formulated implicitly four times as well. In 1:11b, Paul’s wish is to give or to share (μεταδῶ) some spiritual gift with the addressees (ὑμῖν). Paul’s objective and goal is that they should be strengthened (στηριχθῆναι ὑμᾶς) in 1:11c, and that

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\(^{516}\) The verb προτίθημι, set before oneself, intend, is stronger than the verbs βούλομαι or θέλω, will, wish, want; Longenecker, R. N. 2016, 135.

\(^{517}\) Paul gives one reason in Rom 15:22-23 why he has been hindered before to come and visit Rome (see Ch. 5).

they will be mutually encouraged (συμπαρακληθῆναι) both Paul and the addressees through the faith among (or in) each other (διὰ τῆς ἐν ἀλλήλοις πίστεως) in Rom 1:12. Also, in 1:13c Paul wants to come and reap or acquire in return some fruit (καρπός) among the addressees (καὶ ἐν ὑμῖν), as also (καθὼς καὶ) among the other, the rest of, or the remaining nations (ἐν τοῖς λοιποῖς ἔθνεσιν). Thus, to share some spiritual gift, to strengthen, and to be mutually encouraged, and in return to gain some fruit from the addressees, are four expressions of how Paul wants to establish a close relationship with the addressees when he comes to Rome. Therefore, he wants to bring and to proclaim the good news to the addressees.

In sum, Paul expresses his eager ambition to come to them (ἐλθεῖν πρὸς ὑμᾶς), and to visit them (ἰδεῖν ὑμᾶς), the addressees who are (or live) in Rome (ὑμῖν τοῖς ἐν Ῥώμῃ), explicitly four times (1:10b, 11a, 13b, 15), and implicitly four times (11b, c, 12, 13c). This must have been noted by the letter audience.

A final note regarding Rom 1:13-15. As we saw in Ch. 2.3, the Ἕλληνες in 1:14 refers to any group of people, regardless of their ethnicity, who spoke Greek, and the βάρβαροι to non-Greek-speaking people. The exact meaning of wise and unwise (σοφός τε καὶ ἀνόητος) is debated. Paul probably refers in 1:13c-14 to all human beings who live in or among both the Greek-speaking and the non-Greek-speaking nations, including the people in Rome. It is to all those that Paul has obligations, and with whom he wants to share some spiritual gift, and therefore he is eager to proclaim the good news to them. He expects to reap some fruit from them in return as well. A possible interpretation is to understand the whole of 1:13-15 as a “chiastic”-like argument: Paul wants the addressees not to be ignorant that (A) he wants to come to Rome in order to receive or acquire some fruit “also” (καὶ) among you (the addressees), (B) “as also” (καθὼς καὶ) among the other or rest of the nations. (B’) Paul are in debt both to the Greek-speaking “and” (καὶ) the non-Greek speaking, both to the wise “and” (καὶ) the unwise. (A’) Therefore (οὕτως) Paul’s eagerness to proclaim the good news “also” (καὶ) to you (the addressees) to those (who live) in Rome. Whether 1:13-15 is a proper chiasm or not is not crucial for the discussion here, but the paragraph marks a successive progress in the line of thought. It explicitly points to the importance of those who live in Rome. At the same time, it broadens the scope of Paul’s apostolic commission and responsibility to include all the Greek-speaking and the non-Greek-speaking people, including those in Rome. The explicit reason for Paul’s coming visit in Rome is to bring and to proclaim the good news. It is still uncertain precisely why Paul wants to come to the Romans. The addressees are already

519 LSJ, λοιπός, 1060; BDAG, ibid., 602.
520 See chapter 2.3, esp. p. 90 and note 274, 275, regarding the meaning of the terms elaborated in the discussion of the identity of the addressees of Romans. Also, Longenecker, R. 2016, 138.
believers in Christ, and Paul has not been in Rome before, and has not established the assemblies there. Why Paul wants to come to Rome to proclaim the good news is a central question of this thesis. This will be discussed further under the next observation (C) below.

However, for the discussion here, it is most important to note the close connection and the successive progress in the line of thought in Rom 1:8, 9-10, 11-12, 13, 14, and 15, where Paul gives insights to his reason for writing and his overall purpose of the Letter to the Romans. Paul’s coming to Rome to visit the addressees and to establish a close relationship with them is part of his apostolic work to the nations. This is the second observation (B) for the purpose of Romans.

(C) Paul wants to share some spiritual gifts and to receive in return some fruit from the addressees in Rome, therefore he is eager to come to Rome to proclaim the good news.

We noted above Paul’s eager wish and plan to come and visit the addressees in Rome. Paul’s reason to come is explicitly expressed in two ἵνα-clauses; first in Rom 1:11b in order to give or share some or a certain spiritual gift with the addressees; second in 1:13c in order to reap or acquire some or a certain fruit also among the addressees. Therefore, in 1:15 Paul declares that he is eager to proclaim the good news also in Rome. According to Longenecker, the expression some or a certain spiritual gift (τι χάρισμα πνευματικόν) is “the most significant exegetical feature” in 1:11, and “also the most difficult” to understand.522 Further, according to Cranfield, the information in 1:13 is of “special importance” for Paul’s purpose,523 and the expression some or a certain fruit (τις καρπός) has been understood in manifold ways, often as a missionary term which points to the goal or the result of Paul’s apostolic work in a very general sense.524 Paul’s declaration in 1:15 that he is eager to proclaim the good news (εὐαγγελίσασθαι) to the Romans is somewhat problematic to interpret due to

522 The phrase χάρισμα πνευματικόν has been variously interpreted, as (a) one of the gifts mentioned in Rom 12:6-8 and 1 Cor 12:8-10, (b) a blessing or benefit from God given by Paul to the Romans, (c) a sharing of Paul’s gospel and in time himself, (d) a reference to the letter itself, and (e) more precise the letter’s theological exposition and ethical exhortations, finally (f) as something Paul both wants to give but also expects to gain from the Romans, regarding the complexity of the coming Spanish mission. See Longenecker, R. N. 2016, 113-18; Wolter, M. 2014, 108; Jewett, R. 2007, 123-25; Dunn, J. D. G. 1988, 30; Cranfield, C. E. B. 1975, 78-9.
524 The term ὁ καρπός has been understood as (a) the financial and other support Paul hope to receive, (b) a contribution to the money collection, (c) a “spiritual harvest” or success from his apostolic labour, whether new believers in Christ or the strengthening of faith of already believers. See Longenecker, R. N. 2016, 136; Wolter, M. 2014, 110-11; Jewett, R. 2007, 129-30; Dunn, J. D. G. 1988, 32; Cranfield, C.E.B. 1975, 82.
the fact that the addressees are already believers. It is therefore important to discuss the expressions τι χάρισμα πνευματικόν and τις καρπός as part of Paul’s initial two explicit reasons to come to Rome. It must then be explained how these expressions relate to Paul’s eagerness to proclaim the good news also in Rome. This is the third central observation (C).

Paul is rather vague about exactly what he means by the phrases τι χάρισμα πνευματικόν and τις καρπός in Rom 1:11 and 1:13, and particularly by the addition of the indefinite pronoun τι and τις, which denote “some” or “a certain.” The first step (a) must be to look at the lexical definition of the terms in the two expressions. The reason for Paul’s vagueness could be either (b) intentional by Paul, where he intended to explain and elaborate the terms more fully later in the letter, and/or (c) that the two expressions are related to some thoughts or ideas already current in literary context or way of thinking that Paul and his addressees shared. If so, these thoughts and ideas are probably expressed in (1) Paul’s other letters, and (2) the contemporary Jewish writings, particularly in the LXX. We will begin with a brief lexical definition of the terms in the two expressions τι χάρισμα πνευματικόν and τις καρπός.

**A lexical definition of χάρισμα, πνευματικόν, καρπός, and the pronouns τις, τι**

According to lexica, the term χάρισμα primarily denotes something that is freely or graciously given (χάριζομαι) to someone; a favour, a grace or a gift (χάρις), often directly given by God, or originating in God even though it is mediated through, for example, a human being. The term πνευματικόν signifies something belonging to the spirit (πνεῦμα); the inner life of a human being, or something that has to do with the divine spirit; something spiritual, of spiritual nature, or filled with the divine spirit.

The term καρπός primarily means fruit; the product or outcome of something that bears fruit (καρποφορέω), plants or trees or humans; the result of something in the spiritual realm, or the advantage, achievement or gain from human or divine work, actions, oracles or words, or wisdom.

Finally, the indefinite pronoun τις, τι, denotes some or a certain. It can be understood to give the expressions a vague meaning, but can also be used by *meiosis* to strengthen or heighten the meaning of the expressions in Rom 1:11

526 It is not sensible to study similar expressions in other NT writings, since these writings are later than Paul’s letters and may have been influenced by Paul’s writings. On the other hand, if so, they can be understood as early interpretations of the thoughts of Paul. See e.g. Col 1:3-23; Eph 1:2-14; 1 Pet 2:5; 4:10; Jam 3:13-18; possible also Matt 3; Mark 4; John 15.
528 BDAG, πνεῦμα, 837; LSJ, *ibid.*, 1424.
529 BDAG, καρπός, 509-10; LSJ, *ibid.*, 879.
and 13, as some or a certain important gift and fruit. Either way, it is uncertain exactly how we should understand these expressions, possibly because Paul gives more information in the Letter to the Romans.

Χάρισμα πνευματικόν and καρπός in the Letter to the Romans

The specific terms in the two expressions occur at certain points and in a pattern, which indicates that they are important for the purpose of Romans. In order to have a better understanding of the expressions, it is necessary to consider their cognate terms as well, καρποφορέω twice, χαρίζομαι once, ἡ χάρις 25 times, and τὸ πνεῦμα 34 times in Romans. See the table 1 below.

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Table 1. ὁ καρπός, τὸ χάρισμα, πνευματικός, -η, -ν κτλ. in the Letter to the Romans

In table 1, the verses in Romans where the terms occur can be seen. They often occur close to each other and alternate in the text, especially in Rom 5-

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8, and thus they share the same context. It should be noted that they occur in the letter from the beginning to the end, and they therefore are important. I will analyse the terms and their context in parallel and in sequence. The analysis of the terms will be done first (I.) in the introduction of the letter body in Rom 1:8-15, followed by (II.) Rom 5-8, (III.) Rom 11-12, and (IV.) the end of the letter body in Rom 15:14-33, before a short summary.

To begin (I.) with the introduction in Rom 1:8-15, we have previously noted Paul’s eagerness to come and visit the addressees in Rome. The first explicit reason, ἵνα in 1:11, is that Paul wants to share, or give, some or a certain spiritual gift (τι χάρισμα πνευματικὸν) to the addressees. The combination of the two terms χάρισμα πνευματικὸν is unique for Paul. Each term has been variously understood by scholars, including the combination. Some scholars have found the expression χάρισμα πνευματικὸν redundant since, in Robert Jewett’s words, “early Christians considered the gifts of divine grace and individual grace-gifts as spiritual.” By adding the indefinite pronoun some or a certain (τι), Paul is either vague about the meaning of the expression, or maybe wants to heighten the expectations through a meiosis. We can be sure that the expression is connected both to Paul’s work and responsibility as an apostle, and to the good news of God, and the purpose is to strengthen the addressees in their faith. According to Jewett, the shape of Paul’s strengthening in Rom 1:11 is specified later in more detail in Rom 14. The clarification in 1:12 that they should be mutually encouraged contrasts with sowing discord among each other because of differences in faith. For Jewett, 1:11-12 points forward to the entire discussion in 14:1-15:6 on how to behave and conduct oneself among the strong and the weak. Such a connection between Rom 1:11-12 and 14:1-15:6 is possible. Even if this connection was not intended, Paul’s zeal to give or to share some spiritual gift can still be understood as a desire to influence the conduct of the believers in Christ. In order to better understand the main term, the noun χάρισμα, with its qualification, the adjective πνευματικὸν, we must also study the use of the terms elsewhere, for example in Rom 5-8 in step (II.) below.

Before that, the second reason for coming to Rome, stated by the ἵνα-clause in Rom 1:13 in the introduction, is that Paul wants to reap or to acquire (literally “shall have”) some or a certain fruit (τινὰ καρπὸν σχῶ) among the Romans, as also among the other nations. The brief mentioning of fruit makes it difficult to understand exactly what Paul means. As has been discussed above

532 See Longenecker, R. N. 2016, 114-18, for a summary of scholarly suggestions.
533 Jewett, R. 2007, 124, with note 82; Dunn, J. D. G. 1988, 30.
534 Jewett, R. 2007, 124-5. According to Jewett, the verb στηρίζω elsewhere describes Paul’s work of firmly establishing and to make firm the faith of his congregations, e.g. in 1 Thess 3:2, 13, and there are close parallels in Qumran, in 1QS 4:5; 8:3; 1QH 1:35; 2:9; 7:6; 9:32; XII, XIV, where ἔσσεως refers to strengthening members of the congregation with a firm and established mind.
under observation (B), Paul’s obligation and work as an apostle to the people of the nations includes the Romans. The fruit that Paul expects or hopes to receive is the result of his work as an apostle, but also something that relates to and is the produce and outcome of the addressees, and of those among the other nations. It is likely that the fruit is related to, and is the result of, the good news of God regarding Jesus Christ. The close textual position of the inference and the third reason for coming to Rome, stated in 1:15, is an indication of this. Paul is eager to bring and to proclaim the good news (εὐαγγελίσασθαι) also among the Romans (to be further elaborated under the next observation (D)). To have a fuller understanding of the fruit expected by Paul, it is necessary to study Rom 5-8.

Second (II.), as we saw in the table above, all the terms in question with their cognates occur frequently close to one another and alternate in Rom 5-8. The passage will be discussed in greater detail in Ch. 8. For the discussion here, Paul elaborates and explains the new life in Christ. Having been made righteous through faith, the believers have peace with God and access to this (αὕτη) gracious gift (χάρις) through Jesus Christ, and they can take pride in the hope of the glory of God, 5:1-2. All this leads to a number of desirable virtues, and to the outpouring of the love of God in their hearts, through the holy spirit (πνεῦμα ἅγιον) given to them, 5:5. Paul declares that Christ died for the ungodly and for sinners, who will be saved from the wrath of God, and brought into the life of Christ, in 5:9-11. Adam is contrasted to Jesus Christ, and the graciously given gift (χάρισμα) and the gift of God (χάρις τοῦ θεοῦ) are contrasted to the (Adam’s) trespassing, which stands for violation of moral standards, wrongdoings and sin, 5:12-21. The believers are now dead to sin and alive in and through Christ, 6:1-11. They should not continue to live an unrighteous life but should offer themselves to God and give their bodies as tools of righteousness for God, 6:12-20. The fruit (καρπός) of sin is death, but since the believers serve God, the fruit (καρπός) is now holiness. God’s graciously and freely given gift (τὸ χάρισμα τοῦ θεοῦ) is eternal life in Christ, 6:21-23. Previously, the sufferings of sin were at work in their bodies, bearing fruit to death (καρποφορέω τῷ θανάτῳ). Now in the new era or the new aeon the believers have been released from sin through Jesus Christ in order to bear fruit to God (καρποφορέω τῷ θεῷ) and to serve in the newness of the spirit (ἐν καινότητι πνεύματος), 7:4-6. In this new spiritual life in Christ they are awaiting the coming glory of God, who will freely and graciously give (χαρίζομαι) us everything together with Christ, 8:32. Paul concludes and assures them by a hymn of praise that nothing will separate the addressees from the love of God in Christ Jesus, 8:38-9.

From the content of Rom 5-8, it is plausible to understand that the graciously given gift (τὸ χάρισμα) and fruit (καρπός) are closely interrelated and related to the good news of God regarding Jesus Christ, as well as to the believers’ new life in Christ. The good news is not only a spiritual gift with the promise and hope in Christ, but also presupposes an active response (see also
the discussion of the hearkening of faith in Ch. 3 observation (C)). The fruit is this response in the form of the believers' new righteous and spiritual life, as opposed to a former life of sin.

Third (III.), the analysis of the terms in Rom 11-12. Paul summarizes and concludes, in 11:25-36, what has previously been discussed in Rom 9-11 about the situation of Israel and their current (temporary) unbelief of the good news. Paul wants the addressees to know the mystery that the obstinacy and failure by parts of Israel to understand and respond positively to the good news of Christ is an important component of God’s saving plan, 11:25-27. This situation will continue until the full number of the people of the nations have come in. Then all Israel will be saved. In 11:28, Paul says rhetorically that from the perspective of the good news, these unbelievers could be considered enemies, but at the same time and from the perspective of God’s election, they are God’s beloved for the sake of the fathers. Paul explains in Rom 11:29-32 that both the freely and graciously given gifts (τὰ χαρίσματα) and the call of God are irrevocable, and in the end, God will show mercy to all people. Paul concludes the section with a hymn of eternal praise of God’s richness, wisdom, and knowledge in 11:33-36.

Next, in Rom 12:1-21 in the hortatory section of Romans, Paul urges the addressees, by the compassion of God, to put forward (offer) their bodies as a holy, living and well-pleasing sacrifice to God. He urges them to be transformed by the newness of mind, so that they will be able to examine and to draw conclusions about the will of God, that is the good, the well-pleasing and the perfect. In 12:3-8, Paul, by the gracious gift given to him (διὰ τῆς χάριτος τῆς δοθείσης μοι), urges everyone among the addressees to think in a sound manner. God has assigned to each and every one a certain measure or quantity of faith. Just as in one body there are many members, but all members do not have the same function, so all the different members now constitute one body in Christ (ἐν Χριστῷ). But they are all also members of one another. They have graciously and freely been given different gifts (χαρίσματα … διάφορα), according to the grace or favour given by God to each of them (κατὰ τὴν χάριν τὴν δοθείσαν ήμῖν), including the gift of prophesying, the gift of serving, of teaching, of admonishing and comforting, of leading and showing concern for others, of acting with mercy and compassion. In 12:9-21, Paul lists additional virtues of behaviour towards one another and to God, which should characterize all the believers in Christ. Paul ends the paragraph by urging the Romans not to take vengeance themselves, but to leave that to the (coming) wrath of God. Paul argues with quotations from Deut 32:35 and Prov. 25:21-22. The addressees should not be conquered by evil but should conquer evil with good.

Then in context in Rom 13:1-15:13, more exhortations and ethical guidelines follow, particularly to show brotherly love, to live correctly and to clothe themselves with Christ. Paul admonishes the weak and the strong to live together in love and not to cause one another to fall.
To conclude, in Rom 11-12 and its context, the gracious gifts (χαρίσματα) of God are related to the call of God, and both the gifts and the call of God are irrevocable. The gracious gift is different for each different human being, but it is reasonable to conclude that it requires or involves a proper ethical behaviour of all the believers toward one another, as members of one body in Christ (ἐν Χριστῷ).

Finally (IV.), the analysis of the end of the letter body in Rom 15:14-33, where Paul discusses his previous work as an apostle among the nations in the East, and his plan now to go West. For a detailed discussion of the end of the letter body, see Ch. 5. It should be noted first that Paul regards his call to serve as an apostle to be a gracious gift (χάρις) from God through Jesus Christ, with the goal to be the hearkening of the nations. He also repeats his eager wish to come to Rome, but he must first deliver the gift of money from the Macedonians and those from Achaia to Jerusalem. They are obliged to contribute to the necessary material things or needs (τὰ σαρκικά), since the gentile nations have received a share in the spiritual things (τὰ πνευματικά) of the saints in Jerusalem. When Paul has delivered this gift to Jerusalem, and when he has enclosed and marked with a seal this fruit (τὸν καρπὸν τοῦτον) with those in Jerusalem, he will depart for Rome on his way to Spain. When he visits the Romans, he will come with the fullness of the blessings of Christ. Paul ends the letter body by urging the Romans to struggle with him in prayer. He gives two reasons why he asks for their prayers. First, he asks both to be saved from the non-believers, from the unconvinced in Judaea, and that his serving in Jerusalem will be accepted by the holy ones. Second, he asks for prayer so that he can come to Rome with joy (ἐν χαρᾷ) and stay and rest for a while with the Romans. Paul wishes that the peace of God may be with them.

Here at the end of the letter body Paul’s apostolic commission is characterised as a gracious gift related to his serving of God and the good news of Jesus Christ. It is for the purpose of the hearkening of the gentile nations, who have received spiritual things (gifts) from the saints in Jerusalem. The gentile nations are responsible for gathering a collection of money in return. It is possible that the fruit mentioned here by Paul is a reference to the money collection as such, but the fruit is also a sign or a proof of the result of Paul’s work as an apostle. The fruit is all the new believers in Christ from the Eastern part of Roman Empire, who by their almsgivings behave as the eschatologically righteous ones in Christ. The collection of money is a physical proof of their righteousness. From Paul’s use in Romans, we can summarise the meaning of χάρισμα πνευματικόν and καρπός so far. It seems reasonable to connect χάρισμα πνευματικόν with some gracious spiritual and freely given gift from God, which is related to the good news about Christ. The gracious gift is given to

535 Nanos, M. D. 1996, 244-45; Fredricksen, P. 2017, 111, 117.
Paul to be shared with the Romans in order to strengthen and establish them in their faith and conviction, and for mutual encouragement. It is thus connected to the good news of Christ and his achievement. It is a life-changing gift that is contrasted to wrongdoings and sin. The believers are urged to change their life, to live a new life in Christ. It is a righteous life characterised by love of God and of fellow humans. The term ὁ καρπός is connected to χάρισμα πνευματικόν in that it is the result, or the visible effect, of this shared gift and of the new ethical life in Christ. This is the fruit Paul wants to reap or to acquire or to see happen from his work among or with the addressees, just as among the other nations, previously in the East, and in the future also in Rome and all the way to Spain. This fruit is both an additional number of believers in Christ and their new ethically transformed life in Christ. Both expressions thus seem to be connected to the good news, to Paul’s apostolic work and to the message proclaimed. The good news (τὸ εὐαγγέλιον) is not only a story about Christ, about God’s plan, or about what God have achieved in and through Jesus Christ and how that can save the world. It needs a response from those hearing with faith, trust and persuasion, which includes the Romans. The result (the fruit) is a new way of life, hearkening the will of God, and a righteous and charitable life in love for one another, in waiting for the coming glory and the eternal life with Christ. Both expressions in 1:11 and 13, both relate to the good news, and have a profound ethical connotation. As will be seen next, the same line of thought can be found in Paul’s other letters, and in the Septuaginta, LXX.

The use of the terms in Paul’s other letters and in the Septuaginta

The three terms χάρισμα, πνευματικός, and καρπός, together with related or akin terms occur rather frequently in Paul’s other letters.536 The terms χάρισμα and πνευματικόν with cognates occur in the first and the last parts of First and Second Corinthians, Galatians, and Philippians, whereas καρπός and cognate terms occur significantly in the last part of Galatians, and in the first and last parts of Philippians.

For example, in First Corinthians 1:4-9, Paul is thankful for God’s gracious gifts (χάρις and χάρισμα) through Jesus Christ that have been given to the believers in Christ. Jesus Christ is God’s power and wisdom for the rescue of all believers in 1 Cor 1:18, 21, and 24. It is a wisdom proven and revealed by

536 In the so-called genuine letters of Paul besides Romans, the terms τὸ χάρισμα with cognates occur in 1 Cor 1:3, 4, 7, 2:12, 3:10, 7:7; 10:30; 12:4, 9, 28, 30-31; 15:10, 57; 16:3, 23; 2 Cor 1:2, 11, 12, 15, 2:7, 10, 14, 4:15; 6:1; 8:1, 4, 6, 7, 9, 16, 19; 9:8, 14, 15; 12:9, 13; 13:13; Gal 1:3, 6, 15; 2:9, 21; 3:8; 5:4; 6:18; Phil 1:2, 7, 29; 2:9; 4:23. The terms πνευματικός, ἡ -όν etc., occur in 1 Cor 2:4, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15; 3:1, 16; 4:21; 5:3, 4, 5; 6:11, 17, 19; 7:34, 40; 9:11; 10:3, 4; 12:1, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13; 14:1, 2, 12, 14, 15, 16, 32, 37; 15:44, 45, 46; 16:18; 2 Cor 1:22; 2:13; 3:3, 6, 8, 17, 18; 4:13; 5:5; 6:6; 7:1, 13; 11:4; 12:18; 13:13; Gal 3:2, 3, 5, 15; 4:6, 29; 5:5, 16, 17, 18, 22, 25; 6:1, 8, 18; Phil 1:19, 27; 2:1; 3:3; 4:23; The terms ὁ καρπός etc., are found in 1 Cor 9:7; 2 Cor 9:10; Gal 5:22; Phil 1:11, 22; 4:17.
the spirit (τὸ πνεῦμα). The spiritual things (τὰ πνευματικὰ) are also something that God has freely and graciously given (χαρίζομαι), 1 Cor 2:11-16. In the rest of First Corinthians, much of what is written is related to proper moral behaviour, and how to live a life together in unity while waiting for the return of Christ. In 1 Cor 12-14, Paul explicates about the spiritual gifts (περὶ πνευματικῶν), and the central role of the spirit for the believers life in the spirit (ἐν πνεύματι) of God. There are many different spiritual gifts, but only one spirit and one Lord. Even if there are many members with different gifts in the body of Christ, the Corinthians should seek the greatest gracious gifts of all (τὰ χαρίσματα τὰ μείζονα), 12:31. This superior road or way of life is love, which is described and praised in 1 Cor 13.

Likewise, in Galatians 5:13-14, Paul urges the believers not to let the flesh take advantage, but to serve one another in love. They should walk with the spirit (πνευματικῶς), Gal 5:16. The work of the flesh leads to a long list of wrongdoings and sins, 5:19-21, but the fruit of the spirit (ὁ καρπὸς τοῦ πνεύματος) is love, happiness, peace, long-standing, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, humility, and self-discipline, 5:22-23. Such virtues are not against the law. If they all live with the spirit (πνευματικῶς), they will also be in line with the spirit (πνευματικῶς), 5:25. Further, in 6:1-10 Paul teaches that if a person is discovered in some wrongdoings, the addressees who are spiritual human beings (οἱ πνευματικοί) shall correct and restore that person with a spirit of humility (πνεῦμα πραΰτητος). They shall help to carry each other’s burdens in order to fulfil the law of Christ. Spiritual human beings behave correctly and do good things, since what you sow (σπείρω) is what you reap (θερίζω). Those who sow in the flesh will reap total destruction. Those who sow into the spirit (ὁ σπείρων εἰς τὸ πνεῦμα) will reap eternal life from the spirit (ἐκ τοῦ πνεύματος). As long as there is time (before the eschaton) they shall continue to do good things.

The third example is in Philippians, where Paul praises the addressees in Phil 1:3-11, for their fellowship or participation in spreading the good news. Through love, the Philippians will become clean and without guilt on the day of Christ and filled with the fruit of righteousness (πεπληρωμένοι καρπὸν δικαιοσύνης), the fruit through Jesus Christ (τὸν διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ) that leads to the glory and praise of God. For Paul, the ultimate life is to be (eternally) with Christ. Paul’s current life and hard work on earth gives him a fruit of work (καρπὸς ἔργου), 1:22. Paul admonishes and encourages the addressees to live a life worthy of the good news of Christ, to stand together in one spirit (ἐν ἑνὶ πνεύματι), one life, and to compete together with, or for the benefit of, the faithfulness of the good news. They have been given the gracious gift in order that they may be saved, a gracious gift given for the sake of Christ (χαρίζομαι τὸ ὑπὲρ Χριστοῦ). It is not only the gift of faith, but also the gift of suffering for the sake of Christ, Phil 1:29. They should live together in the unity of love, and let the same mind be in them as was in Christ Jesus, 2:5, and seek to imitate the humility of Christ, 2:6-11.
In summary, the investigated terms are also used in Paul’s other letters in the context of the good news and are related to the addressees and their behaviour in accordance with the spirit and the gift of Christ. The fruit of righteousness is eternal life in Christ. Paul’s understanding, both in Romans and in his other letters, is probably influenced by similar lines of thought found in the Septuaginta, LXX.

In the LXX, the term χάρισμα does not occur, but other terms with the χαριτ- root occurs 172 times, for example in the Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Wisdom of Solomon and in Sirach. The gift or favour (χάρις) often refers to the gift freely given by God to humans, or to a gift that has originated from God but is conveyed by someone else. The adjective πνευματικόν is not used in LXX either, but according to the TLG-database, the term πνεῦμα occurs frequently. The term καρπός and other equivalent terms that are translations of the Hebrew פְרִי (noun), פָרֵה (verb), occur 122 times for the noun, and 29 times for the verb. The basic meaning of the term is the product of trees and all the edible produce from the soil, such as plants and seed, or in short fruit or something that bears fruit. Fruit has several derived meanings as well, such as children or offspring of humans or of animals. It is also used as a metaphor for the actions, behaviour or conduct of a person, or the result or outcome of someone’s thoughts, speech, or actions. Disobedience to God and his commandments results in a poor harvest and bad fruits. By contrast, fruit can be understood metaphorically as the outcome of a righteous life in accordance with God’s will. This moral or ethical connotation of the term fruit were most probably part of the world of thought of Paul and his letter addressees.

To give some specific examples, in the prophet Isaiah, there are several occasions where human behaviour is directly or indirectly connected with the term fruit, and also with the spirit of God, the redemption of the people, and with God’s new creation. In Isa 5, the connection is indirect and negative. God’s people, Israel, is a vineyard planted by God. God, who expected a satisfying produce of grapes ((LXX) σταφυλή, (HB) עַנָבִים), found however only wild, sour and inedible grapes or thistles (ἄκανθα, בְאֻשִים). He expected justice (κρίσις, מִשְפָט), but saw bloodshed (ἀνομία, מִשׂפָח), he expected righteousness.
(δικαιοσύνη, צדקה) but heard an outcry of grief or anxiety (κραυγή, צעקה). In Isa 27:6, there is a positive connection between the redemption of the people of God and the term fruit. When the time of redemption comes, Jacob shall take root, Israel shall blossom and put forward shoots or bear fruit ((LXX ἐξανθέω, (HB) פרה), and fill the whole world with its fruit (καρπός, תנוּבָה). Similar thoughts can be found in Isa 32:15-17; 37:30-32, and Isa 65.

The prophet Jeremiah also relates the behaviour of the people, the last judgement according to their doings, and the final redemption by using the image fruit. In Jer 17:7-10, the author writes that those who trust in the Lord shall be like a tree planted by water, that sends out its roots by the stream. Its leaves will remain green, and it will never cease to bear fruit (καρπός, פְּרִי). The Lord tests the mind and searches the heart of all humans, and gives to all according to their ways, according to the fruits (καρποί, פְּרִי (sg.)) of their actions. See also LXX Jer 38:7-12 (cf. HB Jer 31:7-12).

In the wisdom literature of the LXX, there are several significant occurrences of the term fruit (καρπός) related to the behaviour of human beings. Even though χάρισμα cannot be found, the word καρπός is directly connected with the terms χάρις etc., and πίστις etc. The hope of the righteous souls is contrasted to the ungodly, for example in Wis 3-4. The righteous ones are in the hands of God. Those who have been convinced and persuaded (οἵ πεποιθότες) by God will understand the truth, and the faithful ones (οἱ πιστοί) will remain with him in love. The gracious gift and mercy (χάρις καὶ ἔλεος) are for God’s elect. Those free from sin will receive their fruit (καρπός) at God’s visitation. A chosen gracious gift will be given to the faithful one (δοθῆσεται αὐτῷ τῆς πίστεως χάρις ἐκλεκτή), to the one who is without sin. The fruit of the good ones who suffer (ἀγαθῶν πόνων καρπός) will be glory and fame. The righteous shall have rest and be loved by God. God’s elected will receive the gracious gift and mercy (χάρις καὶ ἔλεος). For a similar thought, see Wis 16:22-26.

According to Kyong-Jin Lee, in “Jewish practise” almsgiving was associated with “two of the most fundamental principles”, mercy and righteousness, and was an important quality of both God and humans. In the Torah, almsgiving was originally about the voluntary gifts of the produce or fruit of the land. In the diaspora, the gift shifted to “donations for the poor” also in “the form of money”. It was an ideal for the elite, including the king, to be someone who “hearkens to the cause of the poor and afflicted”, Ps 72; Prov 29:14; Jer 22:15-16; Dan 4:24; Hos 6:6. In the apocrypha and pseudepigrapha, almsgiving is “the equivalence of sacrifice”, Sir 3:30, and “saves from physical death”, 4:8-11. The “eternal consequences” and “rewards in heaven for the righteous”

541 Two additional examples from the prophets can be mentioned, in Hos 10:9-15 and Amos 6.
comes from almsgiving, 2 Enoch 9:1; 51; Sib.Or. 3:24-47. Likewise, the Rab-
bis after the destruction of the Temple used the Aramaic term for righteousness to mean (also) almsgiving.\textsuperscript{542}

\textit{In summary}, in these examples from the Septuaginta, the gracious gift of 
God is related to the term fruit. The latter is the result or the outcome of the 
righteous ones, the chosen ones, those who are faithful. These meanings of the 
term possibly influenced Paul’s usage in Romans.

\textit{To conclude observation (C)}: The expressions \(τ\iota\ χάρισμα πνευματικόν\) and 
\(τυά χαρπόν\) are part of the reason why Paul wants to come and visit the ad-
dressees in Rome. The two phrases are related, both to Paul’s apostolic work 
among the nations, and to the good news of God regarding Jesus Christ. The 
expression \(χάρισμα πνευματικόν\) is connected as well to the ethical demands 
of the good news for a new life in Christ (\(ἐν Χριστῷ\)) in contrast to a life in 
sin. The good news is both a hope and a possibility of a new life for those who 
believe. The term \(χαρπός\), which Paul expects to receive or acquire from the 
adressees, should be understood as both an additional number of believers in 
Christ, and the fruit, the outcome of the believers’ new life as the eschatolog-
ically righteous ones. Thus, the good news of Christ is the story of God’s es-
chatological action in Christ with the promise and hope of the salvation of 
the world. However, and equally central, the good news includes the urge and 
necessity of a new and changed ethically righteous life for those in Christ 
while they await the coming end and the return of Christ. This is something 
Paul explicitly states and underlines, possibly by the pronouns some or a cer-
tain (\(τις, τι\) in the introduction of Romans.

There is no conflict between the apostolic work of spreading the good 
news, and the striving for a new ethical life in Christ. What could be better 
than showing the good news of God regarding Jesus Christ in practice? If you 
want to spread the good news of God, you should proclaim the good news and 
besides that also live a life of moral behaviour as a living example for others 
to follow. This is the third observation (C) for the purpose of Romans. This 
line of thought is strengthened by Paul’s eagerness to bring or to proclaim the 
good news also to the addressees in Rome. In the introduction, Paul explains 
father why he is so eager to proclaim the good news to the Romans. It is 
because of the significance and effect of the good news about Jesus Christ, 
which is the next observation (D) for the purpose of Romans.

\textsuperscript{542} Lee, K. J. 2010, “Almsgiving”, in Collins J. J. & Harlow D. C. (ed.), \textit{The Eerdmans Dic-
tionary of Early Judaism}, Wm. B. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, MI., 324-25.
(D) The significance and effect of the good news regarding Jesus Christ – it has the power to save and to give new life to all who believe

The general content of the good news was summarised in the letter opening in Rom 1:2-4. In the introduction of the letter body, especially in Rom 1:16-17, the significance and effect of the good news is explored further.543

In Rom 1:8-15, the good news is related to both God and Jesus Christ, as it was in the letter opening. Paul serves God in the spirit in the good news of the Son of God (Jesus Christ) (τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ). As was noted under observation (C), the good news is directly connected to the spiritual gift (χάρισμα πνευματικόν) that can be shared with others and that gives strength and encouragement. The good news is expected to lead to a significant result or fruit (καρπός) among the believers, not only by creating additional believers, but also changed behaviour and a new life. Therefore, Paul is eager to come and proclaim the good news (εὐαγγελίσασθαι) also to the Romans.

In 1:16a, Paul declares that he is not ashamed (οὐ ἐπαισχύνομαι) but rather takes pride in the good news (τὸ εὐαγγέλιον). The meaning of the expression in 1:16a is debated. It has often been understood as (i.) Paul’s rhetorical understatement, (ii.) an apologetic or polemical response to criticism of Paul himself and/or of the good news that he proclaims, (iii.) Paul’s personal confession, or (iv.) an expression of pride in the light of the concept of honour and shame in a Greco-Roman context.544 Robert M. Calhoun, for example, sees 1:16a as a transition from the introduction (προοίμιον) to Paul’s definition of a theme (πρόθεσις), and it “represents an instance of the rhetorical figure λιτότης”, that is an assertion by means of understatement, but its exact meaning is difficult to determine. It “might convey the degree to which his fides to his officium overrides all other concerns.”545

This is reasonable but more can be said. The verb ἐπαισχύνομαι is only used here and in Rom 6:21, but its cognate καταισχύνω occurs in Rom 5:5;

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543 Calhoun, R. M. 2011, discusses Rom 1:2-4 and 1:16-17 in detail. Based on practises in Greco-Roman philosophy applied in rhetorical contexts, he understands both passages as two coordinated definitions (ὅροι) of τὸ εὐαγγέλιον, where “the former [is] articulating what it is in terms of its content, and the latter what it does in terms of its function”, the former declaring its essence (οἷόν τὸ ἔστι), and the latter its function (ἠν ἐξεί δύναμιν), in accordance with “the principle outlined in Plato’s Phaedrus”, in Calhoun, R. M. 2011, 3, 86.

544 Longenecker, R. N. 2016, 158-63, gives a fair overview of different scholarly suggestions with references.

545 Calhoun, R. M. 2011, 147-49.
9:33; and 10:11 as well. Both terms have the same basic connotation of dishonour and shame. Since Paul here uses the negation οὐ ἐπαισχύνομαι, it should be understood in relation to the opposite terms pride, to be proud etc. (καυχάομαι, καύχησις, καύχημα), found in Rom 2:17, 23; 3:27; 4:2; 5:2, 3, 11; and 15:27. In addition here in 1:16a, and given the context in Romans, where Paul often uses quotations or allusions to the scriptures, it is reasonable to understand the verb ἐπαισχύνομαι in relation to the use of the cognate verb, to be, or feel, ashamed (αἰσχύνομαι) and other similar words in the LXX. In the lamentation psalms and the prophets, the terms are often used to say that God brings shame and judgement on the unrighteous and the ungodly, but God also does the opposite, brings justification and salvation to the righteous and the faithful, e.g. in (LXX) Ps 24:2-3; 43:8-10; 96:6-12; and in Isa 28:16; 50:7-9. In Rom 1:16a, it is reasonable that Paul is not ashamed but rather takes pride in the good news, since it will not bring judgement to the faithful and righteous ones. This understanding is confirmed by the flow of the arguments later in the letter body, for example in Rom 5:1-2 and 7:24-8:2. See Ch. 8 below.

In Rom 1:16b, Paul clarifies precisely why he is not ashamed. The good news is the power of God (δύναμις γὰρ θεοῦ ἐστιν) and leads to salvation for everyone who believes (εἰς σωτηρίαν παντὶ τῷ πιστεύοντι), for the Jew first and also the Greek (Ἰουδαίῳ τε πρῶτον καὶ Ἕλληνι). The focus changes from Paul himself in 16a to the good news in 16b. The particle “for” (γάρ) and the verb “it is” (ἐστιν) refers to the good news and connects 16b with 16a to explain that the good news is the power of God. Many scholars understand the term δύναμις (also in 1:4 above) from its use in the LXX as a translation of the Hebrew כַּפָּר, and at times of חֲבוֹרֵי, חֶסֶם, or חָס. According to Longenecker, the term δύναμις θεοῦ is the creative, redemptive, and sustaining manifestations of the one true God. For Jewett, it refers to the liberating power of God’s hand during the Exodus. See descriptions of the saving power and

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546 In Paul’s other letter αἰσχύνη, αἰσχύνομαι is found in 2 Cor 4:2; 10:8; Phil 1:20; 3:19, and καταισχύνω in 1 Cor 1:27 (twice); 11:4, 5, 22; 2 Cor 7:14; 9:4. At least in 1 Cor 1:27 and Phil 1:20; 3:19, also with a similar meaning as here in 1:16a.
547 There are a number of additional and related terms and parallels in Romans, e.g. ἁτιμάζω, ἀτιμία in 1:24, 26; 2:23; 9:21; ἡττημα in Rom 11:12; ματαιόω, ματαιότης in 1:21; 8:20; possible also ἀπολλύω in 2:12; 14:15; σύντριμμα, συντρίβω in 3:16; 16:20;
548 Other parallel terms occur frequently in Romans, e.g. δόξα etc. twenty-one (21) times; τίμη six (6) times.
549 See e.g. Rom 10:11-12, λέγει γὰρ ἡ γραφή πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων ἐπ’ αὐτόν οὐ καταισχυνθῆσεται οὐ γὰρ ἐστίν διαστολὴ Ἰουδαίου τε καὶ Ἑλληνος, ὁ γὰρ αὐτὸς κύριος πάντων, πλουτῶν εἰς πάντας τοὺς ἐπικαλουμένους αὐτόν, with the citation of Isa 28:16 in bold. For additional arguments, see Hays, R. B 1989, 36-41.
550 Cranfield, C. E. B. 1975 (1979), 87-91, who for this reason maybe treats only 1:16b-17 as the theological theme of Romans.
552 Longenecker, R. N. 2016, 163-4.
might of God in the LXX, e.g. in Exod 7:4; 15:6, 13; 32:11; Deut 3:24; 4:37; 9:26, 29; 26:8; Isa 10:33; Jer 27:5; 32:17. However, for many scholars, God’s power to save also has an eschatological flavour as an indirectly reference to the last judgement.\(^{554}\) The prepositional phrase, (leading) into salvation or rescue (εἰς σωτηρίαν), in Rom 1:16b, explicitly points to the effect, the purpose and the final goal of God’s power.\(^{555}\) The term σωτηρία with its cognate verb σῴζω and the verb ῥύομαι with a similar meaning of bringing salvation, deliverance and rescue are used frequently in Romans,\(^{556}\) and they are particularly prominent in the LXX and other contemporary Jewish writings. Significant passages include (LXX) Ps 95:2-3, 97:1-3 and Isa 51:4-5; 52:7, 10; 53:1; 56:1,\(^{557}\) where the good news of God’s power is made known, revealed and proclaimed for the salvation of both the people of God and the people of the other nations, which is similar to what Paul expresses here in the letter to Rome.\(^{558}\)

In Rom 1:16b, the salvation is explicitly for everyone who believes. The determiner πᾶς (in total 71 times in Romans) is a repetition from 1:7a and 1:8 with the plural “all” (πάντες), but in 1:16b it refers in the singular to “each and every one” who believes, and specifically to the Jew first but also to the Greek (the non-Jew) (Ἰουδαῖος τε πρῶτον καὶ Ἕλλην).\(^{559}\) Rom 1:16b highlights the inclusiveness of the good news, with the power to save all. But for the good news to be the power for salvation, Calhoun argues that a threat of some kind must exist. The combination of σωτηρία, δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ, and ὀργὴ θεοῦ in 1:16-18 “identifies the threat as one of legal jeopardy” at the last judgement.\(^{560}\) This power to save, and the ultimate goal to save all who believes at the eschaton, becomes most prominent and explicit at the end of the first part of the letter body in Rom 11:23, 25-32, and at the end of the second part of the letter

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554 Cranfield, C. E. B. 1975 (1979), 88-89; Dunn, J. D. G. 1988, 39. Also in the early interpretation of Paul e.g. in Origen & (transl.) Scheck, T.P. 2001, 86. Origen comments on the power of God for salvation that also “there is some power of God that is not for salvation but instead for destruction”. Origen is referring to Ps 59:11.


557 See also Gen 49:18; Exod 14:13; 15:2; Deut 32:15; Judg 15:18; 1 Sam 2:1; 11:9; 14:45; Isa 46:13; and in Jub. 31:19; T.Dan. 5:10; T.Naph. 8:3; T.Gad. 8:1; T.Jos. 19:11; 1 QH 7:18-19; CD 20:20, 34.

558 Olson, R. C. 2016, esp. 80-135. Olson argues that Paul frequently quotes from the scriptures, mostly from Genesis, Deuteronomy, Psalms and Isaiah throughout Romans, and draws particularly from the prophet Isaiah for both the theme and the content of the good news, especially Isa 40-66. For the purpose of this study, it is important to note that in Romans Paul grounds his message and argues extensively with help of the scriptures, either through direct quotations or allusions.

559 The phrase Ἰουδαῖος τε (πρῶτον) καὶ Ἕλλην occurs five (5) times in Romans, but similar expressions such as περιτομή and ἀκροβυστία occurs in the letter as well. The relationship between Jews, non-Jews, and the good news is central, and it is the subject matter in Rom 9-11.

560 Calhoun, R. M. 2011, 150. More on this in the next observation (E) below.
body in Rom 15:4-13. For more on this see Ch. 8. The recurrence of this theme in Rom 1:16b; 11:23, 25-32; 15:4-13, indicates however its importance.

The significance of the verb πιστεύω, with the lexical meaning to have faith, to trust, to believe, to rely on, to be persuaded, and the noun πίστις, meaning faith, belief, trust, persuasion should be observed. Both terms are related to the adjective πιστός, to be faithful, trustworthy, or to be believing or reliable.561 Faith is a prominent theme in Romans.562 In Rom 1:16b, it is the one who has faith or believes who is saved by the power of God. The substantive participle ὁ πιστεύων is without object, but it implies one who responds and accepts the good news, and believes and trusts in both its content about Jesus Christ, and in the originator of the message, that is in God.563 It is faith as a continuing orientation and motivation for life,564 but there is also a demand to believe and trust in the message, and to act consistently with the good news as well.565 The response with faith to the good news is pointed out in the scriptures, e.g. in Isa 28:16; 52:7-54:4.566

The noun faith (πίστις) is central earlier in the letter opening in the expression hearkening of faith in Rom 1:5, and in the body introduction where it refers to the faith of the addressees in 1:8 and 1:12. The term πίστις occurs three times in 1:17, with the pregnant but difficult expressions ἐκ πίστεως εἰς πίστιν in 17a, and the repetition of the prepositional phrase ἐκ πίστεως in the Hab 2:4 quotation in Rom 1:17b. The passage is further discussed under the next observation (E) below. However, for the current observation (D) of the significance and effect of the good news, it is important to note the prepositional phrase εἰς πίστιν in 1:17a. There are problems how to understand the content of 1:17. The meaning of almost every term and phrase, as well as the syntax of the verse is a challenge for scholars, but the prepositional phrase εἰς πίστιν is probably the least problematic. A majority relates the phrase εἰς πίστιν to the faith of human beings,567 regardless of how they understand the


564 Jewett, R. 2007, 139; Dunn, J. D. G. 1988, 40.


566 Olson, R. C. 2016, 85-93.

previous ἐκ πίστεως. It is significant that Paul uses the preposition εἰς with the meaning of purpose, goal or end-state in Rom 1:5, 11, and in the prepositional phrase εἰς σωτηρίαν in 1:16b, immediately before εἰς πίστιν in 1:17a. It is therefore plausible to understand the righteousness of God, which is revealed in the good news ἐκ πίστεως, as something that results in or has the effect or the goal of faith (εἰς πίστιν), which in turn leads to salvation, ultimately at the consummation and the last judgment. This is confirmed by quotation from the Hab 2:4, “the righteous one ἐκ πίστεως shall live”, which is a reference to the eschatological life. In this sense the prepositional phrases in Rom 1:16b, 1:17a and b, are independent but interrelated. The three phrases εἰς σωτηρίαν παντὶ τῷ πιστεύοντι (1:16b), εἰς πίστιν (1:17a), and ἐκ πίστεως ζήσεται (1:17b) correlate to each other and describe the significance and effect of the good news of God.

So, the good news gives hope that God will fulfil his promises in the end to save all who believes, all those who are convinced by the good news and are living a new righteous life, both Jews and gentiles. In addition the good news is an ongoing revelation (ἀποκαλύψις) from God, not just a message told and heard once, but something now being revealed (ἀποκαλύπτεται). It is a message from God regarding Jesus Christ that previously has been hidden, but foretold in the scriptures, and now revealed and made manifest in the believers. The good news has the power to save all believers, 1:16b; 8:1-2; 11:25-32. It is about how God’s righteousness, which leads to a new life from (the) faith in Jesus’ sacrifice, 1:17, 3:21-22, 5:1-5, and about God’s wrath and righteous judgement of all humans at the final judgment, 1:18, 2:5-6, 16. This revelatory aspect of God’s saving acts is often expressed in the scriptures, e.g. LXX Ps 97:2; Isa 52:10; 53:1; 56:1.

To summarise: in the introduction to the letter body, the significance and effect of the good news regarding Jesus Christ should be noted. It gives hope

568 LSJ, εἰς, V.2, 492; See also Heliso, D. 2007, 95, 186; Calhoun, R. M. 2011, 169.
569 Independent if the prepositional phrase ἐκ πίστεως qualifies the righteous one, or the verb shall live, the Hab 2:4 citation points forward to the new (eschatological) life for the righteous one.
570 Similarly in Rom 8:18-19, where it is explained that the present suffering is nothing compared to the coming glory that will soon be revealed (ἀποκαλυφθῆναι) in all of us, the long-awaited revelation of the sons of God (ἀποκαλύψεις τῶν υἱῶν τοῦ θεοῦ) that will soon be realised. See also Gal 1:12, 16; 3:23; 1 Cor 1:7. For a discussion about the significance of “revelation” in Romans 1-3 see Mininger, M. A., 2017, Uncovering the Theme of Revelation in Romans 1:16-3:26, WUNT II/445, Mohr Siebeck, Tübingen.
571 LXX Ps 97:2 ἐγνώρισεν κύριος τὸ σωτήριον αὐτοῦ ἐναντίον τῶν ἐθνῶν ἀπεκάλυψεν τὴν δικαιοσύνην αὐτοῦ; Isa 52:10 ἀποκαλύψεις κύριος τὸν ραχίον αὐτοῦ τὸν ἄγνον ἐνόπλων πάντων τῶν ἐθνῶν καὶ ἴσην τὰ ἄκρα τῆς γῆς τὴν σωτηρίαν τῆς παρα τοῦ θεοῦ; 53:1 κύριε, τίς ἐπίστευσεν τῇ ἁκοῇ ἡμῶν καὶ ὁ βραχίων κυρίου τίνι ἀπεκαλύφθη; 56:1 τάδε λέγει κύριος φυλάσσεσθε κρίσιν ποιήσατε δικαιοσύνην ἥγησεν γὰρ τὸ σωτηρίον μου παραγίνεσθαι καὶ τὸ ἔλεος μου ἀποκαλυφθῆναι.
since it will not bring judgement to the faithful and the righteous ones at the eschaton. The good news is both the power of God and the righteousness of God revealed in order to save and to the give new life to all who have faith. This is the central fourth observation (D) for the purpose of Romans.

(E) The good news of God has ethical consequences for the believers and implies a new righteous life

As noted above, Paul describes the significance and effect of the good news of God regarding Jesus Christ in the introduction of the letter body. The four γάρ-sentences in Rom 1:16-18 are an integral part of the successive line of thought in the entire introduction to the letter body in 1:8-18 and relate directly to 1:15 and give a reason and explanation for Paul’s eagerness to come to Rome and to bring and announce the good news. The good news is the power of God, which leads to salvation for all who believes and gives hope to the faithful and righteous ones of a new eschatological life. However, the good news is not only some propositions about God’s saving action through Jesus Christ that is proclaimed, heard, and believed. The good news must also have ethical consequences for the faithful. They should live a new life characterised by righteousness in contrast to ungodliness and unrighteousness.

The ethical implications of the good news of God for the believers in Christ were already indicated in the previous observations. For the argument here under observation (E), the four γάρ-sentences 1:16a, 16b, 17, and 18 must be studied in greater detail. Five recent special studies discuss various aspects of Rom 1:16-18, which together with the modern commentaries on Romans give an ample overview of the many exegetical issues and their possible answers. It is not feasible here to give full and detailed comments on these challenges and alternative solutions. Five arguments of special relevance for the current observation (E) follow below.

First, according to Robert M. Calhoun, Paul consciously uses methods of brevity in Rom 1:16-17, using three rhetorical figures: (1) Defect, omission (ἔλλειψις), where some words seem to be missing or are needed to give a full understanding, which requires the reader to fill in from the context. (2) To understand one thing through another (συνεκδοχή), with expressions that require something to follow logically from outside, or to give a plurality of meanings that enables further implication of meaning beyond what is actually

573 Heliso, D. 2007, discusses Christological vs. anthropological readings of Rom 1:17; Calhoun, R. M. 2011, studies Rom 1:2-4 and 1:16-17 as two coordinated definitions of τὸ εὐαγγέλιον; Abel, F. 2016, explores the messianic ethics of Paul, as it is expressed in e.g. Romans; Olson, R. C. 2016, discusses Paul’s use of scriptural citations especially from Isaiah when depicting the good news as the theme of the Romans in particular in Rom 1:1-3:26; Stettler, C. 2017, *Das Endgericht bei Paulus*, WUNT I/371, Mohr Siebeck, Tübingen, discusses the importance of the last judgement in Paul’s line of thought and in his soteriology.
said. (3) To understand from the common (element) (ἀπὸ κοινοῦ), whereby a syntactic element in a clause is distributed to other clauses or can include multiple syntactic usages within the same clause. For example, a prepositional phrase could be construed with more than one of the verbs, nouns or adjectives in the clause. Even though scholars are divided about Paul’s educational level, and it is unclear whether Paul was educated in classical rhetoric, it is a fact that Paul’s expressions and statements are very brief, not only in v16-17, but in the whole of Rom 1:16-18. Paul could quite easily have given meaningful clarifications through some short additions in the text. It seems that some methods of brevity have been quite deliberately applied by Paul in order to express multiple meanings. Each individual expression in 1:16-18 could therefore not have only one specific meaning but could very well have several parallel and related meanings. For example, δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ in 1:17 could signify God’s righteousness, both as a relational concept within the covenant with God’s people, but also as God’s justice and impartial judgment; both as God’s mercy and punishment; it could refer to God’s attribute, his activity, and might also be related to a righteous status given or declared by God. All these options can be related to one another and be parallel in meaning. This possible use of methods of brevity must be considered in the interpretation of Rom 1:16-18.

Second, as we saw under the previous observation (D) above, in 1:16a, Paul is not ashamed of the good news (τὸ εὐαγγέλιον) but rather takes pride in them, since the good news will not bring judgement for past sins at the eschaton for the faithful and righteous ones. On the contrary, in 1:16b, Paul states that the good news is the power of God that leads to salvation for all who have faith, both Jews and gentiles. However, this hope and trust in God’s power to save also implies the opposite, as was argued above with reference to Origen and his commentary. There is a power of God that might lead to destruction and condemnation at the last judgment for those who continue to live a life of ungodliness and unrighteousness. Christian Stettler argues for the importance of the universal last judgment as part of God’s righteousness and justice. The last judgment is “(die) Kulmination der geschichtliche Gerichte Gottes” and is “die Voraussetzung” for much of Paul’s topics regarding “(die) Rechfertigung, Rettung, Erlösung und Versöhnung durch den Messias Jesus”. Paul’s thoughts and pronouncements on the last judgment and the eschaton have their origin in the Jewish thought-world expressed in the Septuaginta and elsewhere. Stettler states that “die Endgerichtserwartung ein konstitutives

574 Calhoun, R. M. 2011, 39-84, gives a more detailed explanations of these rhetorical figures.
576 See observation (D) above and note 554.
578 ibid., 125.
Element in der paulinischen Soteriologie darstellt”, and the theme of God’s righteous judgement at the eschaton is an explicit theme in Rom 2:1-16. In 2:5-6, Paul writes that, in the day of wrath (ἐν ἡμέρᾳ ὀργῆς), the revelation of the righteous judgment of God (ἀποκαλύψις δικαιοκρισίας τοῦ θεοῦ) should be expected, when God will give or render (ἀποδώσει) each person (ἐκάστῳ) according to his or hers works or deeds (κατὰ τὰ ἔργα αὐτοῦ). Consequently, the good news proclaimed by Paul in 2:16, which is God’s power to save, also indicate the ethical demands on the believers. Robert C. Olson has a similar understanding of the good news, in 1:16a and b, as the basis for the eschatological vindication with “deliverance from eschatological judgment and enjoyment of eschatological blessings.”

For František Ábel, faith is of special importance in Rom 1:16. He understands the good news as “God’s merciful actions in the event of Jesus Christ as the propitiatory sacrifice in favour of all who have belief … so as to be saved” at the eschaton; and “belief should be understood as the starting point for obedience to God’s will” and “proper behaviour among believers”. God’s “judgment according to deeds”, where “obedience” is “leading to eternal life”, and “disobedience resulting in damnation” is momentous. Ábel concludes that “messianic ethics comes to the fore and becomes the decisive criterion in one’s life” for all, both for Jews and gentiles. Therefore, the argument that the good news of God also has ethical demands and consequences for the believers in Christ is valid. God’s righteousness, and its manifestation in history as both justice and mercy, is however a precondition, which becomes obvious in the third and fourth arguments, which deal more specifically with Rom 1:17-18.

The third argument is that the explanatory γάρ-sentence in Rom 1:17a, followed by the first direct scriptural quotation of Hab 2:4 in Rom 1:17b, explain and confirm what is stated in 1:16. The very condensed and brief expressions in 1:17a and b entail several exegetical problems and challenges. Almost every phrase and term in the sentences have been extensively discussed by scholars and interpreters since earliest time – (a) δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ, whether the genitive is objective, subjective, a genitive of origin etc., and whether the meaning of the righteousness of God is an attribute, an activity or a status, (b) ἐν αὐτῷ is understood by most scholars as a reference to the good news in 1:16a, but it is exegetically possible that it refers to the one who believes in 1:16b, (c)

582 ibid., 286-88.
583 See for example the extensive excurses in Longenecker, R. N. 2016, 168-76; and Wölter, M. 2014, 119-25.
584 Longenecker, R. N. 2016, 167; Wölter, M. 2014, 119 n. 98; Jewett, R. 2007, 142; Fitzmyer, J. A. 1993, 257; Dunn, J. D. G. 1988, 42-3; Cranfield, C. E. B. 1975(1979), 91; all has the phrase ἐν αὐτῶ as a reference to the good news. An interesting exception is Ambrosiaster (c. 380 C.E.) in his Commentary on the Pauline Epistles: Romans, (transl.) de Bruyn, T. S. 2017,
how to understand the verb ἀποκαλύπτεται.\(^{585}\) (d) whether the double prepositional phrase ἐκ πίστεως εἰς πίστιν refers to God’s, Jesus’ or the humans’ faithfulness, and whether the phrase qualifies the verb ἀποκαλύπτεται or the noun δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ.\(^{586}\) (e) how the first scriptural quotation of Hab 2:4 should be understood, why the version differs from the text witnesses of both LXX and HB; whether ὁ δίκαιος refers to the righteous human being or to Jesus as the righteous one; whether ἐκ πίστεως qualifies the noun ὁ δίκαιος or the verb ζήσεται; and whether the prepositional phrase ἐκ πίστεως in Rom 1:17a and 17b should be understood in the same way.\(^{587}\)

All scholars and interpreters throughout history regard Rom 1:17 as crucial for the understanding of the message of Romans. The similar train of thought found also in the scriptures is significant for grasping the meaning of 1:17. Besides the importance of the direct quotation of Hab 2:4, scholars point to the allusions and similarities to e.g. LXX Ps 97:2 that “the terms converge … strikingly”.\(^{588}\) and the many similar themes in Isa 49-55, regarding the Suffering Servant.\(^{589}\) God’s saving righteousness

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\(^{585}\) Cranfield, C. E. B. 1975(79), 91-2; Longenecker, R. N. 2016, 176; Mininger, M. A., 2017, 52-117. The literal meaning is to be uncovered, revealed, which here implies divine action, or divine revealing (the divine passive). But more specifically “the eschatological disclosure of God’s redemptive plan, both in its ‘realized’ and ‘consummated’ expressions”, Olson, R. C. 2016, 93-4. And Dunn, J. D. G. 1988, 43, refers to “the twin notes of Jewish apocalyptic: revelation as the disclosure of a heavenly mystery … and the eschatological character” of something already realised or happening. See also Rom 3:21-26 (with φανερόω), 16:25; 1 Cor 1:7; Gal 1:6; 3:23, and the final acts and judgement of God, which is yet to come, in Rom 2:5; (16); 8:18-19; 1 Cor 3:13.

\(^{586}\) For summaries of scholarly opinions see for example Longenecker, R. N. 2016, 176-80; Wöltner, M. 2014, 125-26; Cranfield, C. E. B. 1975(1979), 99-100; See also Olson, R. C. 2016, 115-20, and his discussion of similar expressions in LXX and in other NT texts.

\(^{587}\) Longenecker, R. N. 2016, 182-86; and Olson, R. C. 2016, 115-20; give an overview of both the difficulties with, and the different interpretative options for the citation of Hab 2:4.

\(^{588}\) LXX Ps 97:2-3, ἐγνώρισεν κύριος τὸ σωτήριον αὐτοῦ, ἐναντίον τῶν ἐθνῶν ἀπεκάλυψεν τὴν δικαιοσύνην αὐτοῦ. ἐμνήσθη τοῦ ἐλέους αὐτοῦ τῷ Ἰακωβ καὶ τῆς ἀληθείας αὐτοῦ τῷ ἐκ Καίσαρος ἐδόθησαν πάντα τὰ πέρατα τῆς γῆς τοῦ σωτήριον τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν. See Hays, R. B 1989, 36, who discusses Rom 1:16-17 and writes that it “echoes the language of LXX,” and compares with LXX Ps 97:2 that “the terms converge … strikingly”.

\(^{589}\) Olson, R. C. 2016, 82-85, gives seven important themes, in Rom 1:16-17, that appear in the context of LXX Isa 49-55, e.g. “in Isaiah 52:7-54:4 these terms and/or their cognate forms appear within the space of 25 verses, and four of them appear twice”, and of particular importance is the term δικαιοσύνη.
(δικαιοσύνη) is central in the scriptures, but also the righteousness of those who are saved, e.g. in Isa 54:14, where the new life of (the people of) Jerusalem will be founded on righteousness (ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ) and on avoiding wrongdoing and unrighteous (ἄδικος) deeds. However, it is crucial to understand the content of Rom 1:17, not only in relation to the previous verse 1:16, and to the scriptural background, but also in relation to the next γάρ-sentence in 1:18, which is the fourth argument for the current observation (E).

Fourth, as we saw above in the analysis of the textual arrangement of the introduction of the letter body, most scholars regard Rom 1:16-17 as the thesis-statement for the entire letter, with a clear and even an antithetical break to the argument beginning in 1:18 and forward. However, there is a strong connection between 1:17 and 1:18, due to the causal or explanatory force of the particle γάρ, and the repetition of the verb ἀποκαλύπτεται, emphatically placed first in 1:18. It seems more reasonable to understand 1:18 as the cause and reason for what is stated in 1:17 and before. The two statements in 1:17 and 18 is closely related. The content of the verses is elaborated later in the letter body, but in reverse order, 1:18 in 1:18-3:20, and 1:17 in 3:21 and forward. Some scholars have recently argued in favour of this parallelism between 1:17 and 18. Desta Heliso, for example, sees Paul’s declaration in 1:17 “regarding the revelation of δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ ἐκ πίστεως εἰς πίστιν” as “one justifying and affirming reason for his claim in 1:16,” and the declaration in 1:18 and “the revelation of ὀργὴ θεοῦ ἀπ' οὐρανοῦ ἐπὶ πᾶσαν ἀσέβειαν καὶ ἀδικίαν ἀνθρώπων is another reason of a different kind for the same claim.” Similarly, but with more focus on the righteousness of God, Robert C. Olson sees the connection between the revelation of δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ and ὀργὴ θεοῦ as “the continuing nature of the revelation of God’s eschatological righteousness realized concurrently in the present in terms of both salvation and wrath.” Rom 1:18-19 is an expression of “the historically oriented assertion of the suppression of truth directly given by God,” which has been continuing “since the creation of the world.” Robert M. Calhoun rightly concludes that, in 1:16-18, Paul “provides the strongest indication … (of) God’s responsibility to condemn and his capacity to save … at the eschatological trial” at the last judgment. Also, with František Ābel, “the final result of the judgment … eternal life or damnation, depends not only on the sole faith of the believer, but also on one’s behaviour.”

590 See above Ch. 4.1 and note 500.
592 For more on how the different statements in 1:16a, b, 17 and 18 are elaborated and spelled out in the letter body at large, see Ch. 8.
593 Heliso, D. 2007, 73-5. The Greek-text quoted is original.
594 Olson, R. C. 2016, 183.
595 Calhoun, R. M. 2011, 167
596 Ābel, F. 2016, 209. Ābel has an American spelling of “behaviour”.
Thus, it is reasonable to read Rom 1:16, 17, and 18 as closely connected in Paul’s successive line of thought. To be more specific regarding 1:18, the term ὀργὴ θεοῦ should be understood as the wrath of God in the historic past, at the current time, and also as the future wrath of God at the last judgment.\textsuperscript{597} The wrath of God is revealed (ἀποκαλύπτεται) already in the present, and with Dunn, God’s final judgment is “the end of a process already in train,”\textsuperscript{598} within the eschatological end-time initiated through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. But the wrath is not directed to all humans.\textsuperscript{599} The reason for God’s wrath throughout history up to the eschaton is all the ungodliness (ἀσέβεια) and unrighteousness (ἀδικία) of human beings. It is directed to those who hindered or suppressed the truth (ἀλήθεια) of God by unrighteousness (ἀδικία).\textsuperscript{600} So, the immoral behaviour of human beings (ἄνθρωποι) is and has been the cause of God’s wrath throughout history. In 1:18 and the previous verses, the necessity is stressed not to violate the moral standards, but to strive for proper ethical behaviour among all human beings in accordance with the will of God.\textsuperscript{601} This proper behaviour of the believers, combined with the trust in and the affirmation of the truth of God, ultimately rely on God’s mercy.

The fifth and final argument for the observation (E) concerns the brevity of Paul’s expressions and statements in the whole of Rom 1:16-18. The expressions seem to be consciously brief in order to express multiple meanings, as argued above. For example, the terms δικαιοσύνη and ὁ δίκαιος in 1:17, which are significant in Romans,\textsuperscript{602} can have multiple meanings. When related to the human beings, the noun δικαιοσύνη does not necessarily mean either-or, but can refer both to a status of righteousness and to the ethical quality of human life.\textsuperscript{603} In 1:17b, the term ὁ δίκαιος can be understood as a Messianic title referring to Jesus Christ, and/or with an eschatological connotation as a reference to human beings and their proper moral behaviour.\textsuperscript{604}

\textsuperscript{597} Longenecker, R. N. 2016, 201; Dunn, J. D. G. 1988, 54. Examples from the scriptures (LXX) are e.g. in Ps 77:31; Isa 9:18, 20; 13:9; where the wrath of God is used with respect to God’s past and present judgments; and in Isa 13:13; 26:20; Ezek 7:19; Zeph 3:8; the wrath is for God’s future judgment.

\textsuperscript{598} Dunn, J. D. G. 1988, 54.

\textsuperscript{599} So also Origen & (transl.) Scheck, T.P. 2001, 88.

\textsuperscript{600} The impiety and unrighteousness, ἡ ἄσεβεια, ἀσεβής, ἡ ἀδικία, ἀδικος etc., occur 12 times in Romans, in 1:18 (three times), 29; 2:8; 3:5 (two times); 4:5; 5:6; 6:13; 9:14; 11:26. The truth, ἡ ἀλήθεια, ἀληθής etc., occurs nine (9) times in Romans, in 1:18, 25; 2:2, 8, 20; 3:4, 7; 9:1; 15:8.

\textsuperscript{601} In Rom 1:18, Paul uses ἄνθρωποι (“human beings”) not in a restricted sense, not only for τὰ ἔθνη (“the gentiles or nations”), but also the Jews. Cf. 1:16b with παντὶ τῷ πιστεύοντι Ἰουδαίῳ τε πρῶτον καὶ Ἑλληνί.

\textsuperscript{602} The δικαιοσύνη etc. occurs 64 times in Romans, besides the first two time here in 1:17, also in Rom 1:32, 2:5, 13, 26; and frequently in Rom 3-8, 9:30-10:10; and once in 14:17.

\textsuperscript{603} Longenecker, R. N., 2016, 174-5; Ábel, F., 2016, 209-10; but contra to Abel, it is for both Jews and Gentiles.

\textsuperscript{604} Longenecker, R. N., 2016, 185-6, where ὁ δίκαιος is referring to either Jesus Christ as “the righteous one”, or to the believers in Christ themselves responding to “the good news” of Jesus.
δικαιοσύνη and to be δίκαιος express central characteristics of God, his Messiah Jesus, and human beings. According to Olson, they include each aspect of attribute, activity and status, and “the eschatological righteousness of God”, revealed in the present time from faith to faith (ἐκ πίστεως εἰς πίστιν). Also as God’s activity, the term δικαιοσύνη is a reference both to God’s eschatological vindication through Jesus Christ, and to God’s anticipated justice. To be righteous is a virtue expected of the believers who live the new life in Christ. This new life is contrasted to the current situation and way of life among many humans, characterised in 1:18-19a as ungodliness and impiety (ἀσέβεια) towards God, and unrighteousness, wrong-doing, and injustice (ἀδικία) towards human beings. As a result, the wrath of God is revealed and made manifest in the current situation and will ultimately lead to the revelation of God’s righteous judgment, 2:5, 2:15-16. The word unrighteous (ἀδικία) is repeated twice, in 1:18-19a, and by contrast to the righteous one (ὁ δίκαιος), in 1:17b. Thus, the three γάρ-sentences, in 1:16b, 1:17, and 1:18, can be understood as three successive and coordinated explanations of 1:15-16a about why Paul is not ashamed of the good news and why he is so eager to come to Rome to proclaim and spread his message. Therefore, it is justified to conclude that Paul’s message, the good news of God, has ethical consequences as well, including a demand for a new righteous life for all believers in Christ.

Christ with faith. See also Heliso, D., 2007, 122-64; Nanos, M. D., 1996, 50-57, 218-38; who understands ὁ δίκαιος as the gentile believers in Christ that are to behave as “the (eschatological) righteous gentiles”; Similarly, Eisenbaum, P., 2009, Paul Was Not a Christian, New York, Harper Collins, 153-67, 244-49, 253. See also the basic characteristic of Paul’s messianic ethics, in Ábel, F., 2016, 76-92. Even though all these Scholars differ in many respect, they have a common understanding of the proper moral behaviour for believers in Christ.  

605 Olson, R. C., 2016, 93-98, 113-15.
Summary of the introduction to the letter body

The following five observation (A) – (E) are understood to be relevant for the purpose of Romans:

(A) The focus is on Paul, his serving and work as an apostle for the good news.

(B) Paul wants to establish a relationship with the addressees and plans to visit them in Rome.

(C) Paul’s wants to share some spiritual gifts with, and to receive in return some fruit from, the addressees in Rome, therefore he is eager to come to Rome to proclaim the good news.

(D) The significance and effect of the good news regarding Jesus Christ is that it has the power to save and to give new life to all who believe.

(E) The good news of God has ethical consequences for the believers and implies a new righteous life.

In the introduction of the letter body of Romans, the focus is on Paul and his serving as an apostle of God regarding Jesus Christ, as it was also in the letter opening (see Ch. 3). Like the opening, Paul here relates his apostleship, his serving, and his responsibility of the good news, directly to the addressees in Rome. He wants to establish a close relationship with the addressees. His eagerness to come (ἐλθεῖν πρὸς ὑμᾶς) and visit them (ἰδεῖν ὑμᾶς) and to proclaim the good news (εὐαγγελίσασθαι) in Rome is stated four times explicitly, and indirectly implied several times. The reason is that Paul wants to share, or to give, some or a certain spiritual gift to the Romans for their strengthening and for mutual encouragement. Not only that, he is also eager to reap or receive in return some or a certain fruit from them as well, as from the other (the rest) of the nations. Paul’s expressions and explanations are brief, but it is reasonable that the spiritual gift that Paul wants to share and the fruit he wants in return for his apostolic work are directly connected to the good news. The result of Paul’s work is not only an additional number of believers in Christ, but also has ethical implications and demands on all believers in Christ. A similar connotation was found in the letter opening for the expression the hearkening of faith. It implies a response, not only with belief, trust, and hope, but also with a changed behaviour. Therefore, Paul is eager to bring or announce the good news (εὐαγγελίσασθαι) also to those in Rome. The four successive γάρ-sentences in Rom 1:16-18 explain or give further reasons why Paul is so eager to come to Rome and to proclaim the good news. All four sentences are closely related, and they make a compact and complementary summary of the significance and effect of the good news, with the direct quotation of Hab 2:4 adding further clarification and argument. So, both Rom
1:16-18 in the introduction, and Rom 1:2-4 in the letter opening, are brief definitions, summaries, and reasons for the good news, and include references or allusions to the scriptures in order to strengthen the argument.

In short: both in the letter opening and in the introduction to the letter body, the importance of Paul and his commission as an apostle for the good news regarding Jesus Christ are directly connected to the addressees in Rome. Paul wants to establish a close relationship with the addressees. He explicitly wants to come and visit, and to bring in or announce the good news in Rome. Paul gives two definitions of the good news of God regarding Jesus Christ. In the opening more of the content of the good news. In the introduction he adds more about the significance, effect, and the expected result and outcome from people who believe and trust in the good news. The expressions and terms used are not only important for theological or doctrinal reasons. They are also very much related to ethical issues and to the fulfilment of moral standards by the believers in Christ. Thus, they add a messianic ethical aspect to the good news of God. Finally, and most interestingly, the content of the introduction, including the four γάρ-sentences in 1:16-18, seems to be of particular importance for different parts in the rest of the letter body of Romans, to be discussed further in Ch. 8. All this must be considered when formulating the thesis for the purpose of Romans.

The next two steps are the detailed analysis of the end of the letter body in Rom 15:14-33 (Ch. 5), and the letter closing in Rom 16:1-27 (Ch. 6).
5. The End of the Letter Body in Rom 15:14-15:33

In chapter 2.4, it was argued that the end of the letter body is found in Rom 15:14-33. This chapter studies the end of the letter body in order to see what information can be found about why Paul wrote Romans. As in the previous chapters, the study proceeds in two steps, first the establishment of the textual arrangement, second identification of observations from the established text that give information about the purpose of Romans.606

5.1 The Textual Arrangement

There is a new opening in Rom 15:14, marked by the coordinating adversative particle but (δέ), the vocative my brothers (and sisters) (ἀδελφοί μου), and a disclosure formula or meta-propositional statement, “(but) I am convinced (πέπεισμαι) my brothers (and sisters)”607. There is an abrupt change of topic in 15:14 and forward, compared to 15:7-13 and earlier in the letter. This is the beginning of a new textual unit after the more hortatory section in 12:1-15:13. Most, if not all, scholars agree that this is the beginning of the last two parts of the letter, where Rom 15:14-33 is the end of the letter body, and 16:1-27 is the formal letter closing. For the latter, see Ch. 6 below.608

In Rom 15:14, Paul expresses that he (καὶ αὐτὸς ἐγώ) is convinced that the addressees (περὶ ὑμῶν ὅτι) also are (καὶ αὐτοὶ … ἐστε) full of good moral quality (μεστοί … ἀγαθωσύνης). They are filled with every kind of knowledge (πεπληρωμένοι πάσης γνώσεως) and are able to put in mind, advise or admonish each other (δυνάμενοι καὶ ἀλλήλους νουθετεῖν). Both Paul himself and the addressees are highlighted in the opening by the two similar expressions (literally) “also I myself” (καὶ αὐτὸς ἐγώ), and “also you yourselves are” (καὶ αὐτοί … ἐστε). Thus, Paul begins to speak explicitly about himself in close relation to the addressees.

606 For more on the approach and methods used for the analysis, see chapter 1.2 of this thesis.
607 There are similar opening markers and constructions in both 1:8 and 1:13, see Ch. 4.
608 Scholars differ in opinion whether Rom 15:33, often called a peace benediction, is the last clause of the letter body or the first in the letter closing. I argue in this thesis that 15:33 is the last clause of the letter body.
Paul continues in Rom 15:15-16 with the coordinating particle δέ and a long complex meta-communicative sentence, explaining that he has written to the addressees more boldly or rather boldly (τολμηρότερον δὲ ἔγραψα ὑμῖν) in part (ἀπὸ μέρους) as to remind them (ὡς ἐπαναμιμνῄσων ὑμᾶς). The reason why he reminds the addressees is elaborated in two prepositional phrases and one final clause. First, because of the gracious gift given to Paul by God (διὰ τὴν χάριν τὴν δοθεῖσάν μοι ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ). Second, the gift given to Paul is to be (εἰς τὸ ἐίναι με) a public servant of Christ Jesus into the nations (λειτουργὸν Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ εἰς τὰ ἔθνη). Third, the serving is a holy or priestly serving of the good news of God (ἱερουργοῦν τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τοῦ θεοῦ) in order that the offering of the people of the nations might be favourable or acceptable (ἵνα γένηται ἡ προσφορὰ τῶν ἐθνῶν εὐπρόσδεκτος) before God and become or made holy or pure in the holy spirit (ἡγιασμένη ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ). So, in 15:15-16 Paul explains that his gracious gift to serve Christ and the good news of God is the reason why he has written to remind the Romans.

Consequently, in Rom 15:17, Paul takes pride in Christ Jesus for the things that pertains to God (ἔχω οὖν τὴν καύχησιν ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ τὰ πρὸς τὸν θεόν). Paul further explains, in 15:18-19a, that he will not venture to be so bold as to say anything (οὐ γάρ τολμήσω τι λαλεῖν) except about things that Christ, the Messiah, has accomplished or performed through Paul for the hearkening of the nations (ὧν οὐ κατειργάσατο Χριστὸς δι’ ἐμοῦ εἰς ὑπακοὴν ἐθνῶν). The use of the coordinating conjunction therefore or consequently (οὖν), in 15:17, indicates an inference of what precedes. The expression with the verb “I will not venture or be bold” (τολμήσω) in 15:18, and the use of the cognate comparative adjective “bolder” or “rather boldly” (τολμηρότερον) in Rom 15:15, signals a direct continuation in 15:17-18 of the line of thought that began in 15:15. The verb to accomplish or to perform (κατεργάζομαι) in aorist indicative implies something already or fully accomplished, and the double negative construction can be understood positively that Paul does not talk except of what, or even talk only of what, Christ has accomplished. The things accomplished by Christ are through Paul as his agent (δι’ ἐμοῦ) and it has been accomplished, in 15:18c-19a, with word and deed (λόγῳ καὶ ἔργῳ), by the power of signs and marvels (ἐν δυνάμει σημείων καὶ τεράτων), in the power of the spirit (of God) (ἐν δυνάμει πνεύματος [θεοῦ]). In 15:19b, a consecutive clause follows that begins with so that (ὥστε), where Paul explains more precisely where geographically all his serving of Christ so far has

been carried out. Paul has been fulfilling or completing the good news of Christ, the Messiah (με … πεπληρωκέναι τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τοῦ Χριστοῦ), from Jerusalem and the surrounding area (ἀπὸ Ἰερουσαλήμ καὶ κύκλῳ) all the way to Illyricum (μέχρι τοῦ Ἰλλυρικοῦ). The theme of Paul’s serving the good news of Christ is continued in Rom 15:17-19b, a theme that began in 15:15-16 after the opening in 15:14.

In 15:20, a conclusion follows, which begins with “but so” or possibly “by this” (οὕτως δέ). Paul has had the ambition, or considered it an honour, to spread the good news (φιλοτιμούμενον εὐαγγελίζεσθαι) where Christ (Messiah) has not been named or become known (οὐχ ὅπου ὠνομάσθη Χριστός) in order that (ἵνα) Paul will not build on another’s, or on a different, foundation (μὴ ἐπ’ ἀλλότριον θεμέλιον οἰκοδομῶ). He clarifies, in 15:21, that this is rather as it is written or, maybe better, to fulfil what is written (ἀλλὰ καθὼς γέγραπται) in LXX Isa 52:5, “for those who have not received the message about him shall see, and those who have not heard will understand” (οἷς οὐκ ἀνηγγέλη περὶ αὐτοῦ ὄψονται καὶ οἳ οὐκ ἀκηκόασιν συνήσουσιν). The participle considering (it) an honour (φιλοτιμούμενον) together with the infinitive to proclaim the good news (εὐαγγελίζεσθαι) are correlated to the pronoun “I” (με) in 15:19b, as a reference to Paul. The theme of proclaiming or bringing the good news regarding Jesus Christ is continued from the verses before. With Cranfield, it is reasonable to understand Rom 15:20-21 as related to and a qualification of v19b. Rom 15:19b-21 is a “so that … but so (or by this)”-construction (ἂστε … οὕτως δέ), which give a consequential elaboration and a concluding explanation or clarification of the previous description of Paul’s service of Christ and the good news of God.

Thus, there is an opening in Rom 15:14, followed by a long continuous description in 15:15-16, with an inference in 15:17, a further explanation in 15:18-19a, and finally, in 15:19b-21, a consecutive clause and a conclusion. Next, in 15:22 and forward, there is a progress of thought, a beginning of something new, but still related to what has been stated in 15:14-21. Therefore, it is valid to treat Rom 15:14-21 as the first textual unit of the end of the letter body. The use of the term the good news (τὸ εὐαγγέλιον), in 15:16, in the beginning, and the cognate terms to proclaim the good news (εὐαγγελίζεσθαι) and to receive the message (ἀναγγέλλω), in 15:20-21, at the end of the first textual unit, mark off the theme of the good news and Paul’s apostolic commission to proclaim the good news. The similar and repeated use of the cognate terms τὸ εὐαγγέλιον, προεπαγγέλλωμαι and εὐαγγελίζεσθαι in Rom 1:1, 2, 9, 15, and 16, in the letter opening and introduction should be noted. The cognate verb καταγγέλλωμαι in 1:8 regarding the faith of the addressees is at least indirectly related to the proclamation of the good news. Finally, in the letter closing, the good news is mentioned explicitly in Rom

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612 Cranfield, C. E. B. 1979, 766.
16:25 (see Ch. 6). These repetitions of cognate terms both at the beginning and the end of a particular textual unit, such as Rom 15:14-21, and at the beginning and end of a larger textual part, even of the entire letter in Rom 1-16, highlight and show the importance of the terms, both in the close textual context and in Paul’s message as a whole.\textsuperscript{613}

At the beginning of the second textual unit in Rom 15:22,\textsuperscript{614} with the inferential conjunction “therefore also” or “and therefore” (διὸ καὶ), Paul explains that what has been stated is the reason why Paul has been prevented many times (ἐνεκοπτόμην τὰ πολλὰ) to come to the addressees in Rome (τοῦ ἐλθεῖν πρὸς ὑμᾶς). Then, in 15:23, follows what scholars understands as two incomplete sentences without finite verbs.\textsuperscript{615} First in v23a, with the emphatic “but now” (νυνὶ δὲ), Paul declares that he has no more, no longer, or no further (μηκέτι)\textsuperscript{616} portion or place in those (Eastern) districts (τόπον ἔχων ἐν τοῖς κλίμασι τούτοις). The reference to the geographical districts (τὰ κλίματα), in v23a, is related to Paul’s previously described geographical missionary work in v19b. This means that the conjunction, therefore also (διὸ καὶ), in v22 refers back, not only to v20-21, but all the way to v19b.\textsuperscript{617} Thus, the reason that Paul has been hindered to come to Rome before is primarily his previous missionary work in the East.\textsuperscript{618} Second, in v23b, Paul writes that he (still) has a yearning desire (ἐπιποθίαν δὲ ἔχων) to come to the addressees in Rome (τοῦ ἐλθεῖν πρὸς ὑμᾶς) after many years (ἀπὸ πολλῶν ἑκατέρων ἡμῶν), as or when (ὡς ἂν), in v24a, Paul wanders (goes) to Spain (πορεύωμαι εἰς τὴν Σπανίαν). Rom 15:24a with ὡς ἂν is a future temporal and subordinate clause to v23b.\textsuperscript{619}

Even if the syntax in 15:23a and b is difficult, including two incomplete sentences, the statements in 15:22, 23a, and 23b, are still related and express together a comprehensible line of thought. The reason why Paul has been hindered to come to Rome is his previous work in the East, but now he has not any area left in those Eastern districts, and Paul still, after many years, has

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{613} Holmstrand, J. 1997, 27-31; Longenecker, R. N. 2011, 176, 187.}  
\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{614} Jewett, R. 2007, 922; Dunn, J. D. G. 1988, 871. For both, Rom 15:22 is the opening of a new paragraph. There is progress of thought in 15:22 and forward focusing on the future plans of Paul’s work. Cf. Longenecker, R. N. 2016, 1032-35, 42, who has v22 as the end of the previous textual unit; Cranfield, C. E. B. 1979, 749-51, who regards 15:14-29 as one text unit. Jewett’s and Dunn’s position seems more valid, there is a progress of thought, even though the textual units 15:14-21, 22-24, and 25-29 are tightly connected and related.}  
\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{615} Jewett, R. 2007, 923; Cranfield, C. E. B. 1979, 766.}  
\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{616} LSJ, μηκέτι, 1126, no more, no longer, no further; Thayer, J. H. 2007 (1896), ibid., 412, no longer, no more; not hereafter; BDAG, ibid., 647, no longer, not from now on.}  
\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{617} Cranfield, C. E. B. 1979, 766.}  
\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{618} Dunn, J. D. G. 1988, 871; Cranfield, C. E. B. 1979, 766, for both the primary reason is Paul’s apostolic work in the East and not some general principle; Cf. Longenecker, R. N. 2016, 1043, who has the primary reason being both his previous work in the East and the general principle in v20-21; Jewett, R. 2007, 915-17, 922-3, has the διὸ in v22 referring back to a general principle in v20-21, which for him is the reason why Paul was hindered.}  
\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{619} BDAG, ὡς, 8.c, 1106; Beale, G. K., Brendel, D. J., and Ross, W. A. 2014, 94.}
a yearning desire to come to the addressees in Rome, as or when he begins his journey to Spain. This is analogous to what is expressed in the introduction in Rom 1:13, where Paul wants the addressees to know that he has had the intention to come to Rome many times, but he has been prevented until now. Here, at the end of the letter, he gives a clearer, at least a specific, reason why he was hindered before. It was because of his work in the East.

In Rom 15:24b, Paul explains further that when he travels through, he hopes to visit the addressees in Rome (ἐλπίζω γὰρ διαπορευόμενος θεάσασθαι ὑμᾶς), and in 15:24c that he also (καὶ) hopes to be assisted or accompanied by them there (ἀφ’ ὑμῶν προπεμφθῆναι ἐκεῖ). Paul has one condition in 15:24d that must first (πρῶτον) be satisfied. Paul must have his fill of the Romans (ἔὰν ὑμῶν … ἐμπλησθῶ), in part or (temporary) for a while (ἀπὸ μέρους).

Note the phrase literally “if of you first (!)” (ἐὰν ὑμῶν πρῶτον). In 15:25, there is then a change of topic. He begins again with the emphatic “but now” (νυνὶ δὲ). Therefore, Rom 15:22-24 constitutes the second textual unit.

In the third textual unit, in Rom 15:25-29, Paul presents his immediate travel plans before going to Rome and Spain. Beginning in 15:25, Paul states that now or first (νυνὶ δὲ) he must wander to Jerusalem to serve the holy ones (πορεύομαι εἰς Ἰερουσαλήμ διακονῶν τοῖς ἁγίοις). He explains why in three successive causal γάρ-sentences, in 15:26, 27a and b. First, in 15:26, because the Macedonians and the Achaeans have agreed (εὐδόκησαν γὰρ Μακεδονία καὶ Ἀχαΐα) to make some or a certain fellowship or contribution (κοινωνίαν τινὰ ποιήσασθαι) to the poor of the holy ones in Jerusalem (εἰς τοὺς πτωχοὺς τῶν ἁγίων τῶν ἐν Ἰερουσαλήμ). Second, in 15:27a, for if the people of the nations have a share in the spiritual things of the holy ones (εἰ γὰρ τοῖς πνευματικοῖς αὐτῶν ἐκοινώνησαν τὰ ἔθνη), the people of the nations are also in debt to serve the holy ones with the fleshly or material things (ὀφείλουσιν καὶ ἐν τοῖς σαρκικοῖς λειτουργῆσαι αὐτῶν).

In Rom 15:28, Paul next states that consequently, having completed this (τοῦτο οὖν ἐπιτελέσας), and (καὶ) having sealed with them this (σφραγισάμενος αὐτοῖς τὸν καρπὸν τοῦτον), Paul will leave and go through or via the addressees in Rome to Spain (ἀπελεύσομαι δι’ ὑμῶν εἰς Σπανίαν). With a meta-propositional clause in 15:29, Paul closes the textual unit. He knows (οἶδα δὲ) that (ὅτι) when he comes to the addressees in Rome (ἐρχόμενος πρὸς ὑμᾶς) he will come with the fullness of the blessings of Christ (ἐν πληρώματι εὐλογίας Χριστοῦ ἐλεύσομαι). Note Paul’s double statement, “coming to you … I will come” (ἐρχόμενος πρὸς ὑμᾶς … ἐλεύσομαι), and it’s emphatic position, not only as the final clause of the third textual unit, in 15:25-29, but also as the completion of the description of Paul’s future travel plans in 15:22-29! This kind of meta-propositional clause in the
closing of a textual unit signals its importance to the reader or hearer. Here, in Rom 15:29, it signals that Paul’s coming to Rome is a prominent theme.

There is a new opening in Rom 15:30a. Paul exhorts the addressees (παρακαλῶ δὲ ὑμᾶς), his brothers (and sisters) (ἀδελφοῖ), in the vocative, through our Lord Jesus Christ (διὰ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ) and through the love of the spirit (καὶ διὰ τῆς ἀγάπης τοῦ πνεύματος). It is the beginning of the last textual unit of the end of the letter body in 15:30-33. Paul urges the addressees, in 15:30b, to fight and to struggle with him (συναγωνίσασθαί μοι) in their prayers for him to God (ἐν ταῖς προσευχαῖς ὑπὲρ ἐμοῦ πρὸς τὸν θεόν). Paul asks them to pray for two things, expressed by two ἵνα-clauses. First, in 15:31, a double wish that Paul will be saved or preserved from the un convince in Judaea (ἵνα ῥυσθῶ ἀπὸ τῶν ἀπειθούντων ἐν τῇ Ἰουδαίᾳ) and (καὶ) that Paul’s service (in)to Jerusalem (ἡ διακονία μου ἡ εἰς Ἰερουσαλήμ) will be accepted or well-pleasing to the holy ones (εὐπρόσδεκτος τοῖς ἁγίοις γένηται). This double wish is thus related to his travel to Jerusalem. Second, in the ἵνα-clause in 15:32, Paul asks the address ees to pray that later, when he has come with joy and happiness to them in Rome (ἵνα ἐν χαρᾷ ἐλθὼν πρὸς ὑμᾶς) he will, through the will of God (διὰ θελήματος θεοῦ), have a rest, regain strength, or make a halt, together with the addressees (συναναπαύσωμαι ὑμῖν).

Scholars regard the second ἵνα-clause in 15:32 as subordinate and dependent on the first in 15:31. This makes the first the object clause that describe the content of the address ees’ prayers, and the second the final or consecutive clause of the first ἵνα-clause. It is reasonable that the Jerusalem trip should come first in time, and the trip to Rome, and eventually to Spain, would come afterwards. If the first trip is unsuccessful or delayed, the second might not come or will at least be further delayed compared to the plan. However, the whole construction ends with and gives weight to the theme of Paul’s coming to the addressees. This indicates that, on the one hand, the purpose of the trip to Jerusalem is that Paul may finally complete his work in the East, and on the other hand, by coming to Rome Paul wishes to start his work in the West. The latter is ultimately in God’s hands, cf. Rom 1:10, discussed in Ch. 3.

As a conclusion in Rom 15:33, Paul prays that the God of peace will be with all the addressees, Amen (ὁ δὲ θεὸς τῆς εἰρήνης μετὰ πάντων ὑμῶν ἀμήν)! A verb in optative is characteristic for wishes that refer to the future, e.g. like the prayer to God in 15:5-6, with the verb δίδωμι in aorist optative.

620 Holmstrand, J. 1997, 28-29. See similar meta-propositional clauses as part of the concluding paragraphs in Rom 3:19-20; 8:28-30; 11:25-32; and also e.g. in 1 Cor 15:58.
621 Commentators often translates – to pray “that” (in v31), “in order to”, or “so that” (in v32). For Cranfield, C. E. B. 1979, 779, the second ἵνα-clause is a final clause depending on the first; For Dunn, J. D. G. 1988, 880, the second in v32 follows from the first in v31, and not from v30. See also Longenecker, R. N. 2016, 1048-49; Jewett, R. 2007, 937;
622 Smyth, H. W. 2010 (1915), §1198.
Here in Rom 15:33 there is no explicit verb, but the verb “may be” (εἴη) is probably implicit. The clause is regarded by many scholars as Paul’s peace benediction and understood either as the last clause of the end of the letter body or as the first of the formal letter closing. In both cases it has a transitory function and is important as such. However, the coordinating adversative particle but (δέ) connects the clause directly to what have just been discussed, and together with the concluding “Amen” (ἀμήν), makes it more plausible that Rom 15:33 is the close of both the last textual unit in 15:30-33, and the close of the end of the letter body in 15:14-33.

The textual arrangement of the end of the letter body in Rom 15:14-33 is thus summarised in fig 9 below.

623 Longenecker, Weima, Jervis regard it as the first clause of the letter closing. Jewett, Wölter, Fitzmyer, Dunn regard it as the last clause of the end of the letter body. Cranfield regard the whole 15:14-16:27 as the conclusion of the epistle, and 15:33 as the end of the paragraph in 15:30-33.

624 The ἀμήν in the end is absent in some text witnesses, but with stronger external evidence for its present.

625 Compare with previous similar clauses, in Rom 15:5-6 and 13; and before that, in 11:33-36; 8:38-39; 7:25; and possible in a minor way also, in 6:23; 5:21; See also Paul’s prayers wish, in Rom 16:20, discussed in Ch. 6.
The end of the letter body consists of four textual units, Rom 15:14-21, 22-24, 25-29, and 30-33. All four are closely related and express Paul’s coherent
line of thought. Romans 15:22-24; 25-29; and 30-33, all have a common theme of Paul’s future plans. In this respect, the three units in 15:22-33 are slightly more interrelated compared to the first unit in Rom 15:14-21, but Rom 15:22 and 23 both refer to what have just been stated regarding Paul’s previous work in the East, and thus indicate a progress in Paul’s line of thought from 15:14-21 to 15:22-33. In addition, two more points should be noted on the basis of the textual arrangement. First, the textual unit in 15:14-21 describes, besides his work in the East, Paul’s call to serve Jesus Christ and the good news of God. Even though the previous work in the East is important, the theme of service and proclamation of the good news is stronger underlined through the theme’s position at both the opening and the closing of the textual unit. Second, even though Paul’s description of his imminent travel to Jerusalem and in the future to Spain are important in the three textual units in 15:22-33, his travel to Rome is significantly more emphasised by its textual position and frequent recurrences in the text. The journey to Rome both begins and ends the unit in 15:22-24, closes 15:25-29, and concludes the admonition in 15:32, just before the wish for peace in the final textual unit of the letter body.

The next step will be to analyse the information observed for understanding the purpose of Romans.

5.2 Observations Relevant to the Purpose of Romans

Given the textual arrangement of Rom 15:14-33, with its content and progress in the line of thought, there are five observations, (A) - (E), at the end of the letter body that are relevant for the purpose of Romans.

(A) The focus is on Paul, on his gracious gift to serve Christ and to proclaim the good news of God

After Paul’s opening statement, in Rom 15:14, regarding the addressees and his conviction of their moral quality, knowledge, and ability to advice one another, Paul changes the focus, in 15:15, to his own graciously given gift to serve Jesus Christ and the good news of God, and to his apostolic commission from God among the nations.

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626 The close relationship of the three first textual units is probably why Cranfield, C. E. B. 1979, 749-51, treats Rom 15:14-29 as one single unit, and 15:30-33 as a separate unit. Cf. Longenecker, R. N. 2016, 1034-35, who has 15:14-17, 17-22, 23-29, 30-32 (but not including 33, which he regards part of the letter closing).

627 This is possibly why both Dunn and Jewett arrange the text in two units, Rom 15:14-21, and 15:22-33, with a minor break in 15:30-33. Dunn, J. D. G. 1988, 855, 870; Jewett, R. 2007, 900, 918.
In Rom 15:15, Paul explicitly declares why he has written the letter. The reason is (διά with ack.) to remind the addressees of the gracious gift (χάρις) which has been given to him by or under God (ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ). In 15:16, Paul develops what this gracious gift of God means or consists of. It means to be a public and cultic servant of Christ Jesus (λειτουργὸς Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ) for or into the nations (εἰς τὰ ἔθνη), and to give priestly service to the good news of God (ἱερουργῶν τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τοῦ θεοῦ). In 15:17-18, Paul describes his service and work as something that Christ, the Messiah, has accomplished (κατειργάσατο Χριστός) through Paul (δι’ ἐμοῦ). Paul is serving under the Messiah, and he is an agent of Christ for the purpose of the hearkening of (the people of) the nations (εἰς ὑπακοὴν ἐθνῶν). In 15:25, Paul depicts his forthcoming travel to Jerusalem in terms of serving the holy ones (διακονῶν τοῖς ἁγίοις) in Jerusalem, and in 15:31 he hopes that his service (ἡ διακονία μου) will be acceptable or well-pleasing (εὐπρόσδεκτος) by the holy ones.

The importance of service, to serve, is most obvious throughout Romans. Here, at the end of the letter body, Paul uses several terms for serving (λειτουργός, ἱερουργέω, and διακονέω/διακονία), and Paul’s elaboration has many similarities with what was discussed in Chs. 3 and 4, regarding the letter opening and introduction. For more on these specific terms and the importance of service and to be a servant, see the observation (D) below. For the discussion here under observation (A), it is significant that Paul explicitly uses several different terms for his own service. A plausible interpretation is that these different terms were used for a purpose. Four points should be noted.

First, Paul’s exposé regarding his call and apostolic work in the East and his plans for the future is founded on his call to serve. It reflects Paul’s total commitment to this call to be a public and holy servant of Jesus Christ, the Messiah, for the good news of God, cf. Rom 1:1, 3, and 9. Paul sees this call, in 15:15, as the gracious gift given by the God (ἡ χάρις ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ), a gift to be further given to or shared with others, cf. 1:5, 11. Paul’s work and service is to the nations (εἰς τὰ ἔθνη), with the aim of bringing about hearkening of (the people of) the nations (εἰς ὑπακοὴν ἐθνῶν). Paul hopes that the offering or the bringing of the nations (ἡ προσφορὰ τῶν ἐθνῶν) will be acceptable and become holy/sanctified in the holy spirit (ἡγιασμένη ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ). All this is ultimately Paul’s goal for his work as the agent of Christ, the Messiah (Χριστός). To be an agent of the Messiah, where Christ works through Paul (δι’ ἐμοῦ), also implies to serve him. The service is carried out in or by the power of the spirit of God (ἐν δυνάμει πνεύματος [θεοῦ]).

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628 Barclay, J. M. G. 2015, 457, 498, 510, where “Paul (is) the recipient of a unique calling, as the apostle to the Gentiles, and thus the apostle to them ... as their apostle”. As a recipient of the gracious gift of God, Paul is also under obligation to God, and “Paul’s authority to instruct is a product of χάρις”.

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Second, the explicitly expressed purpose of Paul’s call to serve in Rom 15:18 is for the hearkening of the nations (εἰς ὑπακοὴν ἐθνῶν). Most scholars relate this purpose to the similar expression in 1:5, for the hearkening of faith among all the nations (εἰς ὑπακοὴν πίστεως ἐν πάσιν τοῖς ἐθνεσιν). It was argued in Ch. 3 observation (C) that the expression in 1:5 implies not only additional numbers of believers, but also refers to their new changed way of life. This argument is also as valid here for the expression εἰς ὑπακοὴν ἐθνῶν in 15:18.

Third, The Greek προσφορά, in 15:16, is a multivalent term, which can refer to both the act of sacrifice and/or the gift that is offered. The associated genitive τῶν ἐθνῶν can be understood as a subjective, objective or a genitive of apposition. Therefore the expression “the offering of the nations” can be understood on the one hand as Paul’s offering, or as his bringing forth an additional number of believers in Christ from the nations, who have become holy in the holy spirit. On the other hand, it could be the response of the believers of the nations with their proper offering. A similar multivalence can be found in 15:28, regarding the term fruit (ὁ καρπός) that comes from Macedonia and Achaia. It could be understood either as the fruit delivered by Paul to Jerusalem, and/or as the fruit produced by, or that is the result from, the believers of the nations in the East. The fruit could be the money collected for the needs of the poor of the holy ones in Jerusalem, or it could signify the result or the visible effect of Paul’s graciously given gift, as argued previously regarding 1:13, in Ch. 4 observation (C). However, it could be a combination of the money collection both as part of the believers’ duty to give alms to the holy ones in Jerusalem, and as proof that they are righteous believers among the nations. See more on this under observation (E) below. Paul’s statement in 15:28 (τοῦτο ... ἐπιτελέσας) thus refers to Paul’s plan to travel to Jerusalem to bring the offering of the nations, and (καὶ) to enclose a seal that signifies the approval and acceptance by or through them (σφραγισάμενος αὐτοῖς) of this fruit (τὸν καρπὸν τοῦτον). This fruit is the result of Paul’s call to serve as an apostle and refers to the full number of new believers in the East, before Paul heads West, cf. Rom 11:25. It is also the proof and the result of these believers’ new righteous life in Christ. There is a connection between the terms the offering (ἡ προσφορά) and the fruit (ὁ καρπός), both of which can have the connotation of the thanksgiving offer, the sacrifice, the first-fruit-
offering in the Temple, on the altar or to the priest.\textsuperscript{633} This strengthens Paul’s public and holy service of Jesus Christ and the good news, and expresses his holy offering and duty to God as well.

Fourth, in Rom 15:17-19, Paul is proud (καύχησις) of his service in Christ (ἐν Χριστῷ). Paul serves as the agent of Christ with words and deeds, by the power (ἐν δυνάμει) of marvel and wonders, and in the power of the spirit of God (πνεῦμα [θεοῦ]). This statement can be perceived, with James A. Kelhoffer, as an “authentication of [Paul’s] apostleship”\textsuperscript{634} Then in 15:20, as a consequence (οὕτως δὲ), Paul has the honour to bring or to announce the good news (εὐαγγελίζεσθαι) so that all who have not received the good news of Christ will see, and those who have not heard will understand, quoting Isa 52:15.\textsuperscript{635} These expressions are similar to the statements in Rom 1:4, 9, 15, and 16. However, at the end of the letter body, Paul does not explicitly use the epithet apostle (ἀπόστολος) about himself,\textsuperscript{636} but the focus in Rom 15:16, 19 is on the good news (τὸ εὐαγγέλιον). Paul serves (ἱερουργέω) and fulfilles (πληρόω) the good news. He is not ashamed of, but instead proud (καύχησις) of this. In 15:18, Paul speaks (λαλεῖν) and acts or achieves (κατεργάζομαι) only as the agent of Christ, with word and dead (λόγῳ καὶ ἔργῳ), and in 15:20-21, he brings or announces the good news (εὐαγγελίζεσθαι) in the name of Christ, the Messiah (Χριστός). Paul builds (οἰκοδομάω) on this foundation in order that all people shall see and may understand. For more on the importance of the good news see observation (D) below.

In summary, from the four points elaborated above it is reasonable to conclude that at the end of the letter body there is a focus on Paul’s call to be a public and holy servant of Jesus Christ and the good news of God, and on his apostolic commission into the nations. This is the first (A) observation for the purpose of Romans.

(B) Paul depicts his apostolic work in geographical terms previously among the eastern nations and in the future in the western parts of the Roman Empire

Paul describes himself as a servant of God, and the good news about Jesus Christ for or into the nations. Paul writes about his apostolic work in some detail, previously in the Eastern parts of the Roman Empire, but also about his plans to work in the Western parts. It should be noted that Paul depicts his apostolic work explicitly in geographical terms.

\textsuperscript{633} LXX Lev 19:24; 27:30; Deut 26:2-4; Prov 3:9; Hos 14:3. Longenecker, R. N. 2016, 136.

\textsuperscript{634} Kelhoffer, J. A. 2001, 175.

\textsuperscript{635} Isa 52:15 οἷς οὐκ ἀνηγγέλη περὶ αὐτοῦ ὄψονται καὶ οἱ οὐκ ἀκηκόασιν συνήσουσιν (“for those who have not received the message about him, they shall see, and those not having heard will understand”)

\textsuperscript{636} As in the letter opening, in Rom 1:1, 5.
Paul describes his work and responsibility by using the Greek term τὰ ἔθνη four times. In Rom 15:16a, Paul is a servant of Christ εἰς τὰ ἔθνη; in 15:16b, so that ἐν προσφορᾷ τῶν ἔθνων will be well-received and become holy; in 15:18, that his work aims at εἰς ὑπακοὴν ἔθνων; and in 15:27, that τὰ ἔθνη have a share or take part in the spiritual and earthly “things” of the poor of the holy ones in Jerusalem. Commentators usually translates τὰ ἔθνη as the gentiles. However, as has been argued previously in Chs. 2.3; 3; and 4, the meaning of τὰ ἔθνη might be “the (non-Jewish) nations,” a geographical term that refers to the area(s) of the people who live outside Judaea and Galilee. Even if Paul’s apostolic commission is aimed specifically for the uncircumcised (ἄκροβυστία), and the responsibility of for example the apostle Peter is for the circumcised (περιτομή) as in Gal 2:1-10, Paul does not necessarily always mean the gentiles, the pagans, or the uncircumcised people when he writes τὰ ἔθνη in another context, for example here in Romans. It could equally well be a reference to the geographical area of the nations outside the Jewish homeland, which of course had a majority of non-Jewish people, the gentiles, but which also had many Jews living in the diaspora. So, Paul’s statements regarding τὰ ἔθνη at the end of the letter body of Romans are ambiguous. We will come back to the meaning of the term τὰ ἔθνη below.

The description in geographical terms of Paul’s previous work as an apostle in the East is more certain. According to Rom 15:19b, he has fulfilled or completed the good news of Christ from Jerusalem and the area around (ἀπὸ Ἰερουσαλήμ καὶ κύκλῳ), and all the way to Illyricum (μέχρι τοῦ Ἰλλυρικοῦ). In 15:23a, he says that now, he has no place left (to work) in those districts (νῦνὶ δὲ μηκέτι τόπον ἔχων ἐν τοῖς κλίμασι τούτοις). Paul’s use of the prepositional construction ἀπό … μέχρι, in 19b, should be understood as references to different geographical places, “from … (all the way) to, as far as”. The Greek word Ἰερουσαλήμ is of course the city of Jerusalem (a geographical place) and the corresponding expression καὶ κύκλῳ, used adverbially, should be understood as “and the (geographical) area in a circle around (Jerusalem)”. Similarly, the Greek Ἰλλυρικόν is the geographical region or the Roman Province of Illyricum on the Eastern shore of the Mare Adriaticum. The area corresponds roughly to modern Northern Albania, Montenegro, Bosnia

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638 There is a debate among scholars whether Paul’s apostolic commission was expressed in ethnic or geographical terms. And if ethnic, if it was exclusively or restricted only to the uncircumcised, or just being the major focus of Paul, but him not being prohibited to proclaim or bring the good news also to the Jews. See e.g. Dunn, J. D. G. 2009, 457-58; Bird, M. F. 2016, 69-107. See also my previously discussion, in Ch. 2.3.
639 LSJ, ἀπό, I, 191-92; μέχρι, II.1, 1123; BDAG, ἀπό, 1, 105; μέχρι, 1, 644. The primary meaning of both ἀπό and μέχρι is a reference of place.
640 LSJ, κύκλος, 1007; BDAG, ibid., 574.
and Herzegovina and coastal Croatia. From Jerusalem to Illyricum is the geographical area of Paul’s previous work in the East. It is the work in the East that has prevented him many times to come to Rome. However, in Rom 15:23a, he confirms that now he has no more, no longer, or no further (adv. μηκέτι) (geographical) place or region (τόπον) in those (geographical) districts (ἐν τοῖς κλίμασι τούτοις). So, Paul’s apostolic work in the geographical East is completed, and now he looks to the West.

Paul’s future plans in the West are also described in specific geographical terms with the goal of eventually reaching Spain, in 15:24a (ὁς ἂν πορεύωμαι εἰς τὴν Σπανίαν) and 15:28b (ἀπελευσόμαι δι’ ὑμῶν εἰς Σπανίαν). The prepositional phrase εἰς (τῆν) Σπανίαν is to (the geographical location) Hispania or Spain. In addition, Paul mentions his intention to come to the addressees in Rome several times, in 15:23b, 24b, c, d, 28b, 29, and 32, and Rome is the geographical centre of the entire Roman Empire.

So, both Paul’s previous and future apostolic work are described specifically in geographical terms. To stress this further, Paul uses the adverb “where (a position)” (ὁποù) in 15:20, and the adverb “there (a position)” (ἐκεῖ) in 15:24. It is reasonable to understand “where” (ὁποù) as a reference to the geographical regions of Paul’s work in the territories in the East that has just been completed. Commentators usually understands the adverb of place ἐκεῖ as a geographical reference to Spain.

The adverb of place ἐκεῖ, however, can be translated either as “there, in that place”, or as “thither, to that place”. The associated verb προπέμπω means to conduct, to escort, to accompany, or to assist. The explicit geographical place is Spain, Hispania, in 15:24a. But closest to ἐκεῖ, in 24c, is the implicit geographic location of Rome where the addressees live. The personal pronoun “you (pl.)”, ὑμεῖς, is mentioned three times in 24b, c, d, and also bracketing the adverb ἐκεῖ. The expression with the adverb “there, in that place” or “thither, to that place” is thus ambiguous.

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641 LSJ, τόπος, 1806; κλίμα, 960; BDAG, τόπος, 1, 1011; κλίμα, 549.
642 Dunn, J. D. G. 1988, 865, 868-69; Cranfield, C. E. B. 1979, 763; Cf. Jewett, R. 2007, 915-16; Longenecker, R. N. 2016, 1042; understanding ὁποù more generally as “where”, that is possibly also at Rome.
643 Jewett, R. 2007, 918, 923-26, translates ὑφ’ ὑμῶν προπεμφθῆναι ἐκεῖ in 15:24b as “to be sent there [Spain] with your help”; Longenecker, R. N. 2016, 918 translates the passage “to have you assist me on my journey there [Spain]”. They do not comment on why they relate the adverb ἐκεῖ to Spain. It seems taken for granted.
644 LSJ, ἐκεῖ, 505; BDAG, ibid., 301.
645 Rom 15:24, ὡς ἂν πορεύωμαι εἰς τὴν Σπανίαν, ἐλπίζω γὰρ διαπορευόμενος θεάσασθαι ὑμᾶς καὶ ὑφ’ ὑμῶν προπεμφθῆναι ἐκεῖ εὰν ὑμῶν πρῶτον ἀπὸ μέρους ἐμπληθῶ. After having mentioned his travel to Spain, Paul explains that he hopes to travel through (implicitly through Rome), to visit the addresses (in Rome) and by the addressees (in Rome) to be escorted, accompanied, or assisted ἐκεῖ, there, in that place, or to that place, if Paul of the addressees (in Rome) first in part or for a while shall be filled.
One possibility is that ἐκεῖ refers to Spain that is thither, to a position relatively distant. It is also plausible, and maybe better, to read ἐκεῖ as a position in the immediate vicinity of the addresses that is there, in that place, the area close to Rome. However, remembering Paul’s use of brevity (see Ch. 4. observation (E)) it could be deliberately multivalent and indicate both the area close to Rome and all the way to Spain. Either way, it strengthens Paul’s description of his apostolic work in geographical terms.

Further, Paul’s imminent travel to Jerusalem to serve the holy ones is also described in geographical terms, in Rom 15:25a (νῦνὶ δὲ πορεύομαι εἰς Ἰερουσαλήμ) and in 15:26a (εὐδόκησαν γὰρ Μακεδονία καὶ Ἀχαία). In 25a, Paul explains that now, imminently, Paul will travel to Jerusalem, the city in Judaea. In 26a, he states that Macedonia and Achaia, both geographical areas, have decided to make fellowship with, or a collection for, the poor of the holy ones. For the discussion here it is sufficient to note that Macedonia and Achaia cover most of the geographical areas of Paul’s work in the East. It is not these provinces that are making the fellowship and the collection, but the believers in Christ in those areas. However, it should be noted that Paul could easily have used for example the term Μακεδόνες instead of Μακεδονία to refer explicitly to the Macedonians, the people of Macedonia, but he used explicitly a geographical term instead.

So, Paul chose geographical terms to describe his previous apostolic work, his future plans, and of his imminent travel to Jerusalem to serve the holy ones. Paul’s work, as it is described here in Romans, started in Jerusalem and the surrounding area, the original place for the early movement of believers in Christ. From Jerusalem it was a mission in the Eastern part of the Roman Empire all the way to Illyricum. Macedonia and Achaia were major areas of Paul’s work. His future plans is for the mission Westwards, beginning in Rome, and continuing all the way to Spain, the end of the world, or at least the end of the Roman Empire in the geographical West.

Finally, we will return once more to the ambiguous meaning of the term τὰ ἔθνη. Paul’s use of specific geographical terms to describe his previous and future apostolic work and commission could be an indication that here, in the immediate context at the end of the letter body of Romans, the term τὰ ἔθνη should also be understood geographically. The term could refer to the nations, the diaspora, the area outside the Jewish homeland, and not only as the gen-

646 LSJ, ἐκεῖ, 1, 505; BDAG, ibid., 1, 301; both have the adverb as “there, in that place”, for the primary meaning; and, as “thither, to that place”, being second.
647 For more on Paul’s use of methods of brevity, e.g. in Rom 1:16-17, see Calhoun, R. M. 2011, 39-84.
648 Ἀχαιός, Ἀχαιά, Ἀχαιόν denote “Achean”, and οἱ Ἀχαιοί the people of Achaia, “the Achaeans”. The primary meaning of Ἀχαιά though is the geographical area of Achaia. LSJ, Ἀχαιά, Ἀχαιός, 295.
tiles, the pagans, or the non-Jewish people. To repeat what has previously already been noted, the geographical description of Paul’s apostolic work as a whole can be an allusion to, or be based on, the scriptures, e.g. Isa 66:18-21; 49:1-6. According to Dunn, in Isaiah “a missionary outreach to the nations is envisaged”, in order both to restore “the scattered exiles of Israel” to their homeland, and as “an eschatological pilgrimage of the nations (τὰ ἔθνη) to Zion”. Further, Dunn states that “the principal direction of travel envisaged in the nations listed in Isa 66:19 is roughly the direction of Paul’s mission”. Also Paul’s hope that the ἡ προσφορὰ τῶν ἔθνων in 15:16 would be well-received in Jerusalem, could be related to the hope in Isa 66:20 that the Jews scattered in exile would “form the eschatological offering”. So, even if ἡ προσφορὰ τῶν ἔθνων should be understood as an offering of and by the nations of Macedonia and Achaia, it is not too far-fetched to think that, if Paul was inspired by Isa 66:19-20, the offering could be the offering both of the gentiles and of the scattered exiles of Israel, who live in Macedonia and Achaia among τὰ ἔθνη. The Greek term τὰ ἔθνη would then mean “the nations” here.

In summary: under the second observation (B) for the purpose of Romans, what is unique here at the end of the letter body is Paul’s geographic description of his apostolic work among τὰ ἔθνη, both in the East and in the West. This was previously expressed in a similar way in the letter opening and in the introduction to the letter body, but maybe the term τὰ ἔθνη is more ambiguous there. At the centre of τὰ ἔθνη, at the centre of the Roman Empire, is the city of Rome, which is of greatest importance for Paul’s future plans and apostolic work. This is discussed more in observation (C) next.

(C) Paul’s overriding concern and of paramount importance for his future apostolic work is to come and visit the addressees in Rome

Paul depicts his apostolic work in geographical terms, his work previously in the East, his imminent travel to Jerusalem, and his plans to go West. Many scholars argue that either his imminent travel to Jerusalem is most important, or that the coming travel to Spain was foremost in Paul’s mind, when he wrote the Letter to the Romans. Even if both his imminent travels to Jerusalem and his future plans to go all the way to Spain are significant, Paul’s overriding

649 Riesner, R. 1994, 216-25, 248-73; Dunn, J. D. G. 1988, 872; Ibid. 2009, 541-44, note 84, for more references. It is reasonable to understand the term τὰ ἔθνη in the LXX Isa 66:18-21 and 49:1-6 as the nations, the areas outside Israel, or the people of the nations. See also Schliesser, B. 2021, 260-283, for a discussion of Paul’s choice of travel route.

650 Dunn, J. D. G. 2009, 542-3.

651 This geographical description is also alluded to by the expression, ἐν πᾶσιν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν, and similar ones in Rom 1:5, 13, depending on how we understand ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν, e.g. as among the nations. See Chs. 2.3, 3, and 4, for more on this.
central concern at the end of the letter body is to come and visit the addressees in Rome as part of his apostolic work.

Having described in some detail his immediate plan to go to Jerusalem, Paul strongly urges the addressees to pray for him in Rom 15:30-32. This is a hortative paragraph, where Paul urges (παρακαλῶ) the addressees (ὑμᾶς ἀδελφοί) to contend or fight together with Paul (συναγωνίσασθαι μοι) in prayer to God for him (ἐν ταῖς προσευχαῖς ὑπὲρ ἐμοῦ πρὸς τὸν θεόν). This mutual struggle and intercession will be achieved through, or with, the help of our Lord Jesus Christ (διὰ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ), and through the love of the spirit (διὰ τῆς ἀγάπης τοῦ πνεύματος). Dunn translates παρακαλῶ as “I appeal”. Cranfield maybe downplays the urge by translating “ask”,652 Jewett and Longenecker by contrast translates “urge”, which highlights these verses.653 For Dunn, the use of the verb συναγωνίσασθαι indicates the importance of their prayers for Paul’s personal welfare, due to the possibility of “a real or threatened conflict” during his journey to Jerusalem.654 Similarly, Jewett understands the admonition as Paul’s urgent need for help and assistance from the Romans to deal with the serious threats and dangers he foresees.655 In contrast, Cranfield understands it more as a request for an earnest prayer for him. Longenecker understands Paul’s admonition first, as asking the addressees in Rome to “join him” in his hard work “to aid the impoverished believers in Jesus in Jerusalem”, and second, as his wish to “be rescued from the unbelievers in Judea”.656

The verses with Paul’s admonition to the addressees are significant. The vocative ἀδελφοί, if original as most commentators argue,657 enforces Paul’s request. The two prepositional phrases that begin with διὰ, both of which refer to Jesus Christ and the love of the spirit, give an added insistence on Paul’s exhortation. It is not unusual for Paul to refer by διὰ to either Jesus Christ, e.g. in Rom 5:1, or to the spirit, in 5:5, but the combined and repeated διὰ-phrases with reference to Jesus Christ and to the spirit respectively are unique here in Rom 15:30. This, together with the verb to struggle or to fight together (συναγωνίσασθαι) show the importance of Paul’s admonition, in 15:30-32. For more on the verb συναγωνίσασθαι see observations (D) and (E) below.

Paul declares why he wants the addressees to pray for him in the two ἵνα-clauses in 15:31-32.658 The first relates directly to his visit in Jerusalem (for

652 Dunn, J. D. G. 1988, 877-78; Cranfield, C. E. B. 1975 (1979), 775-76.
654 Dunn, J. D. G. 1988, 878.
656 Longenecker, R. N. 2016, 1024.
657 The vocative ἀδελφοί is omitted in p46 and B, but included in all other major witnesses.
658 Dunn, J. D. G., 1988, 880, understands that the second ἵνα-clause, in 15:32, follows from the first ἵνα-clause, in v31, and not from v30, and so making the first ἵνα-clause the important reason for Paul’s exhortation to the addressees, and the second ἵνα-clause more of a side issue. So also Jewett, R., 2007, 937.
the second ἵνα-clauses see below). Paul hopes and wishes two things, in Rom 15:31a, that he may be rescued from the unconvinced, unpersuaded, unbelievers in Judaea (ῥυσθῶ ἀπὸ τῶν ἀπειθούντων ἐν τῇ Ἰουδαίᾳ), and in 15:31b, that Paul’s service in Jerusalem may be accepted or well received by the holy ones (ἡ διακονία μου ἡ εἰς Ἰερουσαλήμ εὐπρόσδεκτος τοῖς ἁγίοις γένηται). For Longenecker, Jewett, Dunn, and Cranfield, this first ἵνα-clause is the major reason for Paul’s admonition and request, and it shows Paul’s genuine fear that his travel to Jerusalem will not be successful. Paul may even fear for himself and his life as he comes to Jerusalem, since he asks for their prayers to be rescued from the unconvinced in Jerusalem, (see Acts 21:20-24, cf. Acts 16:3, 18:18). It is reasonable that the first explanation in Rom 15:31a indicates his fear of the unbelievers in Judaea. However, the second explanation in 15:31b, with the corresponding conjunction “and, also” (καί), seems to be equally important. In the second clause, Paul hopes that his service (διακονία) in Jerusalem will be accepted or well received by the holy ones. The first reason has not been suggested before in Romans, but the second is directly related to what was stated in 15:25 just above. For Paul and for all the believers in Christ, to be a servant is of utmost importance in Romans, see observation (A) above, and the next observation (D) below for discussion on the theme to serve.

So, the Jerusalem trip is important for Paul, and he asks for help from the addressees in Rome to make it successful. Some scholars regard this Jerusalem trip and Paul’s request for help as one of several purposes, or even as the most prominent one, for writing the Letter to Romans.

Other scholars understand Paul’s coming mission to Spain as the main purpose for his writing to Rome, since Paul wants the addressees in Rome to help him in different ways with his preparations, and also to assist him in accomplishing this mission to Spain. This is the main reason according to Jewett and Longenecker, for example. Paul plans to travel West, eventually all the way to Spain once he has completed his Jerusalem trip. In Rom 15:24a, Paul states explicitly that he wishes to travel (πορεύωμαι) into Spain (εἰς τὴν Σπανίαν), and in 15:28b, that he intend to travel through Rome to Spain (ἀπελεύσομαι δι’ ὑμῶν εἰς Σπανίαν) when he has completed his work in Jerusalem. As we saw under the previous observation (B), it is possible that Paul also refers indirectly to Spain by the adverb of position ἐκεῖ in 15:24c. His journey to Spain is mentioned explicitly twice and maybe implicitly once, and Spain is certainly significant for Paul’s future apostolic commission. But the question is whether

660 See Ch. 1.3 Previous Research, for scholars view on this, including valid criticism.
661 Jewett, R. 2007, 80, the reason is to elicit support for Paul’s forthcoming mission to Spain; Longencker, R. N., 2016, 10-11, who has two primary purposes, where one is to seek assistance of the Christians at Rome for the extension of his gentile mission to Spain.
traveling to Spain is more important than his imminent journey to Jerusalem? The travel to Spain is mentioned only briefly. The journey to Jerusalem is described in greater detail, explicitly three times, in Rom 15:25, 26, 31, and implicitly four times, maybe five, in 15:27-28, where “them” (αὐτοῖς) refers to the (poor of) the holy ones in Jerusalem, and once in 15:31 to Judaea, implicitly including Jerusalem. Note, that the reference “them” in dative (αὐτοῖς) in 15:28 is ambiguous and can refer to either the holy ones in Jerusalem (“with them”) or to the believers in Macedonia and Achaia (“through or for them”).

However, in addition to his immediate plans to go to Jerusalem, and in the future to Spain, what stands out at the end of the letter body is Paul’s eager intent and plan to come and visit Rome. In Rom 15:22-23, Paul refers back to his previous apostolic work in the East as the reason (διὸ καί) why he has been prevented many times (ἐνεκοπτόμην τὰ πολλὰ) to come to the addressees in Rome (τοῦ ἐλθεῖν πρὸς ὑμᾶς). Since he has now (νυνί) completed his work in the East, the situation has changed. Paul explains that he still has the eagerness or eager intent (ἐπιποθίαν … ἔχων) to come to Rome (τοῦ ἐλθεῖν πρὸς ὑμᾶς) after so many years (ἀπὸ ἱκανῶν πολλῶν ἐτῶν). In 15:24, Paul states that he hopes, when traveling through (ἐλπίζω … διαπορευόμενος) to see and visit the addressees in Rome (θεάσασθαι ὑμᾶς) on his way to Spain. Paul also (καί) hopes to be assisted and/or accompanied by them there (ὑφ’ ὑμῶν προπεμφθῆναι ἐκεῖ), if he can first for a while, or in part, stay and be fulfilled (ὑμῖν) by the addressees in Rome (ἐὰν ὑμῶν πρῶτον ἀπὸ μέρους ἐμπλησθῶ).

Further, in 15:28 Paul mentions again that he will pass through the Romans (δι’ ὑμῶν) on his way to Spain, and in Rom 15:29 he elaborates his knowledge or conviction that (οἶδα δὲ ὅτι) when coming to Rome (ἐρχόμενος πρὸς ὑμᾶς) he will come with the fullness of Christ’s blessing (ἐν πληρώματι εὐλογίας Χριστοῦ ἐλεύσομαι).

Finally, Paul explains in the second ἵνα-clause in Rom 15:32 (for the first ἵνα-clause see the discussion about the Jerusalem trip above) why he is so keen that the Romans should pray for him. It is because he hopes to come to Rome with happiness or joy (ἐν χαρᾷ ἐλθὼν πρὸς ὑμᾶς) through the will of God (διὰ θελήματος θεοῦ) and to have a rest, stay, or make a halt, together with (συναναπαύσωμαι) the addressees in Rome (ὑμῖν).

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662 See Ch. 1.3, Previous Research, for scholar’s criticism on e.g. Jewett’s position regarding Spain.
663 For the minority position of treating αὐτοῖς, in 15:28, as referring to the believers in Macedonia and Achaia, see references to Michel and Bartsch, in Cranfield, C. E. B. 1979, 774 note 3, 4; Dunn, J. D. G. 1988, 877.
664 This is somewhat similar to what Paul expressed in Rom 1:11-12 – the spiritual things he wanted to share with the Romans in order to strengthen the addressees and encourage them. Cranfield, C. E. B. 1979, 775; Dunn, J. D. G. 1988, 877.
665 The Greek term συναναπαύσωμαι has the meaning to rest, stay, or make a halt. The cognate verb αναπαύω has the similar meaning to make a stop, a halt from movement, e.g. for troops.
So, coming, visiting, and having a close relationship with the addressees in Rome are mentioned ten times directly, plus once or possibly twice indirectly.\footnote{666} The adverb of position ἐκεῖ in 15:24 is ambiguous, as argued earlier under observation (B). It may possibly refer to the area around Rome. This is significant. While the visit to Rome is mentioned three times explicitly and at least once implicitly in 24b, c, and d, the journey to Spain is only mentioned once and for the first time in 15:24a. Further, the condition, verbatim “if of you (the addresses in Rome) first (!)” (ἐὰν ὑμῶν πρῶτον) in 15:24d should be noted. No commentator highlights the expression ἐὰν ὑμῶν πρῶτον, and Longenecker and Dunn do not even translate the word πρῶτον.\footnote{667} It would be better to translate the expression as “if of you first (!)”, and read it as an indication that the precondition for his travel to Spain is that Paul will “first” be fulfilled or replenished by the addressees.

In addition, Paul explains in 15:28 that, following his trip to Jerusalem, he will start his journey to Spain via the addressees in Rome. It is followed in 15:29 by the emphatic and significant statement that “I (Paul) know that” (οἶδα δὲ ὅτι) “coming to you (the addressees in Rome) … I shall come” (ἐρχόμενος πρὸς ὑμᾶς … ἐλεύσομαι). Commentators often do not see this expression as important. For example, Jewett only points to “(t)he awkwardness of this formulation”, and Longenecker regards the statement in 15:29 as a “confidence formula” without further explanations.\footnote{668} Dunn, though, finds “something of a tone of καύχησις” (boasting) in the statement,\footnote{669} and Otto Michel gives more importance to this passage.\footnote{670} In contrast to Jewett and Longenecker, I regard the clause in Rom 15:29 as an emphatic statement of Paul’s coming to Rome.

\footnote{666} Once explicitly in 15:22, once in 23, three times in 24, once in 28, twice in 29, and twice explicitly in 32; In addition, once, possible twice, implicitly in 24.
\footnote{667} Longenecker, R. N. 2016, 1023, translates 15:24d: “after I have enjoyed your company for a while”; Jewett, R. 2007, 918, “after I first have the full pleasure of your company for a while”. Dunn, J. D. G. 1988: “once I have had the full pleasure of being with you for a time”, without “first”. Cranfield, C. E. B. 1979, 750: “having first in some measure had my fill of your company”.
\footnote{668} Longenecker, R. N. 2016, 1047; Jewett, R. 2007, 932-33.
\footnote{669} Dunn, J. D. G. 1988, 877.

on the march. LSJ, συναναπαύομαι, 1695, 115; Thayer, J. H. 2007 (1896), ibid., 601, 40-41; BDAG, ibid., 965, 69.
The double phrase “coming to the addressees … I shall come!” is a central thematic summary and closing marker.671

Thus, in Rom 15:22-29 in explaining his plans to go to both Jerusalem and Spain, Paul’s eagerness to come, to visit, and to establish a close relationship with the addressees in Rome, seems to be more emphasised because of the frequent recurrences of this theme in the text. As we saw above, at the conclusion of Ch. 5.1, on the textual arrangement of the three units in 15:22-33, Paul’s travel to Rome is significantly marked by its positions in the text. References to his journey to Rome both begin and end 15:22-24, close 15:25-29, and conclude the admonition in 15:32, just before the final peace wish. This position at the beginning and the end of a text passage is a strong indication of the importance of this theme.

However, many scholars see a problem with a missiological theme to the people in Rome, since the addressees are already believers, although not as a result of Paul’s apostolic work. In their view, the general principle, stated in Rom 15:20 that Paul does not proclaim the good news where Christ has already been named, causes this problem. The implication follows that Paul would not proclaim in Rome, as Jewett argues and Longenecker seems to follow (although not clearly).672 In contrast, Cranfield and Dunn argue against such a general principle,673 and I agree with them. Even though Paul’s apostolic commission is to break new ground, and his call is primarily to be an apostle in the new territories among the nations, it is not reasonable to understand what is stated in 15:20-21 to imply that Paul never proclaimed the good news to those who were already believers in Christ. There are several reasons (to be elaborated in Chs. 7, 8 and 9) and one such reason has already been indicated, in Ch. 2.2, regarding Paul’s apostolic strategy not to work alone, but if possible to start in the synagogues, and to collaborate with a network, based on those who were already believers. In addition, and sufficient for the discussion here about the end of the letter body, the reason explained, in 15:20-21, why Paul has been hindered so many times to come to Rome is not some general principle, but his previous work for the good news in the East, a work which is now completed. The inferential conjunction διό in 15:22, and the words τόπος and κλίμα in 15:23, refer back to Paul’s description of his previous work from Jerusalem all the way to Illyricum in 15:19b-21. Since that work now is fulfilled, Paul can come to Rome to begin his work in the West, once he has also completed his journey to Jerusalem.

672 Jewett, R. 2007, 915-17; Longenecker, R. N. 1042-43.
673 Cranfield, C. E. B. 1979, 765; Dunn, J. D. G. 1988, 865, 869;
674 Cranfield, C. E. B. 1979, 766
Moreover, and most importantly, neither the journey to Spain, nor to Jerusalem, is mentioned in the opening and introduction to the Letter to the Romans, but only here at the end of letter body. By contrast, Paul’s eagerness to come and visit and proclaim the good news in Rome is explicitly mentioned four times in Rom 1:10, 11, 13, and 15. Besides, Paul refers to the Roman addressees by the personal pronoun “you” (ὑμεῖς) an additional four times, twice in the ἵνα-clause in 1:11, once in 1:12 and once in the ἵνα-clause in 1:13, all related to his activities in Rome. See Ch. 4 above for further details on this.

**In summary**, it should be noted that, even though his imminent travel to Jerusalem is described, and his future plans for a mission to Spain is mentioned, Paul’s plan to come and visit Rome is more prominent in the text. Compared to the journeys to Jerusalem and Spain, his coming to Rome is repeated more frequently in an emphasized way at the end of the letter body. The position in the text gives further significance to the travel to Rome. To come to Rome both opens and closes the textual unit 15:22-24, and the entire description of his future travel plans in 15:22-29. The meta-propositional clause in 15:29 stresses Paul’s coming to Rome: “but I know (!)” that “coming to you the addressees in Rome … I will come” with the fullness of blessings of Christ. Coming to Rome is the content of the final ἵνα-clause in 15:32 in the last textual unit of the letter body. In addition, the travel to Rome is mentioned in the letter opening and introduction, whereas Jerusalem and Spain are not mentioned at all in those passages. Taken together, these points indicate Paul’s eagerness to come and visit the addressees in Rome and show the utmost significance of that visit at the end of the letter body. This is the third observation (C) for the purpose of Romans.

**(D) The necessity of being a servant of Christ for the good news of God**

There is a focus in the end of the letter body on Paul’s call to serve the good news of God, and to be a servant of Jesus Christ. Not only is the call of Paul central, but also the call of all the believers to be servants of the good news.

The centrality of the good news of God regarding Jesus Christ in the end of the letter body was indicated previously in observation (A). The good news (τὸ εὐαγγέλιον) is a significant part of the subject matter in Rom 15:16-21. Paul’s call in 15:16, 19b, is to be a public servant of Jesus Christ (λειτουργός Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ) into the nations, and to make a holy service (ἱερουργέω) of the good news of God, and to fulfill (πληρόω) the good news of Christ, the

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Messiah. In addition, Paul takes pride (καύχησις) in Christ Jesus (ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ), in 15:17, for the things that pertains to God (τὰ πρὸς τὸν θεόν), and he talks (λαλεῖν) and acts or achieves (κατεργάζομαι), in 15:18-19a, only as the agent of Christ. Above all it is Christ, the Messiah (Χριστός), who is the focal point of the good news, and who accomplishes the hearkening of the nations (ὑπακοὴν ἐθνῶν) through Paul. This is achieved with word and deed (λόγῳ καὶ ἔργῳ), with the power of wonders and marvels (ἐν δυνάμει σημείων καὶ τεράτων), and in the power of the spirit of God (ἐν δυνάμει πνεύματος [θεοῦ]).

Therefore, it is an honour (φιλοτιμούμενος) for Paul, in 15:20-21, to bring or to announce the good news (εὐαγγελίζεσθαι) in the name of Christ, Messiah (Χριστός). This is the foundation on which Paul builds (οἰκοδομέω), so that all people may see and understand. The good news (τὸ εὐαγγέλιον) and to bring or proclaim the good news (εὐαγγελίζεσθαι) is a central theme at the end of the letter body.

To serve is most obvious as well in the message of the end of Romans, where λειτουργός, ἱερουργέω, and διακονέω, διακονία are different terms for serving the good news of God and Jesus Christ. It can be compared with other terms for serving in the letter opening and introduction, and most of these terms occur elsewhere in the letter.

To repeat from the discussion in Ch. 3 and 4, these terms have different connotations and express important nuances. The Greek words δουλέω, δοῦλος have the connotation of subjugation, to serve as slave.

The verb λατρεύω means to serve for a special purpose, to be in someone’s service, to serve a human being or God. And λειτουργέω refers to the public service of the people or the city, or can have a connotation of ritual service by a priest in the temple. Here, at the end of the letter body, Paul refers metaphorically to the ritual service of Christ. Similarly, the verb ἱερουργέω literally means to perform a holy service, often in the sense of offering a sacrifice. Here, it has the metaphorical meaning of priestly serving the good news of God.

Finally διακονέω, διακονία refer to the special personal activity of serving another human being through love and benevolence. To be the servant of Christ, and to serve together with Christ is significant. The fact that Paul uses different terms for service and to serve, both here at the end

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676 Cf. 2 Cor 12:11-12; Gal 3:1-5; 1 Thess 1:5; 1 Cor 2:4-5; 12:9-10, 28-30. Paul’s serving as the agent of Christ, is divinely approved. See also Kelhoffer, J. A. 2002, esp. 169-71.
677 See Ch. 3 and note 379.
678 LSJ, δουλέω, δοῦλος, 446-47; BDAG, ibid., 259-60; Thayer, J. H. 2007 (1896), ibid., 158-9; Cranfield, C. E. B. 1979, 50-51.
and in the opening and in the introduction of the letter body, is an indication of Paul’s total commitment to the good news of God regarding Jesus Christ.

Besides the call of Paul, the call of the believers in Christ to be a servant is equally important. Paul is a servant of Christ Jesus (λειτουργός Χριστοῦ θεοῦ) in Rom 15:16, and the believers in Christ in 15:27 are indebted or obliged to serve (ὀφείλουσιν καὶ … λειτουργῆσαι) the holy ones in Jerusalem. The admonition to the believers to serve is expressed elsewhere in Romans, and to be a δοῦλος, to perform λατρεία, to be and do διακονία, often occur in the context of the theme of offering themselves.683 The call of the believers to serve are not uniform but can be of different kinds, see for example Rom 12:5-8. All the different kinds of service are part of the gracious gift (χάρις) given by God,684 and should be shared with other people. To respond to the call to serve is therefore a crucial part of being in Christ. In this respect, all the believers should follow Paul’s example and ultimately imitate Christ, in 15:7-8, to be a servant of both God and humans.

In addition, in the end of the letter body, Paul describes how all the believers, both the addressees in Rome and others elsewhere, should help and support one another. This applies to all believers in Christ and is part of being a servant of the good news. The addressees in 15:14 are described explicitly to be full of good moral quality (ἀγαθωσύνης), to be filled with every knowledge (γνώσις), and able to put in mind, admonish, or advise (νουθετεῖν) one another. Even though this is expressed as praise or as a compliment, it is a characteristic that the addressees are expected to nourish and to keep strong. Paul further asks the addressees to assist or accompany (προπεμφθῆναι) him in his future work in 15:24c. To work and help one another is a prominent theme, and the believers who live among the nations and those in Judaea should strive to make a (holy) communion (κοινωνία), and to share (κοινωνέω) and help one another with both spiritual and earthly matters in 15:26b, 27.685 Further, it is likely that not only the addressees, but all the believers should struggle together (συναγωνίσασθαί) in their prayers, 15:30, and stay together (συναναπαύσωμαι) in order to strengthen one another in 15:32. All these desirable virtues are part of the demand for proper moral behaviour among all the believers in Christ. See more under the next observation (E) below. For the discussion here, to help and to serve one another is part of a mutual relationship in order to work together for a common task, the good news of God and Christ.

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684 Rom 12:6 ἔχοντες δὲ χαρίσματα κατὰ τὴν χάριν τὴν δοθεῖσαν ἡμῖν διάφορα, refers to all believers. 15:15b ἐπαναμιμνῄσκων ὑμᾶς, διὰ τὴν χάριν τὴν δοθεῖσαν μοι ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ, refers to Paul’s serving as the gracious gift that has been given by God to Paul.
685 For more on the assembly of believers in Christ being holy, see Regev, E. 2018; Wassén, C. 2011; Poorthuis, M. & Schwartz, J. 2005;
In summary: Paul and the addressees should serve the good news of God and Jesus Christ together, since through his life and death Christ has served all the believers for their benefit. The human call to serve is of various kinds and is performed to obtain the common goal that is the good news of God and to receive the fullness of the blessings of Christ. Therefore, the centrality of being a servant of Christ for the good news of God is the fourth (D) observation for the purpose of Romans.

(E) The significance of proper moral behaviour among the believers as the righteous ones in Christ

The call to all believers to serve the good news is not only a call to help spreading the message to attain an additional number of new believers in Christ. As has already been indicated in the previous discussions, the good news of God implies a direct response of proper moral behaviour from all the believers, who should help and support one another and show a number of good characteristics as part of the eschatological communion of the righteous ones in Christ.

As we saw above, in Rom 15:14, Paul expresses that the addressees themselves are full of good moral quality (ἀγαθωσύνης) and filled with every kind of knowledge (γνώσεως), and that they are able or strong enough (δυνάμεως) to keep each other in mind or to advise (νουθετεῖν) one another. This is not only Paul’s confidence in the addressees. It also refers to, and must be understood in the light of, the exhortations just before in 12:1-15:13. Paul admonishes the addressees and possibly all believers to help one another. The commendation in 15:14 is similar to what was expressed in Rom 1:8, 12 (see Ch. 3), regarding the addressees’ faith (πίστεως) and the implicit admonition there to keep and nurture one another’s faith. Here at the end, it is related to the addressees’ proper behaviour.686

Further, in 15:18b-19, Paul’s call to serve Christ and the good news of God is for the purpose of the hearkening of the nations (εἰς ὑπακοήν ἑθνῶν) in or with the power of the spirit (of God) (ἐν δύναμις πνεύματος [θεοῦ]). The reference to the power of the spirit of God can be associated with the definition of the good news of God regarding Jesus Christ in Rom 1:3-4. There, Jesus was appointed God’s Son in or with the power according to the spirit of holiness. The purpose of Paul’s serving was also expressed in Rom 1:5, where the gracious gift and apostleship given to Paul and possibly to others was for the hearkening of faith among all the nations. As we saw in the discussion in Ch. 3 observation (C), the hearkening (ὑπακοή) among the people of the nations, refers to an additional number of believers as well as to their new ethical life.

in Christ. Here too, at the end of the letter body, the expression “the hearkening of the nations” refers naturally both to the additional number of believers in the nations and to their new ethical life in Christ.

In Rom 15:26-27, Paul gives the reason for his journey to Jerusalem to serve the holy ones. Macedonia and Achaia are well pleased and have resolved (ἡδόκησαν) to make a certain fellowship or contribution (κοινωνίαν τινά ποιήσασθαι) for the poor of the holy ones (εἰς τοὺς πτωχοὺς τῶν ἁγίων) in Jerusalem. Since they have received a share of the spiritual “things” (ἐκοινώνησαν τοῖς πνευματικοῖς) from those in Jerusalem, they are now obliged to serve them with the earthly matters in return. The meaning of the terms κοινωνία and κοινωνέω is debated. According to lexica, the meaning can vary. Except here in Rom 15:26-27, the verb κοινωνέω occurs only once before in 12:13 in a list of preferred behaviour. Jewett understands the meaning in Romans and elsewhere in Paul’s letters to be “making financial contributions and sharing other resources” as part of a close “fellowship” of believers. The expression ὁ πτωχός τῶν ἁγίων then refers to the poor among the saints in financial terms. Other scholars have suggested that the genitive should be translated epexegetically, that is as “the poor who are the saints” which would be an honorific title for the believers in Christ in Jerusalem. The importance of the financial contribution to those in need is found in Paul’s other letters, in 2 Cor 8:4; 9:13; Gal 2:9-10, and possibly in Phil 4:15. The word κοινωνία also means fellowship, besides a money collection. The use of κοινωνέω, κοινωνία elsewhere in 1 Cor 1:9; 10:16; 2 Cor 6:14; 13:13; Gal 6:6; Phil 1:5; 2:1; 3:10; Phlm 6, means more generally to share, to be in communion and to form a close fellowship with others in Christ. However, most scholars translate the noun in Rom 15:26 as contribution, with reference to the collection of money. In the LXX, and related terms in the HB, the terms κοινωνία, κοινωνέω refer to a mutual relationship of a close bond, and to the joining together of two parts. The verb means to share, to take part, to have a share or to give a part. The noun refers to a fellowship, participation, or communion. Examples from LXX/HB of the joining of two parts are found in Exod 26:4, 6, 10; 28:7; with the nations in Gen 14:3; or in a common task in

688 LSJ, κοινωνέω, κοινωνία, 969-70; Thayer, J. H. 2007 (1896), ibid., 351-52; BDAG, ibid., 552-53.
690 See Jewett, R. 2007, 929 and note 81, for scholarly references. Jewett refers to other Jewish groups who maybe “used ‘poor’ as a designation of the elect”, e.g. in Qumran, 1 QM 11:8, 13; 4Q171 (4QPsA 1-2) ii 9; 1,3- iii 10.
691 Jewett, R. 2007, 918, 928-29, translates fellowship for κοινωνία; Longenecker, R. N. 2016, 1023, 1044-45; Dunn, J. D. G. 1988, 875-76; Cranfield, C. E. B. 1979, 772; all three translate collection.
Job 34:8; Ps 119:63. For the meaning of material participation in a mutual human relationship, see Wis 8:18.\footnote{TDNT (3), Hauck F., κοινός, κοινωνέω, κοινωνία, κτλ., 789-809.}

Even if the close context of Rom 15:26-27 relates to the collection of money for the poor of the saints in Jerusalem, a broader translation as fellowship or communion for the noun κοινωνία, and to share or to take part in for the verb κοινωνέω is possible. However, the choice is not decisive, and there is no conflict between the money collection and sharing in a close fellowship of believers.\footnote{Cranfield and Dunn (see the note above) understand the money collection as an expression of both “Christian fellowship” and “their common life in Christ”.} Paul’s call to serve the good news of God regarding Jesus Christ is for the purpose of the hearkening of the people of the nations, who have received or who take part in the spiritual things from the saints in Jerusalem. The believers among the nations are responsible for making a collection of money in return. It is possible that the term fruit (καρπός) in 15:28 refers to the money collection as such, but it is also reasonably a sign or a proof of the result of Paul’s work as an apostle, that is of all the new believers in Christ from the Eastern part of Roman Empire. All the believers in Christ should behave as the eschatological righteous ones in Christ, where their almsgiving, their money collection, would be a physical proof of that.\footnote{Dunn, J. D. G. 2009, 458-61, 933-34, 944-47, 970; Nanos, M. D. 1996, 50-56, 207-8, 261; Fredrickson, P. 2017, 87, 111, 163; Eisenbaum, P. 2009, 153-67, 252.} To repeat from the discussion above, according to Kyong-Jin Lee,\footnote{Lee, K. J. 2010, 324-25; See also Dunn, J. D. G. 2009, 458-61, 933-34, 944-47.} in Jewish practise almsgiving was associated with two of the most fundamental principles, mercy and righteousness. In the diaspora the gift shifted from gifts from the produce of the land to donations for the poor in the form of money. The discussion in Ch. 4 observation (C), regarding the fruit (καρπός) that Paul expects to receive or to acquire from the addressees in Rome as well as from the other nations, relates to this topic. Paul expects a changed behaviour and a new righteous life in Christ from all the believers. A similar meaning and expectation are reasonable here as well, at the end of the letter body.

Next, in Rom 15:29, Paul declares that when he eventually comes to Rome, he will come with the fullness of the blessing of Christ (ἐν πληρώματι εὐλογίας Χριστοῦ). Dunn relates the expression to the gracious gift of Christ to be given and shared with the addressees in Rome, expressed earlier in 1:11-12. Cranfield in addition relates the expression to both Rom 15:24 immediately before, and to 1:13, 15 in the introduction. In 15:24, Paul states that when he comes and visits in Rome, he wishes to have his fill (ἐμπίμπλημι) of or from them. In 1:13 and 1:15 Paul, in his service of the good news, wants to receive or to acquire some fruit among the Romans, and therefore he is eager to proclaim the good news also in Rome. For Dunn, the statement in 15:29 has the sound of boasting (καυχήσις). If so, the expression here alludes to Paul’s

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pride in the good news, previously in 1:16a. Further, the words εὐλογία, εὐλογητός, and εὐλογέω are used elsewhere in Rom 1:25; 9:5; and 12:14 (and in 16:18 to be discussed in Ch. 6). In Rom 1:25; 9:5, the adjective εὐλογητός depicts a characteristic of God. God is blessed and the source of all benefits, and the one who has the power to triumph over all things, see LXX Ps 40:14; 88:53. In Rom 12:14 the verb εὐλογέω is used as part of Paul’s many admonitions to the addressees in 12:9-21, to show genuine love, to bless (εὐλογέω), and not to condemn, those who persecute them, not to be conquered by the evil but to conquer evil with the good. Similarly, in the admonitions in 1 Cor 10:1-22, Paul asks if the cup of the blessing (εὐλογία), in 1 Cor 10:16, the one we bless (εὐλογέω), is not the communion (κοινωνία) of the blood of Christ? In addition, in Gal 3:8-9, 14, Paul talks about God’s promise that all nations shall become blessed (ἐνευλογέομαι) in Abraham, so that those of his (Abraham’s) faith will also be blessed (εὐλογέω). This is because Christ, the Messiah (Χριστός), has redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse himself for our sake, in order that the people of the nations may have the blessing (εὐλογία) of Abraham in Christ Jesus (ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ).

In the light of all this, it is reasonable that the phrase in Rom 15:29, “with the fullness of the blessing of Christ”, should mean that, when Paul comes to Rome, he will come with the blessings and hope of the good news of God and Jesus Christ. This brings all the benefits and has the power to save. However, it is also about the blessing of being in communion with Christ, which should be shared with others through good behaviour towards fellow human beings.

The final goal, hope, and promise for all believers in Christ is then conveyed by Paul in Rom 15:33. By helping, doing good things, sharing each other needs and developing the good characteristics, which is part of the good news of God, the God of peace (ὁ θεὸς τῆς εἰρήνης) will be with them all (μετὰ πάντων υμῶν). Then the ultimate peace, the “shalom” of God will be a fact all over the world. Paul gives emphasis to this by Amen (ἀμὴν)! See also the discussion in Ch. 3.2 observation (E), regarding Rom 1:7b, where the peace, the shalom of God, possibly refers to an aspired quality of the believers’ relationship with God, and also refers to people who live in peace with other human beings as part of their ethical news life in Christ. Many scholars understand Paul’s use of peace (εἰρήνη) to be related to the concept of shalom translated as εἰρήνη in the HB/LXX, e.g. in Lev 26:6; Num 6:26; Judg 6:24; Ps 29:11; Isa 26:12; Jer 6:15. The wishes for εἰρήνη and χάρις here in Rom 15:33, and later in Rom 16:20a and b, have some similarities to the initial wish of χάρις and εἰρήνη in the letter opening in Rom 1:7b. At the end and closing of the letter, as we saw above, the terms εἰρήνη and χάρις come in the reverse

Further, the wish for the peace relates, not only to the resolution of possible conflicts among the addressees, e.g. as maybe expressed in 14:1-15:6, but also concerns peace and reconciliation with God for all human beings, as explicitly expressed earlier in 5:1-11. According to Jeffrey A. D. Weima, peace, shalom, indicates Paul’s eschatological hope for the restoration of the fallen created order to its former perfection and glory, expressed throughout the letter in Rom 1:7, 2:10, 3:17, 8:6, 14:17, 19, 15:13, 15:33, and 16:20. This is a central theme of the good news of God about Christ.

In summary for the final observation (E) at the end of the letter body: the centrality of the good news of God regarding Jesus Christ in Paul’s message should be noted. The good news also includes at least an indirect demand for proper moral behaviour among all believers in Christ. They should help and support one another and give alms to the poor. This is a likely interpretation in the light of the previous ethical demands made elsewhere in the Letter to the Romans. By following these demands, the believers will be serving God and Jesus Christ in accordance with God’s will and thus become proof of the holy communion of believers and their new righteous life in Christ.

Summary of the end of the letter body

To summarise what can be perceived from the content and flow of arguments at the end of the letter body, in Rom 15:14-33, there are five observations found for the purpose of Romans:

(A) The focus is on Paul, his gracious gift to serve Christ, and to proclaim the good news of God
(B) Paul depicts his apostolic work in geographical terms, previously among the Eastern nations and in the future in the Western parts of the Roman Empire
(C) Paul’s Overriding Concern and of Paramount Importance for his Future Apostolic work is to Come and Visit the Addressees in Rome
(D) The necessity of being a servant of Christ for the good news of God
(E) The significance of proper moral behaviour among the believers as the righteous ones in Christ.

The focus on Paul, his gracious gift to serve Christ, and proclaim the good news of God that we saw in the letter opening and in the introduction of the letter body, also applies to the end of the letter body. What is unique here is the description of Paul’s work in distinctly geographical terms. He speaks of the Eastern nations and of the Western parts of the Roman Empire. Even if his imminent plan is to travel to Jerusalem and his future venture will eventually

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697 Longenecker, R. N., 2016, 1063-64; Byrskog, S. 2006, 123, 128.
take him all the way to Spain, his overriding concern, and of paramount importance for his future plan is to come and visit the addresseees in Rome as part of his apostolic work. We found this emphasis on visiting Rome also in the introduction to the letter body, but his travel to Jerusalem and Spain was not mentioned there at all.

The good news of God, and to be a servant of Christ are equally central themes of Paul’s message at the end of the letter body. To be a servant is expressed by different terms with many connotations. To be a servant is significant, not for Paul only, but for all the believer in Christ. To be a servant expresses the believer’s total commitment to the good news of God regarding Jesus Christ. Their common call to serve aims to achieve a common goal and to receive the blessings of Christ.

Finally, as we saw in the letter opening and introduction, the good news of God refers not only to teachings about the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ and to belief in this message, but also requires a response of proper moral behaviour from all the believers to help and support each other according to God’s will, and to act as a communion of the righteous ones in Christ. Both these aspects of the good news have the power to save all the believers, the Jews first but also the Greeks.

These five observations, at end of the letter body in Rom 15:14-33, both repeat significant aspects from the opening and introduction of the letter, and give some additional new information about the purpose of Romans.

The next step is the detailed analysis of the letter closing in Rom 16:1-27 in Ch. 6.
6. The Letter Closing in Rom 16:1-27

This chapter analyses the letter closing, in Rom 16:1-27, in order to see what information can be found for the purpose of Romans. In accordance with Ch. 1.2, this is done in two steps, first by studying the textual arrangement and the content, second by determining what observations can be made from the text and the content that give information of why Paul wrote Romans.

6.1 The Textual Arrangement

Most scholars agree that Paul’s letter closing in Rom 16 consists of the following five textual units. First, the commendation of Phoebe in Rom 16:1-2. Second, the long and unique list of greetings, in 16:3-16, to several specific persons or groups in Rome, including the instruction to greet one another with a holy kiss, and the greeting from all the assemblies of Christ. Third, the final exhortations and the double wish for peace and grace in 16:17-20. Fourth, the greetings to the addressees from Paul’s co-workers and associates in 16:21-23. Fifth, the last textual unit, the concluding doxology is in 16:25-27. The very last paragraph is contested. Views vary whether the ending is in 16:24 or in 16:25-27. From a text-critical point of view, scholars see this as an either-or choice with stronger external textual evidence for 16:25-27. For the text-critical issues in Rom 16 see Ch. 2.1.

In the commendation of Phoebe, in 16:1-2, Paul introduces, brings together as a friend, and (re)commends Phoebe to the addressees (συνίστημι δὲ ὑμῖν Φοίβην). Paul refers to her as our sister (τὴν ἀδελφὴν ἡμῶν) and as a servant of the assembly at Cenchreae (διάκονον τῆς ἐκκλησίας τῆς ἐν Κεγχρεαῖς). Paul wants the addressees to receive and welcome her (ἵνα αὐτὴν προσδέξησθε) in the Lord (ἐν κυρίῳ) worthy of the holy ones (ἀξίως τῶν ἁγίων)


700 Both Rom 16:24 and 16:25-27 are contested from a text critical point of view. E.g. P46, 1506, excludes both as part of Rom 16, but has the doxology after 15:33 and before 16:1 (1506 excludes the whole Ch. 16). Most other major text witnesses have either 16:24 or 16:25-27, with a stronger case for 16:25-27.
ἁγίων). He urges them to help (παραστῆτε) her in those matters she needs. Paul explains (γάρ) that she is a benefactor (προστάτις) of many including Paul. Perhaps Phoebe was of gentile background given her Greek name, even though her origin is uncertain. It is possible that she was a freed slave. Many Jews in Rome in the middle of the first century C.E. were slaves or former slaves who had been given Greek names. At the time of Paul, Phoebe was probably of some social position, wealth, and independence. She is the leader, or one of the leaders, of the assembly at Cenchrea, the harbour port of the city of Corinth, and she is possibly the bearer of Paul’s Letter to the Romans.

After the commendation of Phoebe, the first set of greetings in the letter closing in Rom 16:3-16 follows. The many greetings in 16:3-15 are different from those in 16:16a and b, since v3-15 contains a list of fifteen admonitions to the addressees to greet (ἀσπάσασθε) specific persons and groups of people in Rome on behalf of Paul. This long list of greetings in 16:3-15 is possibly the most unique part of the letter closing of Romans. Twenty-six (26) specific persons are greeted, of which twenty-four (24) are explicitly named. In addition, there are greetings to five specific groups, assemblies, or households of people. They are followed by two additional greetings, but they are more general. The first, in Rom 16:16a, is an admonition to all the addressees in Rome to greet one another with a holy kiss (ἀσπάσασθε ἀλλήλους ἐν φιλήματι ἁγίῳ). In the second in 16:16b, Paul conveys a greeting to all the addressees in Rome from all the assemblies of Christ, the Messiah (ἀσπάζονται ὑμᾶς αἱ ἐκκλησίαι πᾶσαι τοῦ Χριστοῦ). This greeting is another unique expression of Paul, both by form and content.

The next textual unit in Rom 16:17-20 is treated by Jewett as “a non-Pauline interpolation”. Jewett argues that 16:17-20 creates a break in the “flow and

701 Longenecker, R. N. 2016, 1064-65; Dunn, J. D. G. 1988, 886-87; Cranfield, C. E. B. 1979, 780-83; Jewett, R. 2007, 942-43, and n. 14; For Jewett, Phoebe is a most important person for Paul’s coming mission to Spain, and she is responsible for the preparation of the help needed from the Romans for this mission.

702 The different persons’ names, their possible ethnic origin and relationship to Paul have been discussed in Ch. 2.3 of this thesis.

703 Twenty-four named persons: Πρίσκα, Ἀκύλας, Ἐπαίνετος, Μαριώ, Ανδρόνικος, Ἰουνία, Ἀμπλιάτος, Ὀυρβανός, Στάχυς, Ἐρμῆς, Κατάριος, Ἑρμῆς, Πατροβᾶς, Ἑρμᾶς, Φιλόλογος, Ἰουλία, Νηρεύς and Ὀλυμπᾶς.

5 Un-named persons: τὴν μητέρα αὐτοῦ (mother of Ῥοῦφος) καὶ ἐμοῦ (and Paulus); and τὴν ἄδελφην αὐτοῦ (the sister of Ἱηρεῦς).

Five groups of people: τὴν κατ’ οἶκον αὐτῶν ἐκκλησίαν (those in the house-assembly of Πρίσκας and Ἀκύλας); τοὺς ἐκ τῶν Αριστοβούλου (those of the household of Αριστοβούλου); τοὺς ἐκ τῶν Ναρκίσσου (those of the household of Ναρκίσσου); τοὺς σὺν αὐτῶν ἄδελφους (the brothers together with Ασύγκριτος … Ἐρμᾶς); and τοὺς σὺν αὐτῶς πάντας ἁγίους (all the holy ones together with Φιλόλογος … Ὀλυμπᾶς).

704 Jewett, R. 2007, 975-77, 986-88, in contrast to most other scholars regards Rom 16:16b as part of the last greeting unit (16:16b + 16:21-23) of the letter closing, and 16:17-20 as a later interpolation and not original.

705 Cranfield, C. E. B. 1979, 796-7; Dunn, J. D. G. 1988, 899.
tone” of the greetings, and that it contains “direct contradictions to the preceding argument of Romans” with “non-Pauline” rhetoric and vocabulary.\textsuperscript{706} Most others scholars regard it as a part of the letter closing, e.g. Longenecker, Wölter, Weima, Jervis, Dunn, and Cranfield. The position taken in this thesis conforms to these latter scholars.\textsuperscript{707} With Longenecker, even though Rom 16:17-20 is somewhat different to what is found elsewhere in the letter, the paragraph does in fact relate to Paul’s previous argument in Romans and summarises some of the “major themes and thrusts” of what was written earlier.\textsuperscript{708} Moreover, Jewett’s argument is based only on internal evidence. The external text witnesses give a strong evidence that Rom 16:17-20 is original.

So, Rom 16:17-19 is treated as a separate textual unit with Paul’s special and final exhortation with an opening at a higher level.\textsuperscript{709} In 16:17, Paul urges or warns the addressees (παρακαλῶ δὲ ὑμᾶς ἀδελφοί) to watch out for (σκοπεῖν) and to keep away or deviate (ἐκκλίνετε) from those who create or make (τοῦς ... ποιοῦντας) dissensions and traps or stumbling-blocks (τὰς διχοστασίας καὶ τὰ σκάνδαλα) besides the teaching the addressees have learnt (παρὰ τὴν διδαχὴν ἣν ὑμεῖς ἐμάθετε). For (γάρ), in 16:18, such people do not serve the Lord Christ (τῷ κυρίῳ ἡμῶν Χριστῷ οὐ δουλεύουσιν), but their own belly (ἄλλα τῇ ἑαυτῶν κοιλίᾳ). They deceive or seduce the hearts of the innocent ones (ἐξαπατῶσι τὰς καρδίας τῶν ἀκάκων) with fair speaking and blessing (διὰ τῆς χρηστολογίας καὶ εὐλογίας). Paul explains in 16:19a that the hearkening of the addressees (ἡ γὰρ ὑμῶν ὑπακοὴ) has reached into all (people or believers) (ἐις πάντας ἀφίκετο). Therefore Paul rejoices over them (ἐφ' ὑμῖν οὖν χαίρω) in 16:19b, and wants them (θέλω δὲ ὑμᾶς) in 16:19c, to be wise into or about the good (σοφοὺς εἶναι εἰς τὸ ἀγαθὸν), but innocent or pure about the evil (ἀκεραίους δὲ εἰς τὸ κακόν).

In Rom 16:20a and b, Paul gives a double wish, or rather an assurance, by the particle “but” (δέ) which relate the verse to the previous unit. First, that the God of peace may soon crush Satan under the addressees’ feet (ὁ δὲ θεὸς τῆς εἰρήνης συντρίψει τὸν Σατανᾶν ὑπὸ τοὺς πόδας ὑμῶν ἐν τάχει). The prepositional phrase ἐν τάχει, interpreted adverbially as “soon”, is placed last, which gives emphasis to the expression. Then Paul wishes asyndetically that also the gift or the grace of the Lord Jesus may be with them (ἡ χάρις τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ μεθ' ὑμῶν). Rom 16:20a and b give a certain

\textsuperscript{706} Jewett, R. 2007, 6, 986-88; with more scholarly references in note 5, 986.
\textsuperscript{708} Longenecker, R. N. 2016, 1074. For more on this see observation (C) in Ch. 6.2 below.
\textsuperscript{709} Cf. with the opening in Rom 12:1 and 15:30; and see the discussion in Chs. 2.1 and 2.4 above.
eschatological tone and alertness to the entire letter closing, which draws attention and adds significance to Paul’s previous message.\textsuperscript{710}

In the next textual unit, in Rom 16:21-23, the second list of four final asyndetic greeting-clauses follows. First, the greetings from Timotheus (ἀσπάζεται ὑμᾶς Τιμόθεος), Paul’s co-worker (ὁ συνεργός μου), and from Lucius (Αὐκίως), Jason (Ἰάσων), and Sosipater (Ζωσίπατρος), Paul’s fellow Jewish kinsmen (οἱ συγγενεῖς μου). Second, the personal greeting from Tertius (ἀσπάζομαι ὑμᾶς ἐγὼ Τέρτιος), who has written the letter in the Lord (ὁ γράψας τὴν ἐπιστολὴν ἐν κυρίῳ). Third, from Gaius (ἀσπάζεται ὑμᾶς Γάιος), the friend or host of Paul (ὁ ξένος μου), and the whole assembly (at Gaius house) (ὅλης τῆς ἐκκλησίας). Finally, from Erastus (ἀσπάζεται ὑμᾶς Ἐραστος), the city administrator or treasurer (ὁ οἰκονόμος τῆς πόλεως), and the brother Quartus (Κούαρτος ὁ ἀδελφός).

The entire letter ends either with Rom 16:24 or 16:25-27. If 16:24 is original, including ἡ χάρις τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ μετὰ πάντων ὑμῶν ἀμήν, it should be regarded as Paul’s typical final benediction or wish for grace. If this is the case, Romans has two benedictions for grace in the letter closing, both in 16:20b and 16:24. This would be unique compared with Paul's other letter closings. The first one in 16:20b, with “with you” (μετὰ ὑμῶν); the second one in 16:24, with “with all of you” (μετὰ πάντων ὑμῶν) and a concluding amen (ἀμήν). Jewett argues that 16:24 is part of “the earliest published form of Romans” and understands the omission of “all” in 16:20b to be in line with the rest of the interpolation in 16:17-20a. Therefore, Jewett thinks that the grace benediction in 16:20b is also a later interjection and not original, but that the benediction in 16:24 with the reference to all the addressees is “completely consistent with the earlier argument of Romans”.\textsuperscript{711} The position of the current thesis, together with most other scholars, is that 16:24 is not original, but 16:20b is original and 16:25-27 is the final textual unit. This view is based on stronger external textual evidence.\textsuperscript{712} In the analysis below, Rom 16:25-27 alone will be studied in greater detail.

The textual arrangement of the letter closing of Romans is summarised in the fig 10 below.

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\textsuperscript{710} Cranfield, C. E. B. 1979, 803; Compare with the closing markers with similar phrases previously in 15:5-6, 13, 33; and also in 11:33-36; 8:38-39; 7:25; possible in a minor way also in 6:23; 5:21. All these phrases attract the readers’ and hearers’ attention, as markers of transition in the text. See Holmstrand, J. 1997, 31.


\textsuperscript{712} See Ch. 2.1 of this thesis regarding text critical issues for more on this.
The letter closing of Romans consists of seven textual units – the commendation of Phoebe in Rom 16:1-2; the first list of greetings in 16:3-15; the closely related greetings in 16:16a and b; the final exhortation to the addressees in 16:17-19; the assurance of the God of peace, and the wish for the grace of Christ in 16:20 a and b; the second list of greetings in 16:21-23; and the
final doxology in 16:25-27. The letter closing of Romans includes many of the letter conventions found also in Paul’s other letters.713 However, as with the letter opening (see Ch. 3), the letter closing in Romans is unique in many respects, and the size of the closing in Romans is significantly larger than in all his other letters.714 The next step is to discuss more precisely what significant observations can be perceived from the text and the content for understanding the purpose of Romans.

6.2 Observations Relevant for the Purpose of Romans

Jeffrey A. D. Weima argues fairly that “Paul’s letter closings are carefully constructed units”.715 Even though they show some similarities, each closing is unique in form and structure, and echoes concerns and issues and highlights key themes in the respective letter. So too in the Letter to the Romans.716 There are four special observations (A) – (D) in the letter closing for the purpose of Romans, described in greater detail below.

(A) The attention is on all the addressees in Rome, both the Jewish and gentile believers in Christ, and on Paul’s wish to establish a close relationship with them

Paul begins the letter closing, in Rom 16:1-2, with what scholars usually understands as the commendation of Phoebe. Paul introduces Phoebe to the Romans. She is a servant, a leader (according to Jewett) and a minister (according to Dunn, Fitzmyer)717 of the assembly at Cenchreae, and she is a benefactor of many including Paul himself. She is possibly the bearer of the Letter to the Romans. Paul urges the addressees to welcome and receive her, and to help her in the matters she has need of.

What is central here, and the first thing of five to be noted in observation (A), is Paul’s use of the cognate words συνίστημι, παρίστημι, and προστάτις.

713 Longenecker, R. N. 2016, 1053-54; Weima, J. A. D. 2010, 307-45. The commendation in Rom 16:1-2 is in part paralleled in 1 Cor 16:10-12; the greetings in Rom 16:21-23 is similar to the ones in 1 Cor 16:19-21; 2 Cor 13:12-13; Phil 4:21-22; 1 Thess 5:26; Philm 23-24; the exhortations in Rom 16:17-19 can be compared to 1 Cor 16:13-22; 2 Cor 13:10-11; Gal 6:17; Phil 4:8-9; 1 Thess 5:25, 27; Philm 20; the peace and grace wish in Rom 16:20 is analogous to 1 Cor 16:23; 2 Cor 13:11, 13; Gal 6:16, 18; Phil 4:9, 23; 1 Thess 5:23, 28; Philm 25.

714 The letter closing in Rom 16:1-27 consists of 425 words, cf. the opening Rom 1:1-7, which has 93 words. The letter closing in Romans is +70% longer than the second longest, Philippians, and +115% longer than the third, First Corinthians. Romans and First Corinthians are similar in total size (Romans +4% more words).

715 Weima, J. A. D. 1994, 156, 222.


The lexical meaning of these words are to (re)commend (συνίστημι) Phoebe, and to help or assist (παρίστημι) her, who is a (female) benefactor, patroness, leader (προστάτις) of many.\textsuperscript{718} All three are composite words, a combination of a preposition and a cognate word related to the verb ἵστημι with the primary transitive meaning: to cause to be, make to stand, to set, place, or bring, in a place or a position.\textsuperscript{719} They are all used in relation to Paul, Phoebe and the addressees, and they express Paul’s wish for a close personal relationship. Paul makes to stand, sets or places Phoebe “together” (συνίστημι) with the addressees (ὑμῖν), and by doing so he also brings them together with himself. Paul asks the addressees to be standing, set, or be placed “beside” (παραστῆτε) Phoebe in all her needs, and Phoebe is the one who stands or is set “before” (προστάτις) others. She is a benefactor, protector, and a guardian of many, including Paul himself. She may possibly be that for the addressees also in the future.\textsuperscript{720} So, this making to stand and to set together, besides, and before is directed both to the addressees and to Phoebe, and it expresses Paul’s wish for a close relationship and co-operation between them all. Phoebe provides specific evidence in the Letter to the Romans that Paul did not work alone, but preferably together with other people as associates and co-workers in his service as an apostle to the good news. Even if there is a special focus on Paul himself and his call as an apostle to the nations previously, in the letter opening, in the introduction, and at the end of the letter body, as discussed in Chs. 3, 4, and 5, there were also indications and a wish for a close co-operation and joint-venture in Paul’s apostolic work, e.g. in Rom 1:5-6, 12, and 15:30-32. The lists of greetings in Rom 16:3-15, 16a, 16b, and 16:21-23 are of special interest with regards to this co-operation in the letter closing, which will be discussed next.

Second, the fifteen admonitions in Rom 16:3-15 to greet specific persons and groups in Rome probably constitute the most unique part of the letter closing. This special way of greeting so many people, through the addressees themselves, by using the second person plural imperative, has no previous known parallel among any letters in antiquity.\textsuperscript{721} This must have been highly noted by the addressees. As we saw above, in Ch. 6.1 note 703, Paul asks that twenty-six specific persons should be greeted, twenty-four of which are explicitly named, as well as five specific groups of people. Those explicitly named are probably leaders, prominent or otherwise well-known persons among the believers at Rome, of both Jewish and gentile origin. Similarly, the

\textsuperscript{718} For the meaning of παρίστημι, προστάτις, and συνίστημι see LSJ, 1340-1, 1526, 1718-19; BDAG, 778, 885, 972-3; Thayer, J. H. 2007 (1896), 489, 549, 605.
\textsuperscript{719} LSJ, ἵστημι, 841; BDAG, ibid., 482; Thayer, J. H. 2007 (1896), ibid., 307-8.
\textsuperscript{720} Jewett, R. 2007, 946-8; Longenecker, R. N. 2016, 1065.
\textsuperscript{721} Jewett, R. 2007, 951; Cranfield, C. E. B. 1979, 783.
named groups are probably known among the addressees as well. Some of these persons are most certainly Paul’s associates, friends and acquaintances made during his previous missionary work, who are now leaders of the different assemblies addressed in Rome. All these greetings with the epithets given to each person have a strong character of commendation. For more on the different epithets, see the next observation (B) below. The greetings are a way for Paul to honour the persons named, but also to enhance Paul’s own standing in front of the addressees. Paul makes known his personal and friendly connections and relationship to well-known people and leaders in Rome publicly. This gives esteem and credit in the eyes of the addressees to Paul himself, his apostolic calling, and to his future missionary plans. By asking the addressees themselves to bring the greetings, Paul honours them as well. Instead of greeting them directly, Paul gives the addressees the responsibility to greet these leaders and prominent persons. This must have been noted, since many of the leaders were probably already present in the audience when Paul’s letter was delivered, read, and heard. Thus, the unique list of greetings signals Paul’s relationship with many of the people in Rome. It also indicates that Paul wishes to establish a future close relationship with both the leaders and all the believers in Christ in Rome. The reason is probably that he is eager to work together with all the addressees in his coming apostolic serving of the good news, as will be discussed under observation (B) below.

The third point of five concerns the admonition in Rom 16:16a to the addressees to greet one another with a holy kiss (ἀσπάσασθε ἀλλήλους ἐν φιλήματι ἁγίῳ), which further strengthens Paul’s wish for a close relationship. It was a widespread custom in Paul’s time among Jews and gentiles to greet one another with a kiss when arriving or departing. However, Paul’s qualification of the kiss as holy (ἅγιος) may suggest that this was a special way of greeting one another among believers in Christ. It was an expression not only of friendship and love, but also of reconciliation and peace, cf. LXX in Gen 33:4; 45:15; 2 Kgdms 14:33, and in the NT Luk 15:20. According to Weima and Jewett, Paul includes this specific greeting with a holy kiss at the close of letters in which conflicts or issues of unity among believers have been treated or are important. Besides Romans, both scholars also refer to First and Second Corinthians, and First Thessalonians. However, this argument is not necessary altogether valid. Galatians, which many scholars read as a letter of

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722 Longenecker, R. N. 2016, 1065-66; Dunn, J. D. G. 1988, 891; Cf. Jewett, R. 2007, 951-2, n. 10. See also Ch. 6.1 above, and previously in Ch. 2.3, regarding the addressees in Rome.
725 There is a greeting with a holy kiss also in 1 Cor 16:20b; 2 Cor 13:12a; 1 Thess 5:26. If this special way to greet other believers with a holy kiss in a letter was invented by Paul, or something common among all believers in Christ is uncertain. A similar practise (a greeting with a kiss of love) can be found in 1 Pet 5:14a.
conflict, does not have such a greeting. Even though there may have been different opinions and beliefs among the Romans, the focus here in Rom 16:16a is on Paul’s wish for unity and a close relationship with the believers in Rome. The admonition to the addressees in Romans to greet one another with a kiss shows Paul’s effort to be included and become part of the communities in Rome. If this letter and admonition was delivered by Phoebe, it would also include her in their fellowship.

Fourth, the greetings to the addressees in 16:16b from all the assemblies of Christ (ἀσπάζονται ύμᾶς αἱ ἐκκλησίαι πάσαι τοῦ Χριστοῦ) is another unique expression in the Letter to the Romans. It occurs nowhere else in Paul’s letters. The assembly of God (ἡ ἐκκλησία τοῦ θεοῦ) is used more often. It was not unusual for Paul to send greetings from different congregations, for example in 1 Cor 16:19, which has greetings from the congregations in Asia, and from the assembly in the household of Aquila and Prisca. Here, in the letter to Rome Paul speaks for all (πᾶσαι) the assemblies of believers in Christ, which probably refers to all those in Achaia, Macedonia, Galatia and Syria, where Paul has worked as an apostle until now. It reinforces Paul’s apostleship to the nations and his completed mission in the East. However, Jeffrey A. D. Weima and Robert N. Longenecker argue that this particular greeting is “an implied challenge” to the addressees in Rome to recognize “the authority of Paul’s apostleship” and to “establish his authority” over the Roman assemblies. This is not a probable conclusion from the expression in the text. Rather, with Cranfield, Paul’s purpose here is to further strengthen and give weight to the message of unity, and to bind together all the believers in Christ by the bond of love. By this expression, the Romans become related to the believers in all these assemblies. It should be noted that all (πᾶσαι) is placed between the assemblies (αἱ ἐκκλησίαι) and the genitive, of Christ (τοῦ Χριστοῦ). This makes the second part of the expression “all of the Christ”

728 The expression ἡ ἐκκλησία τοῦ Χριστοῦ does not occur in the rest of NT, but ἡ ἐκκλησία τοῦ θεοῦ occurs in 1 Cor 1:2; 10:32; 11:16, 22; 15:9; 2 Cor 1:1; Gal 1:13; 1 Thess 2:14, or ἡ ἐκκλησία ἐν θεῷ in 1 Thess 1:1. Cf. Gal 1:22, αἱ ἐκκλησίαι τῆς ιουδαίας αἱ ἐν Χριστῷ, which is closest to the expression found in Rom 16:16b.
729 1 Cor 16:19 - ἀσπάζονται ύμᾶς αἱ ἐκκλησίαι τῆς Ασίας ἀσπάζεται ύμᾶς ἐν κυρίῳ πολλὰ Ἀκύλας καὶ Πρίσκα σὺν τῇ κατ’ οἶκον αὐτῶν ἐκκλησίᾳ.
730 Longenecker, R. N. 2016, 1070-1; Weima, J. A. D. 2010, 335.
731 Longenecker, R. N. 2016, 1070-1; Weima, J. A. D. 1994, 227; ibid., 2010, 334-5. The quotations are from Weima (1994), and are referred to by Longenecker. Cf. with Dunn, J. D. G. 1988, 899, who says somewhat cautiously: “The greeting thus has a ‘political’ overtone: Paul speaks for all these churches, and they are behind him in his mission”; It is fair to argue that Paul’s assemblies are behind him in his mission, but it is not evident what Dunn means by “‘political’ overtone.”
(πᾶσαι τοῦ Χριστοῦ) emphatic, highlighting both “all” and “of Christ”, and indicates the overall unity of all the assemblies of Christ, all the assemblies of believers that are in the domain of Christ. This strengthens the observation that Paul strives for a close relationship with all the believers in Christ in Rome.

The fifth and final point that should be noted is the second list of greetings in 16:21-23, which includes personal greetings (ἀσπάζεται) to all the addressees from eight specific persons. Timotheus, Lucius, Jason, and Sosipater are all close associates of Paul who now reside with him (in Corinth). Also Tertius, the amanuensis of the letter, and Gaius, Erastus, and Quartus, who are prominent persons and associates. What is unique in Romans compared with Paul’s other letters is this long list of eight specific persons directly associated with him. It is reasonable to consider all these to be Paul’s co-worker, associates, or fellow Jews, or the amanuensis (Tertius) of the Letter to the Romans, even though none of them was mentioned earlier in the letter opening in Rom 1:1-6. Finally, besides being proper greetings to the addressees, they are together with the commendation of Phoebe above important evidence and a signal to the addressees that Paul does not work alone. In his apostolic work, Paul always worked together with others as a team. It is possible that the plan was for some of the persons mentioned to be part of, help with, or in some other way lend support to Paul’s coming apostolic work in the West together with all the believers in Rome.

In summary, the first observation (A) in the letter closing depicts Paul’s apostolic mission as a joint venture with many people involved, which require a close relationship between them. They should help one another in the task of bringing or proclaiming the good news of God regarding Jesus Christ to the people of the nations, to people of both Jewish and gentile origin. This will also involve the addressees in Rome in the future apostolic work in the West.

Paul’s underlying missiological message and the importance of working together will be discussed further in the next observation (B).

733 There is no similar construction within the Pauline corpus, or in the NT as a whole, see Moulton, W. F. and Geden, A. S. 2002, ἐκκλησία, 330-31, πᾶς, 842-56. The usual predicate position is πᾶσαι αἱ ἐκκλησίαι, e.g. in Rom 16:4; 1 Cor 14:33; Eph 1:22; Rev 2:23; and only once αἱ ἐκκλησίαι πᾶσαι, in 1 Cor 7:17; but never followed by a genitive attribute, like τοῦ Χριστοῦ in Rom 16:16b. The closest parallel construction is Rev 13:12, τὴν ἐξουσίαν τοῦ πρῶτου θηρίου πᾶσαν, with πᾶς last, but not in between as in Rom 16:16b.

734 Jewett, R. 2007, 977-84; Longenecker, R. N. 2016, 1083; Dunn, J. D. G. 1988, 908-12.

735 1 Cor 16:19-21 names two specific persons, besides a number of groups; 2 Cor 13:12 no specific persons, just one group; Galatians do not have any greetings at all; Phil 4:21-22 only two groups; and 1 Thess 5:26 has no specific person.

736 Jewett, R. 2007, 975-6. This is a possibility, but it is not certain.
(B) Paul’s underlying message is missiological in character and the apostolic call and mission is a joint venture

Under the second observation (B) for the purpose of Romans, the missiological character in the letter closing should be noted. It is expressed through Paul’s references to believers in Christ in the letter closing and the epithets used for them, but also through themes in both the final admonitions and in the concluding doxology. It depicts the mission to spread the good news of God regarding Jesus Christ among the nations as a teamwork. Particularly three points speak in favour for this.

First, the commendation of Phoebe, in Rom 16:1-2, explains that she is a servant (διάκονος) of the assembly at Cenchreae and a benefactor (προστάτις) of many, including Paul (see above). She might be a leader or a minister at Cenchreae, and she is a prominent person. She is the first person mentioned and is thus given the most prominent position of all persons in the letter closing. She is important for Paul and for his message to the Romans. Therefore scholars often propose that she is the one who delivers the Letter to the Romans. Longenecker believes that she is also the one who will present the message of the letter to the addressees, and explain its meaning in greater detail. Whether the term servant (διάκονος) has a further missiological connotation is debated. The term διάκονος and cognate words are used in a missional context and for Paul’s work as an apostle in Rom 11:13; 12:7; 13:4; 15:25, 31, and elsewhere in 1 Cor 3:5; 2 Cor 3:3, 6; 6:4; 11:8, 15, 23. For more on the call to serve of Paul and others, see Ch. 5, observation (A) and (D). Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza argues that a διάκονος “is a missionary entrusted with preaching and tending churches”, and Jewett contends that “it is no longer plausible to limit her role to philanthropic activities”, even though for him “it seems more likely that she functioned as a local leader rather than as a travelling missionary”. For the discussion here, the use of the epithet benefactor, patroness, or guardian (προστάτις) shows that Phoebe has helped Paul before, and has probably been involved in Paul’s previous apostolic work and mission in the East. The explanation that she is now a servant (διάκονος) at Crencea, a leader or a minister of the assembly, indicates that she has participated in

737 See also Vollmer, T. A. 2018. Vollmer’s work is a specialised analysis of Rom 8:26 in its letter context, and he properly grounds the analysis in the light of what he understands as Paul’s missiological purpose. Vollmer discusses Paul’s missional language, in ibid., 72-93.
Paul’s work for the good news in the area around Corinth, at least at Cenchreae and possibly elsewhere as well. It is therefore legitimate to deduce from the paragraph with the commendation of Phoebe that she will have a role in Paul’s coming apostolic work in the West as well. If Phoebe is the one who brings the message of the letter, this is in itself an act of mission. Paul’s exhortation to the addressees to help or assist her in any way she needs (ἐν ᾧ ὑμῶν χρῄζῃ πράγματι) probably implies that the addressees should also involve themselves in the coming work of mission together with Paul and Phoebe.\footnote{Jewett, R. 2007, 948. He understands Phoebe to be “the patroness of the Spanish mission”.}

The second point is that a number of epithets with a missiological connotation are used for many of the specific persons mentioned in the greetings in Rom 16. The epithets refer both to prominent persons and leaders in Rome and to Paul’s associates in Corinth (or wherever Paul was when he wrote the Letter to the Romans). Four epithets are especially telling. First (1), the epithet the (one) who work together with, or the co-worker (συνεργός), with the added prepositional phrase in Christ Jesus (ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ), is used for Prisca and Aquila and Uranus, and for Timothis (as a co-worker). Elsewhere Paul uses the same epithet (συνεργός) in a missional context for himself and Apollos in 1 Cor 3:9, for himself, Silvanus, Timotheus, and Titus in 2 Cor 1:24, 8:23, for Epaphroditos in Phil 2:25, and for Timotheus in 1 Thess 3:2. Jewett understands the epithet co-workers in Christ Jesus to be “technical language for missionary colleagues”.\footnote{Vollmer, T. A. 2018, 80.}

Thomas A. Vollmer believes that Paul uses the epithet in many greetings in order “to solicit support from the Romans to become fellow workers themselves”.\footnote{Most commentators today have Junia as a woman, so also “(m)any ancient commentators up to the twelfth century”, Fitzmyer, J. A. 1993, 735, and more recently Vollmer, T. A. 2018, 79-80.} Next (2), the epithet apostle (ὁ ἀπόστολος) is used for Andronicus and Junia. They are even notable or outstanding among the apostles (εἰσιν ἐπίσημοι ἐν τοῖς ἀποστόλοις).\footnote{Jewett, R. 2007, 957, with notes for further references; also Fitzmyer, J. A. 1993, 735, and more recently Vollmer, T. A. 2018, 79-80.} Andronicus and Junia became believers in Christ (ἐν Χριστῷ) before Paul. According to Jewett, they had functioned previously in the Eastern mission, and “(i)t seems quite likely that they had missionized in Rome”.\footnote{Vollmer, T. A. 2018, 80.} Further (3), the verb to work hard

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\footnote{Jewett, R. 2007, 948. He understands Phoebe to be “the patroness of the Spanish mission”.}

\footnote{Jewett, R. 2007, 957, with notes for further references; also Fitzmyer, J. A. 1993, 735, and more recently Vollmer, T. A. 2018, 79-80.}

\footnote{Vollmer, T. A. 2018, 80.}

\footnote{Most commentators today have Junia as a woman, so also “(m)any ancient commentators up to the twelfth century”, Fitzmyer, J. A. 1993, 737. For example John Chrysostom (347-407 C.E.), In epistolam ad Romanos 31.2, PG:60.669-70, (TLG-database), who states about Andronicus and Junia being apostles that – καίτοι καὶ τὸ ἀποστόλους εἶναι μέγα τὸ δὲ καὶ ἐν τούτοις ἐπίσημοι εἶναι ἐννόησον ἡγήκαν ἐγκώμιον ἐπίσημοι δὲ ἦσαν ἀπὸ τῶν ἔργων ἀπὸ τῶν κατορθωμάτων βαβαί πόση τῆς γυναικὸς ταύτης ἡ φιλοσοφία ὡς καὶ τῆς τῶν ἀποστόλων αξιωθῆναι προσηγορίας – “indeed (!), also to be apostles is great, but to be also outstanding among those (the apostles), you must consider how great a song of praise that is. Outstanding they were by (their) deeds, or works, (and) by (their) virtuous actions. Oh wonder (!), how great was (what magnitude had) this woman’s wisdom that also she was worthy of the apostles’ title, or name”. See also Belleville, L. 2005, “Ιουνίαν … ἐπίσημοι εν τοῖς ἀποστόλοις: Α Re-examination of Romans 16.7 in Light of Primary Source Materials,” NTS 51.2, 231–249.}

(κοπιάω) is a characteristic of Miriam in the third greeting, with the addition “much … for you” (πολλὰ … εἰς ὑμᾶς) that is for the addressees. It is also used of Tryphaina, Tryphosa, and Persis, three women who had worked hard in the Lord (ἐν κυρίῳ). According to Jewett, to work hard (κοπιάω) is a “technical expression” for an “evangelist” and a term for “missionary and congregational work”. ⁷⁴⁷ See the use of the verb to work hard in relation to Paul’s own apostolic work in 1 Cor 15:9-10; Gal 4:11; Phil 2:16; for other’s hard work in 1 Cor 16:15-16; 1 Thess 5:12. It strengthens the relationship between people and the term relate to the mission for the good news. The connection of the verb to the good news of God and Jesus Christ is moreover indicated by the qualifications given in Rom 16:6 and 12, “much … for you [the addressees]” and “in the Lord” (Jesus Christ). However, whether the verb κοπιάω means the same as to be an apostle and a co-worker, and whether it involves proclamation of the good news as an itinerant missionary, is uncertain. It should be further noted that, of all ten specifically named persons with the epithets co-workers, apostles, and as hard working in their missiological work, sixty percent (60 %) are women. Finally (4), the epithet and prepositional phrases “into, in Christ”, or “in the Lord” (εἰς Χριστόν, ἐν Χριστῷ, or ἐν κυρίῳ) points to the result, the new status and the established communion of believers. In addition, many of the in Christ/Lord-expressions are directly connected to the previous terms (1) – (3) discussed above, and it is plausible that all three epithets are related to some kind of missiological work for the good news and are most significant as such. To be “in Christ” is an indication, not only of the unity, position, or status as believers in Christ, but also a reasonable demand to be part of the spreading of the good news of God for the salvation of all. According to Wendel Sun, to be “in Christ” is “the foundation for mission”. ⁷⁴⁸ Longenecker thinks that the “laudatory descriptions” of all the persons mentioned in the greetings with all their epithets are related “to their past association with Paul and his Gentile mission.” ⁷⁴⁹ The four epithets used for the persons greeted, who are related to Paul in some way, are therefore evidence that for Paul, the missiological work for the good news is a joint-venture, a team work with many people involved, and Paul’s plan is probably to continue to work with a team in the future apostolic work in the West.

The third and the last point is that, in the final admonition to the addressees in Rom 16:17-21, and in the final doxology in 16:25-27, Paul takes up many major themes discussed previously in the letter, themes that are related to Paul’s call and apostolic work; his work in the nations (τὰ ἔθνη); for the good news (τὸ εὐαγγέλιον); the words of Jesus Christ proclaimed (τὸ κήρυγμα

⁷⁴⁷ Jewett, R. 2007, 961, 968, with notes for further references. Also Longenecker, R. N. 2016, 1068; and Fitzmyer, J. A. 1993, 737. Fitzmyer points to the uncertainty of exactly what this “voluntary, laborious work on behalf of the gospel” consisted in.

⁷⁴⁸ Sun, W. 2018, 177.

⁷⁴⁹ Longenecker, R. N. 2016, 1066.
Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ); including the teaching (ἡ διδαχή) learnt (ὑμεῖς ἐμάθετε); the revelation of the mystery or what is secret (ἀποκάλυψις μυστηρίου) and that now has become manifest (φανερωθέντος δὲ νῦν) through the scriptures (διὰ τε γραφῶν προφητικῶν); and made known (γνωρισθέντος) in accordance with the command of God (κατ’ ἐπιταγὴν τοῦ αἰωνίου θεοῦ); for the hearkening of faith (εἰς ὑπακοὴν πίστεως) into all the nations (εἰς πάντα τὰ ἔθνη). These two paragraphs in Rom 16 are double short recapitulations or references to the good news of God regarding Jesus Christ. This will be further elaborated under the next observation (C) below. For the discussion here it is sufficient to state that both paragraphs allude to the good news proclaimed by Paul in his apostolic work, and they underscore Paul’s missiological message in the letter closing.

In summary, it is reasonable to note the underlying missiological character of Paul’s message in the letter closing. The three points above provide evidence that Paul’s apostolic work is a teamwork. The work of spreading the good news of God among the nations is shared with others. That was previously so in the East, and Paul probably wishes to continue that for the coming mission in the West, beginning in Rome, and all the way to Spain. This is observation (B) for the purpose of Romans.

(C) Two recapitulations and references to the good news of God regarding Jesus Christ forming an urgent eschatological message

Besides the commendation of Phoebe and the lists of greetings, the letter closing consists of the final admonitions to the addressees in Rom 16:17-20, and the doxology in 16:25-27. They are two short recapitulations and references to the good news from God about Jesus Christ.

Four points in the admonitions in Rom 16:17-20 should be noted. First, in Rom 16:17, Paul urges the addressees to watch out (σκοπεῖν) for those who create dissentions (αἱ διχοστασίαι) and traps or stumbling-blocks (τὰ σκάνδαλα) in opposition to the teaching (παρὰ τὴν διδαχὴν) that the addressees have learnt and gained knowledge of (ἐμάθετε). The addressees should keep or turn away from (ἐκκλίνετε) those people. This implies of course that the addressees should not do such things themselves. A number of themes and terms are repeated from earlier passages of Romans. The preferred teaching (διδαχή) refers plausibly to the good news of God regarding Jesus Christ that the addressees have already heard and hearkened to since they are believers in Christ, as is expressed for example in Rom 6:17-18. These admonitions also

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751 Rom 6:17-18 χάρις δὲ τῷ θεῷ ὅτι ἦτε δοῦλοι τῆς ἁμαρτίας υπηκούσατε δὲ ἐκ καρδίας εἰς ὅν παρεδόθητε τύπον διδαχῆς ... ἐδουλώθητε τῇ δικαιοσύνῃ
refers or alludes to what Paul presents in Rom 9-11. The good news regarding Jesus Christ has caused different opinions among some of the addressees. The result is (temporary) unbelief and darkened eyes among some of the Jews rather than belief (πίστις), because of a stumbling block (λίθος προσκόμματος καὶ πέτρα σκανδάλου), in Rom 9:32b-33; 11:8-11.\(^\text{752}\) According to Paul, this unbelief among the Jews is part of God’s mysterious ways and plans for the rescue of all people, including the nations in Rom 11:25, 26, and 32. In another example in Rom 14:1-15:6, people with different faith (πίστις) and opinions on food and calendar day regulations should receive and welcome one another rather than creating separation or distinction (διακρίσις, ὁ διακρινόμενος), Rom 14:1, 23. They should not disregard (ἐξουδενέω) or judge one another (κρίνω), 14:3, 10, 13, 22, and not set or place an obstacle (πρόσκομμα) or a stumbling-block (σκάνδαλον, προσκόπτω) in front of their brothers and sisters, 14:13, 20. Rather, Rom 15:7 encourage them to continue to help each other to hearken the good news and to receive and take hold of one another for the glory of God, just like Christ.

Second, in Rom 16:18, Paul explains that such persons, who both cause disensions and stumbling-blocks for others, do not serve (οὐ δουλεύουσιν) the Messiah (τῷ κυρίῳ ἡμῶν Χριστῷ), but rather their own stomach (τῇ ἑαυτῶν κοιλίᾳ). These people deceive or seduce the hearts of the innocent ones through plausible and favourable talk. As we saw previously in Ch. 5 observation (A) and (D), to serve Jesus Christ and the good news of God is a central theme throughout the letter, and a specific demand on Paul and all the other believers as part of their new ethical life in Christ. This theme is further elaborated under the next observation (D) of the letter closing below. For the discussion here it is sufficient to say that, in Rom 16:18, Paul urges the addressees, through his explanation and by some bad examples, to exemplify the reverse behaviour, that is to serve Christ rather than just their own stomachs. This is a direct allusion to Paul’s admonitions to the addressees in 14:17-21 how to behave as part of their call to serve the Christ, see particularly 14:18.\(^\text{753}\)

Third, Paul explains further in Rom 16:19 and in contrast to 16:18 that the news of the addressees’ hearkening to or heading the good news (ἡ γὰρ ὑμῶν ὑπακοή) has reached (ἀφίκετο) to all (εἰς πάντας) believers. Compare the similar praises of the addressees in Rom 1:8 and 15:14. The significance of listening and to hearkening (ὑπακοή) the good news of God is expressed

\(^{752}\) Rom 9:32b-33 – προσέκοψαν τῷ λίθῳ τοῦ προσκόμματος καθὼς γέγραπται Ἰδοὺ τίθημι ἐν Σιὼν λίθον προσκόμματος καὶ πέτρα σκανδάλου καὶ ὁ πιστεύων ἐπ’ αὐτῷ οὐ κατασχυνθῆσεται (Isa 8:14; 28:16). Rom 11:8-11 – καθὼς γέγραπται ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς ὁ θεὸς πνεῦμα κατανύξεως ὀφθαλμοὺς τοῦ μὴ βλέπειν καὶ ὦτα τοῦ μὴ ἀκούειν ἕως τῆς σήμερον ἡμέρας καὶ Δαυὶδ λέγει γενηθήτω ἡ τράπεζα αὐτῶν εἰς παγίδα καὶ εἰς θήραν καὶ εἰς σκάνδαλον (Isa 29:10; Ps 69:23) ... λέγω οὖν μὴ ἔπταισαν ἵνα πέσωσιν; μὴ γένοιτο.

\(^{753}\) Rom 14:18 ὁ γὰρ ἐν τούτῳ δουλεύων τῷ Χριστῷ εὐάρεστος τῷ θεῷ καὶ δόκιμος τοῖς ἀνθρώποις.
throughout the letter in 1:5; 5:19; 6:16; 10:14, 16; 11:8; 15:18, 21. Here in 16:19, Paul rejoices in the addressees because of their hearkening, and ends with a wish that they should continue to be wise in the good things (εἰς τὸ ἀγαθόν) and pure and without blemish in the bad things (εἰς τὸ κακόν).

Rom 16:17-19 alludes to earlier passages of Romans. Paul reasonably wishes the addressees to continue listening to and hearken to the good news of God regarding Jesus Christ, and to keep away from those who try to persuade them otherwise, those who cause others to stumble or who create disensions. It is a recapitulation of the essence of the ethical demands in the letter body in Rom 12:1-15:13 and elsewhere.754 The addressees’ hearkening and service should continue to be testimony and good examples for other non-believing gentiles and Jews in Rome and the rest of the nations.

Fourth, Paul concludes the admonitions with two expressions in 16:20. He first expresses a hope, possibly even a conviction and yearning, that the God of peace (ὁ θεὸς τῆς εἰρήνης) may crush Satan (συντρίψει τὸν Σατανᾶν) under the feet of the addressees (ὑπὸ τοὺς πόδας ὑμῶν) soon, in the near future (ἐν τάχει). Then follows the characteristic wish that the gracious gift of the Lord Jesus Christ (ἡ χάρις τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ) may be with the addressees. Paul’s expressions give both a certain eschatological urgency in the present and a hope for the future.755

In the closing doxology, in Rom 16:25-27, Paul gives a glorious praise to God (잳; η δόξα εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας ἀμήν). This can be compared with 11:33-36, where Paul ends the first major part of the letter body with a similar hymn and a glorification of God.756 The doxology in Rom 16:25-27 recapitulates, as the admonitions in Rom 16:17-20, some of the central themes and major thoughts previously in the letter.

There are several similarities to the letter opening and the introduction of the letter body. God is the only one who is wise (μόνῳ σοφῷ θεῷ) and who has the power (τῷ δὲ δυναμένῳ) to strengthen the addressees (ὑμᾶς στηρίξαι .... θεῷ). Earlier in Rom 1:11, Paul expressed his eagerness to come to Rome to share some spiritual gift (from God) in order to strengthen the addressees. In the closing of the letter, it is God who has the (real) power to accomplish this, through Jesus Christ (ὁ θεὸς τοῦ Χριστοῦ). Compare also Rom 1:4 and 16b in the letter opening and introduction and the references to the power of God and Jesus Christ. This is in accordance with the good news (κατὰ τὸ κήρυγμα Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ), cf. 10:8, 14-15. It is further in

754 See also the discussion in Ch 4 observation (C) and (E) of the ethical teachings and demands throughout Romans, e.g. in Rom 2, 6, 12-15.
756 See also the briefier exclamations that end other parts of the letter body, e.g. in Rom 8:38-39.
accordance with the revelation of the mystery (of God) (κατὰ ἀποκάλυψιν μυστηρίου), cf. 1:17, 18, 2:5, 8:18-19, 11:25, which for all eternity (χρόνοις αἰωνίοις) has been kept secret or silent (σεσιγημένου), but has now, in our time, become visible or manifest (φανερωθέντος δὲ νῦν), cf. 1:19, 3:21-22, through the prophetic writings (διὰ τε γραφῶν προφητικῶν), cf. 1:2-4, 1:16-17, 3:21-22, 11:25-32. Finally, it has been made known (γνωσθέντος), cf. 9:22-23, in accordance with the command of the eternal God (κατ' ἐπιταγὴν τοῦ αἰωνίου θεοῦ … γνωσθέντος), for the purpose of the hearkening of faith (εἰς ὑπακοὴν πίστεως), cf. 1:5, 15:18, in (to) all the nations (εἰς πάντα τὰ ἔθνη), cf. 1:5, 1:13, 3:29, 4:17-18, 9:24, 30, 11:11-13, 25, 15:9-12, 16, 18, 27. A similar way of relating the good news to all people without difference (at least indirectly), to Jews (first) and also Greeks, is found in 1:16, 17, 18, 2:9-10, 3:9, 29, 9:24, 10:12, and to the circumcised and also to the uncircumcised in 2:25-29, 3:30, 4:9, 15:8-9. So, in this final doxology many thoughts, ideas, and themes mentioned in the letter opening, introduction, and the rest of the letter body are repeated. Longenecker states that the doxology “evidently was intended to highlight certain important themes and emphases” from what was “written earlier in the letter”. Dunn calls it a “summing up” of important themes discussed.757

Therefore, and in summary, it is reasonable to view both the final admonition in Rom 16:17-20 and the final doxology in 16:25-27 as two short recapitulations and references to the good news of God regarding Jesus Christ, which Paul proclaims to the people of the nations. It includes and alludes to several important themes and exhortations that have been discussed in greater detail earlier in the letter. Both express an eschatological urgency that sharpens and focus attention to the message of the letter. This is the third observation (C) for the purpose of Romans.

(D) There is a demand in the good news of God for proper moral behaviour among all believers, particularly to serve Christ and one another as a consequence of the new life in Christ.

In the admonitions, greetings, and summary expositions of the good news in the letter closing, as in the rest of the letter, all believers in their new life in Christ are expected to live a moral life and to serve. Six points should be noted.

First, in Rom 16:1-2, the addressees are urged to receive and welcome (προσδέξησθε) Phoebe in the Lord (ἐν κυρίῳ), as worthy of the holy ones (ἀξίως τῶν ἁγίων), and to help her (παραστῆτε) in all her needs. This admonition to welcome and to assist other people, not only Phoebe, but all believers

that are in need, is a requirement for all believers in Christ (ἐν Χριστῷ). Besides here in Rom 16:2, the verb παρίστημι is found previously in 6:13 (twice), 16, 19 (twice); 12:1; and in 14:10. It indicates the importance of standing by, being placed alongside, and to help other people throughout the letter. It is a general admonition to all who are in Christ to do good and, with the words of Rom 6:13, to become slaves of righteousness and to help one another. A similar admonition is given in 14:1 and 15:7 to receive or to lend a hand to (προσλαμβάνεσθε) others. It is an admonition to all believers to help fellow humans following Christ, 15:7, and God, 14:3.

Second, in the list of greetings to specific persons in Rome, Prisca and Aquila are described, in 16:3-4, as those who have helped Paul. They are co-workers (συνεργῶν) of Paul, and they have even risked (ὑπέθηκαν) their own lives, their neck or throat (τράχηλος) for the sake of Paul’s life (ὑπὲρ τῆς ψυχῆς μου). The verb ὑποτίθημι means to place, or set under, to offer as an expression of service.758 To be willing to give or offer one self for another being is praise-worthy in Paul’s view. The outmost example is Christ, whom they should imitate, cf. Rom 5:1-11; 8:28-39; 12:1-2.

Third, Prisca and Aquila are also describes as being in Christ Jesus (ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ). Throughout Romans the terms to be in Christ (ἐν Χριστῷ) and associated phrases: to be together with Christ, to be clothed in Christ, to be baptised into Christ, all express crucial themes.759 To be in Christ or in the Lord (εἰς Χριστόν, ἐν Χριστῷ, or ἐν κυρίῳ) are phrases used often in the letter closing. The expression in the Lord (ἐν κυρίῳ) occurs in 16:2, 8, 11, 12 (twice), 13, and 22. The phrase in Christ (ἐν Χριστῷ) is found in 16:3, 7, 9, and 10; and (coming) into Christ (εἰς Χριστόν) in 16:5. Those who are in Christ are Phoebe, Prisca and Aquila, Efaïnetos, Andronicus and Junia, Ampliatos, Urbanus, Apelles, those from Narcissus, Tryfania and Trufosa, Persis, Rufus and his mother, and Tertios the writer of the letter. According to Dunn, the expression “in Christ”, which occurs the first time in Rom 6:11, reflects a quality of life of those who share the character of Christ, and it is a depiction of the “eschatological humanity”, and their relationship to one another, which is defined in the ethical exhortations in 6:12-23.760 For Wendel Sun, these exhortations are an encouragement “towards righteous living”, a life “in light of this union” with Christ.761 With so many persons who are in Christ referred to in Rom 16, it is likely that Paul wants to remind the addressees and to give examples of believers in Christ, who live such a new righteous life described previously in the letter. This is a demand or an expectation of all believers, and an important observation in the letter closing.

758 LSJ, ὑποτίθημι, 1898; BDAG, ibid., 1042.
759 The importance of the idea to be “in Christ” is discussed as well in Ch. 3.2 observation (C) and (E), Ch. 4.2 (C), Ch. 5.2 (D) and (E).
760 Dunn, J. D. G. 1988, 324.
761 Sun, W. 2018, 174, 177.
Fourth, Efainetos is also called Paul’s beloved (ὁ ἁγαπητός μου) in Rom 16:5. Other persons referred to with the epithet beloved in the letter closing are Ampliatus, Stachys, and Persis. Prisca’s and Aguilà’s readiness to offer their life for Paul is an extraordinary way of expressing ones love to a neighbour and to serve a fellow human in the likeness of Jesus Christ. Everyone who is part of the communion of believers in Christ should strive for the spiritual gift of love, cf. 1 Cor 12:31-13:13. In the letter opening in Rom 1:7a, all the addressees are first of all characterised as God’s beloved (ἁγαπητοί). Love is an important theme and characteristic throughout the letter, e.g. in Rom 5:5, 8; 8:28, 35, 38, 39, and a crucial aspect of the admonitions, in 12:9, 13:8-10.

Fifth, the phrase to be hard-working (κοπίω) is another epithet in the letter closing, used for prominent believers, such as Miriam, Tryfania, Trufosa, and Persis. The term implies hard-working in Christ for the sole benefit of other people, for example Miriam in 16:6, who had worked hard for a long time, in many ways or things (πολλά) for the sake of the addressees (εἰς ὑμᾶς).

Sixth, the admonitions in Rom 16:17-19 are a summary and refers to the hortatory section of the letter in Rom 12:1-15:13, as we saw under observation (C) above. The teaching (διδαχή) in 16:17 refers not only to the teaching about Jesus, his life, death, and resurrection and what that means for those who believe, but also to the ethical demands that are an intrinsic part of the good news of God regarding Christ. Spreading and arguing for the good news should not create dissentions and stumble blocks but should generate cooperation and unity among believers. They should all strive for the good (εἰς τὸ ἀγαθὸν) and to be pure or innocent (with regard) to the evil (ἀκέραιος δὲ εἰς τὸ κακόν), 16:19. The overall purpose of the good news of God and the kerygma of Christ is described as the hearkening of faith (εἰς ὑπακοὴν πίστεως) among all the people who live in all nations (πάντα τὰ ἔθνη) in 16:26. The hearkening includes the addressees in Rome (ἡ ὑμῶν ὑπακοὴ ἐις πάντας ἀφίκετο) in 16:19. It will be a sign for all who believe and it is part of their service (δουλεύω) to the Lord Christ (τῷ κυρίῳ ἡμῶν Χριστῷ) in 16:18.

In summary, the importance of proper moral behaviour in the communion of believers in Christ (ἐν Χριστῷ) is stressed in the letter closing. This is part of serving (δουλεύω) the Christ our Lord (τῷ κυρίῳ ἡμῶν Χριστῷ), and part of their new life in Christ. This is the last observation (D) in the letter closing.
Summary and conclusion of the observations in the letter closing of Romans

First, it is fair to observe that there is a major focus on the relationship between the addressees, Paul, and his co-workers and associates. Phoebe especially is given a prominent first position in the letter closing. The unique list of greetings underscores the importance of these relationships as well. Second, there are two recapitulations of the message in the letter at large about the good news of God regarding Jesus Christ, where both its ethical and doctrinal part are highlighted. These two general points are confirmed by the four more specific observations found and discussed above.

(A) The attention is on all the addressees in Rome, both the Jewish and gentile believers in Christ, and on Paul’s wish to establish a close relationship with them.

(B) Paul’s underlying message is missiological in character, and the apostolic call and mission is a joint venture.

(C) There are two recapitulations and references to the good news of God regarding Jesus Christ that form an urgent eschatological message.

(D) There is a demand in the good news of God for proper moral behaviour among all believers, particularly expressed as service to Christ and to one another as a consequence of the new life in Christ.

So, it is valid to say from the letter closing that the missiological character of the message in the letter is still valid. The foundation for the mission and the call is the good news of God regarding Jesus Christ. The ethical demands of the good news for the believers in Christ are not opposed to this missiological message. To bring and spread the good news both by proclamation, and by the believers’ own behaviour as proper examples for others to follow, are equally important activities for a missiological purpose. The message relates Paul and his associates directly to all the addressees in Rome to achieve their common goal.

With this, the detailed analyses of the letter opening, the introduction to the letter body, the end of the letter body, and the letter closing, ends. Therefore, it is time to give a preliminary conclusion and thesis about the purpose of Romans in Ch. 7.
7. Preliminary Conclusion and Thesis about the Purpose of Romans

Previously, the four introductory and concluding parts of Romans have been analysed in detail in Chs. 3-6. Even though it is unique in many respects, the Letter to the Romans largely follows the ancient Greco-Roman letter conventions. Thus, Paul’s purpose when writing Romans should be reflected in these four parts of the letter. The Letter to the Romans was written for a special occasion and matter, within a certain historical and social context, and to specific addresseees in Rome. The historical and social context of Paul and the Letter to the Romans, discussed in Ch. 2.2, including the identity of the addresseees in Rome, discussed in Ch. 2.3, must be taken into account in order to understand the purpose of the letter. Therefore, here in Ch. 7, based on the previous analyses, a preliminary conclusion, and a thesis about the purpose of Romans will be given. For the approach and methods see Ch. 1.2.

Reading and hearing a letter was and is a linear process. This means that, for a reader or hearer of Romans, the letter opening would include Paul’s personal concerns and indicate his purpose for writing. The introduction of the letter body would provide further indications of the content and topics discussed in the rest of the letter, and of the reason for writing. The end of the letter body and the letter closing after the main parts of the letter would then recapitulate themes and important arguments discussed and would give additional clarifications about the purpose of the letter. Therefore, the following four questions must be considered in order to establish the purpose of the Letter to the Romans. (I.) What observations are related and common to the opening, the introduction, the ending and the closing of the letter? (II.) What additional observations in the opening and the introduction alone point forward to and indicate what to expect in the discussion and flow of argument in the main parts of the letter body? (III.) What observations at the letter ending and the closing alone recapitulate, bring further light on, and strengthen themes and arguments that have been discussed previously in the letter body? (IV.) What information regarding the historical and social context of Paul and the addressseees in Rome have a bearing on the conclusion and thesis about the purpose of Romans? With these issues in mind, the overall conclusion of the analyses so far will first be given in Ch. 7.1 and then the preliminary thesis about the purpose Romans will be formulated in Ch. 7.2.
7.1 The Conclusion of the Analyses

First, it is justifiable to conclude that the focus already in the sender part of the letter opening in Rom 1:1-6 refers particularly to Paul, to his apostolic commission and his call to proclaim the good news of God about Jesus Christ.

Further, in the introduction to the letter body in Rom 1:11, 13, and 15, Paul explicitly explains his reason and his eagerness to come to Rome and visit the addressees. Paul wants to share some or a certain spiritual gracious gift with the addressees in Rome. The spiritual gift refers to the good news about Christ, which he will bring to them, and this gift should be shared with the Romans to strengthen and establish them in their faith and conviction. It will be for the mutual encouragement of them all. The gift is thus connected to the good news of Christ, the message about Christ’s life, death, and resurrection. It is a life-changing gift that should be received in faith, and in contrast to wrongdoings and sin. The believers are urged to change their life, to live a new life in Christ in righteousness and love to God and to other human beings. Paul wants to receive or to acquire some or a certain fruit also among the addressees in Rome, as among other nations. It is the result and the visible effect of Paul’s shared gift, his bringing of the good news of God to the nations. The fruit probably means additional new believers, but it also refers to the new righteous life in Christ that all believers should embrace. Paul has obligations to many different peoples and nations and therefore he is eager to proclaim the good news also among the Romans.

Similarly, Paul’s apostolic work is given prominence at the end of the letter body, where Paul explicitly explains in Rom 15:15-19a that he has written the Letter to the Romans rather boldly and in part, not in full. This implies that the message of the letter, the good news of God, is sent to Rome in writing, but it also needs to be elaborated further and brought forward in full, with additional words, works, wonders and marvels in the power of the spirit of God, when Paul himself comes in person to Rome later on. However, he has written the Letter to the Romans to remind them of the gracious gift given to him by God, the gift to be a servant of Jesus Christ, the Messiah, into the nations, and to offer priestly and holy service to the good news of God, in order that the offering of the people of the nations will become acceptable and made holy in the holy spirit. Paul takes pride in Christ Jesus, and all his apostolic work is only possible as the agent of the Messiah. All the effort and work are for the hearkening of faith of all the nations, a thought similarly expressed in Rom 1:5; 15:18; 16:19, 26.

Second, the good news of God regarding Jesus Christ is defined and summarised in the opening and in the introduction. Paul gives information about the content of the good news, in Rom 1:2-4, and about its significance, reason and effect for all human beings, both Jews and gentiles, in 1:16-18. Some of the content and the important themes, and the significance and effect of the good news, are recapitulated at the end in Rom 15:15-19a, and in the letter
closing in 16:17-20, 25-27. In both the introductory and concluding parts of the letter, the good news of God about Jesus Christ consists of a doctrinal message about God’s act in and through Jesus Christ for the rescue of all who believe, both Jews and gentiles. The message also includes the ethical demands of the good news for a changed new righteous life among all the believers in Christ. Both aspects are equally important.

Third, besides the apostle Paul and the good news of God about Jesus Christ, the addressees in Rome are given a prominent position. Direct references to the addressees are made more than fifty (50) times in the opening, introduction, ending and closing of the letter, through the personal pronoun “you.” In Rom 1:13; 15:14, 30; 16:17, the pronoun is used in combination with the address brothers (and sisters). In the introductory and end parts of the letter, Paul gives thanks, praises, admonishes, and expresses his wishes, and in other ways directly addresses the Romans. A great number of specific and prominent persons in Rome are explicitly named and greeted in the letter closing in 16:3-15. They are Paul’s previous co-workers, associates or otherwise known to him, who are now living in Rome. The addressees, you, are collectively admonished by Paul to greet these specific persons. Taken together, this indicate that Paul wishes to establish a new close relationship and co-operation with all the addressees in Rome.

Fourth, in the introduction and at the end of the letter body, Paul expresses his apostolic work and future plans in specific missiological and geographical terms, Rom 1:10-11, 13, 15; 15:16-24, 28-29. His primary plan, described in the introduction, is to come West and particularly to Rome to preach the good news of God regarding Jesus Christ in the capital of the Empire and the area around. The overall goal is the hearkening of faith among all nations.

Fifth, at the end of the letter body in Rom 15:19b-32, Paul describes both his previous apostolic work and the ultimate destination for the future. Paul’s previous apostolic work in the geographical East from Jerusalem to Illyricum was coming to an end. He wants to complete it by an imminent trip to Jerusalem to bring the collection and to deliver the fruit to the holy ones, which he hopes will be well accepted by them. However, Paul is already well ahead with his plan to start and to fulfil the second half of his apostolic commission, that is, the coming mission in the geographical West, beginning in Rome, and eventually leading all the way to Spain at the far end of the Roman Empire. Paul’s missionary plan might have been inspired by Isa 66:19-20. However, it should be noted that, even though Paul’s immediate plan is to travel to Jerusalem, and in the future ultimately all the way to Spain, the predominant focus at the end of the letter body is still Paul’s visit to Rome. The travel to Rome is more emphasised. Neither Jerusalem nor Spain is mentioned in the opening and the introduction, but only at the end of the long letter body. This observation together with the explicit explanation of Paul’s purpose in coming to Rome, mentioned three times in the introduction of the letter body, in order to share some spiritual gift, to receive and acquire some fruit, and to the proclaim
the good news in Rome, adds primacy to Paul’s coming visit to Rome. The Jerusalem trip signifies the conclusion of Paul’s work in the East, and he is aware of the possibility that it may not be successful. It could even be threatening to Paul himself. However, Jerusalem is still secondary in the letter, although an important prerequisite for Paul’s coming visit to Rome. Also, the mission Westwards will, according to Paul’s plan, ultimately lead all the way to Spain, or to the end of the Western part of the Roman Empire. Spain is still secondary, or even third after Jerusalem. The primary focus in the introduction and the end of the letter body is Paul’s visit to Rome.

Sixth, Paul always worked together with other people in his apostolic work. Several previous associates and co-workers are named both in Paul’s other letters (and in Acts) and here in the letter closing of Romans in Rom 16:1-2, 21-23. The apostolic work was a teamwork, including many close friends, co-workers, and other associates, even other apostles, some of which were now in Rome. It was a teamwork in the East, and it would probably be so also in the mission Westwards, according to Paul’s plan. Therefore, it was of greatest importance to secure help from the Romans to be able to fulfil this plan, first for the work in Rome and the area around, and eventually all the way to Spain. This is a significant reason why he wrote the Letter to the Romans.

Seventh, as discussed in Ch. 2.2, the believers in Rome were a tiny minority. They lived among, or close to, the Jewish synagogues. The Jews themselves were also a minority among the great majority of many different non-Jewish people who lived in Rome. This is illustrated in fig 11.

![Rome](image)

Rome was the centre of the nations in the Roman Empire. The believers in Christ were a tiny minority, among the larger minority of Jews who did not
believe in Jesus as the Christ, among the great majority of unbelieving gentiles who lived in Rome. The believers addressed in Romans consisted of a mix of both Jewish and gentile believers in Christ, more likely a 50/50 percent situation, and not necessarily one group dominant over the others.

Thus, Paul wants to come and proclaim the good news of God regarding Jesus Christ in Rome, following his imminent travel to Jerusalem. There is plenty of work for Paul in Rome and in the surrounding area to increase the number of both Jewish and gentile believers, who would accept and believe in Jesus as the Christ, and who would also change or strengthen their way of life in accordance with the ethical demands of the good news. Since Paul’s primary responsibility (at least it was so in the East) was to be an apostle to the uncircumcised (non-Jewish people), and the main responsibility of other apostles was to the Jews, and because there was still so much to do, also in Rome, with little time left before the eschaton, Paul needs help from all the believers in Rome. The addressees are all called to serve and to help.

Finally, Paul’s has never been in Rome. He may have been known to some people, but the majority in Rome may never have heard much of him before, and particularly not of Paul’s proclamation of the good news of Jesus Christ. Therefore, he intends to present his message about God’s salvific plan for the Jews first and the gentiles already in this letter. Paul presents both the content of the message and of its significance and effect. By doing so Paul intends to strengthen the believers in Rome in their faith and their behaviour as believers in Christ. He also expresses the active response he expects in return, the fruit from all believer in Christ in Rome and elsewhere. The fruit is both additional new believers in Christ, and the response of a new ethical life in Christ among all believers, termed as the hearkening of faith. With this letter, Paul hopes to make the Romans willing to work alongside him in the future mission Westwards, first in Rome and eventually all the way to Spain. These two points, a strengthened and changed way of life in Christ among the Romans, and their willingness to work alongside him in the apostolic work are not conflicting. Besides the proclamation of the good news of God about Jesus Christ for the salvation for all, the duty to be good examples of how to behave with love for one another in their new life in Christ, is probably the best way to spread the good news among the nations. Paul is aware that his travel to Rome could be delayed again, depending on what happens in Jerusalem. Because of the eschatological urgency of the message with so little time left, Paul therefore begins his missionary work among those in Rome by sending the lengthy description of the good news in the Letter to the Romans.

Following this conclusion of the previous analyses in Chs. 3-6, within the historical and social context, given in Ch. 2.2 and 2.3, it is time to formulate the preliminary thesis about the purpose of Romans.
7.2 Preliminary Thesis about the Purpose of Romans

In a somewhat more compact form, the conclusion of the previous analysis in Chs. 3-6 above can be summarised in the following six points:

(A) Paul writes the Letter to the Romans as an apostle, called by God to serve Jesus Christ and to proclaim the good news among all the nations, including the Romans.

(B) The good news of God’s action in and through Jesus Christ, which is the power of God for the salvation of all who believes, is an intrinsic and essential part of the message of the letter.

(C) The good news is not only a doctrinal message of God’s action and salvation in and through Jesus Christ, but also includes a demand for proper moral behaviour among all the believers and to live the new righteous life in Christ.

(D) The good news is for all human beings, both Jews and gentiles, including the addressees in Rome, who were a mixture of Jewish and gentile believers in Christ.

(E) Paul’s future plan is missiological in character and involves his coming West, in particular to Rome to bring and to proclaim the good news of God regarding Jesus Christ.

(F) Paul wishes to establish a close relationship and co-operation with the addressees for his apostolic work in the West, with the overall goal being the hearkening of faith among all the nations, from Jerusalem and all the way to the end of the world, where Rome, the geographical centre of the Roman Empire, is the important future starting point.

Based on these six points, the preliminary thesis can be formulated as:

Paul writes the Letter to the Romans as an apostle, called by God to serve Jesus Christ and to proclaim the good news among all the nations, including all the people who live in Rome. Paul wishes to establish a close relationship and co-operation with the addressees for his apostolic work. The overall goal is the hearkening of faith among all the nations, from Jerusalem and all the way to Spain. Rome is the geographical centre of the Roman Empire and the starting point for the coming mission to the West.

The next step, in Ch. 8, is to test and assess this thesis against the content and flow of argument in the letter body at large, in order to be able to formulate the final thesis about the purpose of Romans.
8. Assessment and Test of the Thesis by Analysis of the Letter Body at Large in Rom 1:16-15:13

In Ch. 2.4, the preparatory analysis of the overall textual arrangement showed that the letter body of Romans consists of three main parts, the first in Rom 1:8-11:36, the second in 12:1-15:13, and the third in 15:14-33.

Here in Ch. 8, the two first main parts of the letter body of Romans will be studied in order to test and assess the preliminary thesis from Ch. 7. The study will be made by two steps. First, in Ch. 8.1, the textual arrangement and the content of the two first main parts will be analysed. In line with Ch. 1.2, Approach and Methods, and the terminology used in the current investigation: the main parts of the letter body, consist of one or several sections each. Each section consists of several textual units at different sub-ordinate levels. It should be noted that these terms are modern categories and not current at the time of Paul, and they are only used for this study of Romans. For the scope of this dissertation, the textual arrangement is limited to the sections of the two first main parts and the textual units at the next sub-ordinate level, following the introduction and up to the end of the letter body. The way in which these sections and units relate to each other in Paul’s flow of argument and line of thought is most important. The analysis of the content is also limited. Not every possible topic and subject matter with their many interpretative issues in the letter body will be discussed in detail. The study focuses on what is relevant for the evaluation of this thesis about the purpose of Romans with an emphasis on the overall progress in Paul’s flow of argument.

Second, in Ch. 8.2, based on the textual arrangement, the content and the flow of argument of the letter body, the actual test and assessment of the preliminary thesis will be performed. The previously formulated six points (A) – (F) from Ch. 7.2, which are the foundation for the formulated preliminary thesis, will be studied in Ch. 8.2 against the content and flow of argument in the first two main parts of the letter body. In evaluating the result of this study, the following questions are urgent: What in the letter body can be seen to be in line with and support the preliminary thesis? What arguments run against or problematize the thesis? What additional observations have a direct impact on the thesis?
The dissertation will then be concluded and the final thesis about the purpose of Romans will be formulated in Ch. 9. The analysis of the overall textual arrangement and the content of the letter body follows in Ch. 8.1.

8.1 The Overall Textual Arrangement and Content of the Letter Body

As was concluded in Ch. 2.4, the letter body is found in Rom 1:8-15:33. There are major openings within the letter body in Rom 1:8; 1:13; possibly in 1:15; in 12:1, and finally in 15:14. There are major closings in 11:33-36; 15:13; and 15:33. The letter body therefore consists of three main parts, the first part in Rom 1:8-11:36, the second part in 12:1-15:13, and the end of the letter body in 15:14-33. This position is common among scholars.

The introduction to the letter body begins in Rom 1:8, and is followed by a new opening in 1:13, being a “first …. then” (πρῶτον μὲν … δέ) construction. Next follows an inference or conclusion in 1:15, “therefore” (οὕτως) of what has just been written. As we saw in Ch. 4, the progress of thought develops successively from 1:8, through Rom 1:13, 14, 15, and continues directly with the four casual and explanatory for- sentences (γάρ) in 1:16a, b, 17, and 18. There is no sharp break between the introduction and the rest of the first main part of the letter body due to the four γάρ-sentences, but a smooth and successive transition from 1:8-18 into 1:19 and forward. The first main part ends in 11:32-36 and the second main part of the letter body begins in 12:1. This second part is concluded in 15:13, and is followed by the third main part, the end of the letter body, in Rom 15:14-33, which was analysed in Ch. 5. In the analysis of the introduction to the letter body 1:8-18 in Ch. 4, the special function of Rom 1:16-18 for different parts of the letter body was indicated. This must be discussed further.

The analysis of the overall textual arrangement here in Ch. 8.1 will therefore consist of and be limited to the letter body from Rom 1:16 to 15:13. The analysis will be concluded with some general observations of the content and flow of the argument in the letter body at large. First, the analysis of the first main part of the letter body.

An analysis of the first main part of the letter body limited to Rom 1:16-11:36

In the first main part of the letter body there are, besides the major openings and closings identified above, two additional openings at the next sub-ordinate level in Rom 3:21-23 and in 9:1-3. There is similarly a closing at the next sub-ordinate level in Rom 3:19-20, and a rather lengthy closing paragraph in 8:31-
39 with a closing exclamation in 8:38-39. Therefore, it is central to study the two transitions in 3:19-20/21-23 and in 8:38-39/9:1-3 in greater detail.

Beginning with the transition in Rom 3:19-20 and 3:21-23, Paul opens in 3:19 with a typical meta-propositional statement “but we know that” (οἴδαμεν δὲ ὅτι), which marks the conclusion of the previous discussion. He states that the law speaks to those in the law, that is to the Jews,762 for the purpose of (ἵνα) silencing every tongue, since the whole world is liable to be judged before God. This is an allusion to the previous discussion in 1:19-32; 2:1-29; and 3:1-18. Then Rom 3:20 begins with the subordinate conjunction “because, since” (διότι) as in 1:19 and 21. Paul explains that no human being will be declared righteous before God from the works of the law, for (γὰρ) through the law is or comes knowledge of sin. This last expression can be seen as a contradiction, but it is part of Paul’s argument.763 It sharpens the attention of the addressees, who may ask: If not through the works of law, how can anybody become righteous before God?

Paul gives the answer in 3:21-23 and forward, beginning with a new opening in 3:21, using the coordinating adversative particle but (δέ), preceded by the emphatic time adverbial “now!” (νυνί) and followed by the adverbial preposition with genitive “apart from, without, or independently of” (χωρίς). The new opening indicates both a continuity and a contrast to the preceding paragraph and signals a progress in the line of thought. The repetition of the term law in combination with righteousness indicate a continuity with 3:19-20. The phrase in 3:21 is also a contrast, with the adversative but (δέ), the time adverbial now (!), and the phrase apart from (the) law, and thus moves the argument forward. In 3:21-23, Paul states that now a righteousness of God is revealed apart from the law but testified by both the law and the prophets. This is a righteousness of God through the faithfulness of Christ, or by faith in Christ, for all who believe. For there is no difference between people since all have sinned and failed to reach the glory of God. Besides the theme of faith and righteousness, Jesus Christ becomes prominent in 3:21 and forward. Jesus Christ was only mentioned once before in Rom 2:16, after the introduction in 1:8-9 and up to 3:20, but from 3:21 and forward, he is mentioned explicitly or alluded to frequently.

It is thus justified to conclude that 3:19-20 and 3:21-23 mark the transition between the first section of the first main part of the letter body up to 3:20, and the second section, which begins in 3:21.

762 Longenecker, R. N. 2016, 358; Dunn, J. D. G. 1988, 152; Cranfield, C. E. B. 1975, 197. The term νόμος in 3:19 refers to the Torah, and those in the law refers to the Jews, to those who follows the Torah.
763 Rom 3:20 could perhaps be seen as a contradiction to Rom 2:6-7, 10, 13-15a. Yet Paul explains and gives more details about the law and the works of law in relations to human beings and sin throughout Rom 2-8. See a brief discussion of some aspects of Paul’s view of the law that are relevant for this thesis below.
Regarding the next transition between Rom 8:38-39 and 9:1-3, Paul begins already in 8:31-34 with a lengthy conclusion of the previous discussion by asking “so what shall we say about this?” He then gives the answer by a summary of God’s action in and through Jesus Christ for the sake of all humans. In 8:35-37, Paul assures the believers that nothing can separate them from the love of Christ, and through him, they have gained a surpassing victory. Paul ends with a hymnic exclamation and explanation, in 8:38-39, that he is convinced that (γὰρ ὅτι) neither death, nor life, neither angels, nor ancient things, neither present, nor coming things, neither powers in the height, nor in the deep, nor any other created things, will be able to separate them from the love of God and from the love in Christ Jesus our Lord.

In 9:1-3, follows a new opening in two sentences, with an asyndeton and a meta-communicative statement, “I am telling the truth in Christ, I am not lying. My consciousness testifies for me in the holy spirit”. Paul explains his deep grief and unceasing distress over the situation among his fellow kinsmen, which refers to the Jews who do not believe in Jesus as the Christ. These asyndetic opening statements mark a change in content and together with the strong closing of the previous section, indicate a new opening at a somewhat higher level. It is a transition from the previous section that ends in 8:30 and the opening of a new section of the letter body of Romans in 9:1-11:36.

Consequently, there is a first section that ends in Rom 3:20, a second section that begins in 3:21, and a final section in 9:1-11:36 of the first main part of the letter body. The delineation of a section in 9:11-11:36 is uncontroversial among scholars. By contrast, commentaries usually report a major break between the first and second sections, not in 3:20/21, but either in 4:25/5:1 or in 5:21/6:1. The relationship between Rom 5:1 and the previous and following content is extensively discussed among scholars. The inferential conjunction “so, therefore” (οὖν) in 5:1 indicates both continuity and progress in thought. Dunn and Wolter argue convincingly for a strong connection and continuation of Paul’s line of thought between the earlier discussion in 3:21-4:25 and the following in 5:1 and forward. In particular, the conjunction so, therefore (οὖν) in combination with the participle verb in aorist passive, “having been declared righteous”, and the prepositional phrase, “from faith”, in 5:1a, indicate a connection to the previous discussion in 3:21-4:25. The three nouns in 5:1b-2, peace (cf. 2:10; 3:17), the gracious gift (cf. 3:24; 4:4, 16), and hope (cf. 4:18), describe the new situation for the believers and their relationship

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with God through Jesus Christ. These three terms were also central in the previous argumentation. Therefore, the position in this thesis is that there is no break between two sections in Rom 4:25/5:1. Dunn’s and Wolter’s opinion that there is a new break between the two sections in 5:21/6:1 is not valid either. Even if there is a progress to something new in 6:1-4, the paragraph starts with the inferential conjunction so, therefore, and the rhetorical question “what shall we say” (τί οὖν ἐροῦμεν), and with the repetition of the terms sin, death, the gracious gift, and life, from 5:18-21. It is therefore better to understand Rom 6:1 as a beginning of an immersed argumentation or as the extended discussion of the subjects in the previous paragraphs. So, neither Rom 5:1 nor 6:1 begin a new section of the first part of the letter body. It is better to treat the whole of Rom 3:21-8:39 as the second section of the first part of the letter body, following the first section up to 3:20, and preceding the third section in 9:1-11:36.

Next follows a more detailed study of the textual arrangement in Rom 1:18-3:20; 3:21-8:39 and 9:1-11:36 with a summary of the content and the flow of the argument. After that Rom 1:16-18 and its special function for the flow of argument in the letter body at large will be studied.

**Rom 1:18-3:20**

It is for grammatical reasons that the analysis of the first section starts in Rom 1:18. For the detailed analysis up until 1:18 see in Chs. 2.4 and 4 above. For the discussion here, Rom 1:19 begins with “because” (διότι) and is directly sub-ordinate to 1:18. There is a continuous flow and progressive line in Paul’s thought, from the beginning of the introduction in 1:8, through 1:13, 14, 15 and the four successive γάρ-sentences in 1:16-18, and further in 1:19 and forward. For the special function of Rom 1:16-18 see below.

Rom 1:18-3:20 can be divided into five (5) textual units on the next sub-level, (i) 1:18-32, (ii) 2:1-16, (iii) 2:17-29, (iv) 3:1-8, and (v) 3:9-20. There are some minor differences among scholars how to arrange the first section in different textual units. In my reading of the text, I follow for Rom 2 the opinion of Longenecker, Wolter and Jewett, but Dunn, Wolter and Byrskog for Rom 3. The latter since there is a slight progress in the argument that can motivate a separation between Rom 3:1-8 and v9-20, although the two textual units are closely related. The differences in textual arrangement in the first

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766 It is not decisive for this thesis if Rom 3:21-8:39 is treated as one section or divided into two. If divided, it is reasonable to have the division between 3:21-4:22 and 5:1-8:39, since there is a slight shift in Paul’s line of thought between Rom 4 and 5, which also marks a progress of his thought.

767 The arrangement of the text in Rom 1:18-3:20 differs in commentaries in some minor ways – for example the text in Rom 2 is delineated as 2:1-16, 2:17-29 (Longenecker, Wolter, Jewett), or as 2:1-11, 12-16, 17-24, 25-29 (Dunn, Fitzmyer, Byrskog); and Rom 3, as 3:1-20 (Longenecker, Jewett), or as 3:1-8, 9-20 (Dunn, Wolter, Byrskog), or even as 3:1-9, 10-20 (Fitzmyer).
section are not of major importance for this thesis. Rom 1:18-3:20 as a whole shows a continuous line of thought in Paul’s argument.

In the first textual unit in Rom 1:18-32, Paul elaborates the statements in 1:18 and explains the situation for the human beings (ἄνθρωποι), and why it is necessary or even reasonable that the wrath of God is being revealed. The wrath of God is a consequence of or a reaction to human impiety and unrighteousness. Human immoral and ungodly behaviour are in contrast and opposed to the truth and knowledge of God, to his eternal power and divinity, which can be seen and be discerned in God’s creation and work. Humans who do and encourage immoral and ungodly behaviour are worthy of death.

In Rom 2:1-16, Paul’s argument continues with new themes introduced, such as the judgment, sin, and the law, which are further elaborated in later sections of the letter body. Paul explains why the good news of God about Jesus Christ is necessary in God’s plan for the rescue of the world, and why it also includes a message of the unavoidable last judgment of God. It gives substance to the observation that the good news is not only a number of doctrinal statements but includes a demand and requires a response of proper moral behaviour from all believers, both from Jews and gentiles. Paul explains that it is not the hearers, but the doers of the law who are made righteous before God. This includes the people of the nations, who have no law, but who nevertheless do the things of the law. They are themselves the law. God will judge each one, both Jews and Greeks, according to their behaviour. It will result either negatively in wrath and anger, affliction, and fear, or positively in glory and honour, and in indestructibility and peace, because there is no partiality before God. All those, who have sinned without the law, will perish without the law. Similarly, all those in the law will be judged by the law. In Rom 2:15-16, Paul concludes that this relates to all humans, who demonstrate the work of the law written in their hearts, as their consciousness will testify for or against them on the day when God will judge the hidden things of all human beings. According to the good news proclaimed by Paul, all this happens at the last judgment of God. So, in the second unit of the first section, Paul points out that the good news relates to all human beings without partiality.

Next, in Rom 2:17-29, Paul gives a number of positive or at least neutral characteristics of the Jews.\textsuperscript{768} A Jew rests or relies on the law and takes pride in God and in the law. However, circumcision is of no value if a Jew does not

\textsuperscript{768} Smyth, H. W. 2010 (1915), §1394, declares that simple conditional sentences, as in Rom 2:17 and forward, “simply state a supposition” and they “are sometimes called neutral” (italic original). Cf. Nanos, M. D. 2014, “Paul’s Non-Jews Do Not Become ‘Jews,’ But Do They Become ‘Jewish’?: Reading Romans 2:25-29, Within Judaism, Alongside Josephus”, JMJJS 1, 26-33, particularly 41-43. Nanos finds the motives or the characteristics, in Rom 2:17-24, to be “all praiseworthy, including the impulse to teach”, an opinion which is valid. However, contrary to Nanos, Paul’s discussion is not directed only to “non-Jews to whom he writes.” Instead, the position in this thesis is that the addressees are a mix of Jews and gentiles, see Ch. 2.3.
behave as a Jew should behave, that is according to God’s will.\textsuperscript{769} In addition, it is clear that the gentiles are not obliged to be circumcised, but must also behave in accordance with God’s will, and will then be valued and regarded similar to a Jew, that is as a righteous gentile.\textsuperscript{770}

Paul concludes the first section by two units in Rom 3:1-8 and 3:9-20, answering several questions. First, in 3:1-8, that the Jews have an advantage since they have been entrusted with the word of God. Paul explains that his message does not violate the law nor turn everything upside down. However, in 3:9, Paul states that both Jews and Greeks are under sin. With the help of the scripture Paul argues in the exceptional but carefully constructed catena of quotations, in 3:10-18,\textsuperscript{771} that all human beings are liable to be unrighteous and ungodly. This is a preparation for the conclusion of the first section in 3:19-20, where Paul states that no human shall be declared righteous before God from the works of the law.\textsuperscript{772} Through the law comes knowledge of sin.

Paul’s arguments and progress of the line of thought continue directly in the lengthy second section of the first part of the letter body in Rom 3:21-8:39.

\textbf{Rom 3:21-8:39}

As was argued before, in Rom 3:21, there is a new opening, with the coordinating adversative particle but (δέ), preceded by the emphatic adverb of time now (νυνί), and followed by the adverbal preposition with genitive, apart from, without, or independently of (χωρίς). The new opening indicates both continuity and contrast to the preceding paragraph, and there is a progress in the line of thought. It is the beginning of the second section of the first main part, all the way up to Rom 8:39.\textsuperscript{773} The new section focuses on the themes in Rom 1:17, and also elaborates other themes in 1:16-18 and 1:18-3:20. Given the previous argument, in 1:18-3:20, about the situation of the whole human-

\textsuperscript{769} According Nanos, M. D. 2014, 49, “Paul is appealing to a well-known trope in Greek and Roman as well as Jewish cultures, the difference between legal credentials and the spirit of the ideals to which those credentials should point”. Paul expects that most Jews and gentiles of his time would agree on this trope.

\textsuperscript{770} Cf. with the argument in Nanos, M. D. 2014, 44-51. Nanos argument here is valid. Paul is taking a fictive example, and the main point is that if a gentile behaves as a Jew should and doing God’s will, then “his body is ‘valued/regarded [λογισθήσεται]’ similarly”. This example “represents how all human should behave”.

\textsuperscript{771} Allusions to Ps (LXX) 13:1-3, 52:1-3, Eccl 7:20; perhaps to Prov 1:16. Quotations from Ps (LXX) 5:10b, 139:4b, 9:28a, 35:2b, and Isa 59:7-9. All but one direct quotation (the last from Isaiah) are drawn from the Psalms.

\textsuperscript{772} For a discussion of the phrase “the works of the law” see e.g. Dunn, J. D. G. 2009, 475-78, 886-7; Byrskog, S. 2006, 89.

kind, both Jews and Greeks, Paul explains and argues how and why a righteousness of God is revealed at the present time from faith to faith, and how the righteous one from faith can and shall live. The second section Rom 3:21-8:39 consists of six (6) textual units at a sub-ordinate level, (i) 3:21-31; (ii) 4:1-25; (iii) 5:1-21; (iv) 6:1-23; (v) 7:1-25; and (vi) 8:1-39. The reason why these units are part of one rather lengthy section was partly discussed above and this position is strengthened by the content and the continuous flow of the argument throughout Rom 3:21-8:39. Thus, there is good reason to discuss the content of the six textual units in some detail.\footnote{The delineation of Rom 3:21-8:39 in these six textual units, differs from other scholars, who delineate the text, either as Rom 3:21-31, 4:1-25, 5:1-21, 6:1-23, 7:1-25, 8:1-30, 31-39 (Dunn); or as 3:21-31, 4:1-25, 5:1-11, 12-21, 6:1-14, 15-23, 7:1-6, 7-25, 8:1-11, 12-17, 18-30, 31-39 (Byrskog); or as 3:21-26, 27-31, 4:1-25, 5:1-21, 6:1-11, 6:12-7:6, 7:7-25, 8:1-39 (Wolter); or as 3:21-31, 4:1-24, 25, 5:1-11, 12-21, 6:1-7:13, 7:14-25, 8:1-17, 18-30, 31-39 (Longenecker); or as 3:21-31, 4:1-25, 5:1-11, 12-21, 6:1-14, 15-23, 7:1-6, 7-12, 13-25, 8:1-17, 18-30, 30-39 (Jewett). The delineation proposed here is closer to Dunn’s, except that 8:1-39 is treated as one textual unit, where 8:31-39 is a long conclusion of the sixth textual unit and the second section.\footnote{For the important discussion on the many exegetical problems in Rom 1:17 and 3:22, see e.g. Mininger, M. A. 2017; Olson, R. C. 2016; Calhoun, R. M. 2011; Campbell, D. A. 2009, 323-6, 601-714; Byrskog, S. 2006, 31-6, 98-9; Dunn, J. D. G. 2002, “Once More, ΠΙΣΤΙΣ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΥ”, appendix 1 in Hays, R. B., The Faith of Jesus Christ, The Narrative Substructure of Galatians 3:1-4:11, 2nd ed., 249-71; Hays, R. B. 2002, “Πιστις and Pauline Christology: What Is at Stake?”, appendix 2 in ibid., 272-97. For the purpose of this thesis, the righteousness of God has been briefly discussed in Ch. 4. Regarding the πιστις Χριστοῦ debate, even though the arguments for the meaning to be the faith, or the faithfulness, of Jesus Christ are done because of the previous sins committed by human beings. Paul’s gracious acts in and through Jesus Christ are done because of the previous sins committed by human beings. Paul

The first textual unit (i), in Rom 3:21-31, consists of a number of coordinated compound sentences in 3:21-26, followed by (rhetorical) questions and answers in 3:27-31. It is uncontroversial that Rom 3:21-31 is an elaboration of Rom 1:17a. The thematic and linguistic similarities between 3:22 and 1:17a have been noted since the earliest interpretations of Romans. Three major issues in recent commentaries are: (1) the difference in meaning between the verb to reveal, to disclose (ἀποκαλύπτω) in the present indicative passive, and to make manifest, to reveal (φανερώ) in the perfect indicative passive; (2) how to interpret the phrase righteousness of God (δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ); (3) the meaning of the prepositional phrase, through the faithfulness of Jesus Christ, or faith in Jesus Christ (διὰ πίστεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ), and its relationship to the expression from faith to faith (ἐκ πίστεως εἰς πίστιν).\footnote{For the important discussion on the many exegetical problems in Rom 1:17 and 3:22, see e.g. Mininger, M. A. 2017; Olson, R. C. 2016; Calhoun, R. M. 2011; Campbell, D. A. 2009, 323-6, 601-714; Byrskog, S. 2006, 31-6, 98-9; Dunn, J. D. G. 2002, “Once More, ΠΙΣΤΙΣ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΥ”, appendix 1 in Hays, R. B., The Faith of Jesus Christ, The Narrative Substructure of Galatians 3:1-4:11, 2nd ed., 249-71; Hays, R. B. 2002, “Πιστις and Pauline Christology: What Is at Stake?”, appendix 2 in ibid., 272-97. For the purpose of this thesis, the righteousness of God has been briefly discussed in Ch. 4. Regarding the πιστις Χριστοῦ debate, even though the arguments for the meaning to be the faith, or the faithfulness, of Jesus Christ are somewhat more convincing, this does not exclude or reduce the necessity of believers to have faith in Jesus Christ. Whichever alternative is preferred does not affect the conclusions in this thesis.} In addition, as we saw above, there is in Rom 3:21-31 both a close connection and a contrast to what was discussed in the previous section. It is stated that now, a righteousness of God is being revealed apart from the law but witnessed by both the law and the prophets. It is a righteousness of God through the faithfulness of Christ, or faith in Christ, for all who believes. For there is no difference between people since all have sinned. God’s gracious acts in and through Jesus Christ are done because of the previous sins committed by human beings. Paul...
further elaborates on the relationship between the law, works, faith and righteousness. He distinguishes between the law of works and the law of faith and explains that a human being becomes righteous by faith apart from the works of (the) law, since God is not only the God of the Jews (or Judaeans), but also of (the people of) the nations. Paul concludes that God will make righteous a circumcised (a Jew) from (out of) faith and a foreskin (a gentile) through “the” faith. The law is indeed not made invalid and powerless through “the” faith, but rather the law is established.

The second textual unit (ii), in Rom 4:1-25, begins with a characteristic (rhetorical) question together with a connecting inferential conjunction, in 4:1, “so/consequently what shall we say?” (τί οὖν ἐροῦμεν). The question is followed by Paul’s own answers and explanations.776 Paul continues the previous discussion, now by using Abraham as an example to explain more about righteousness, works, and faith. Paul also introduces the theme of the promise (ἐπαγγελία) for the first time in the letter. God’s promise is made to Abraham and to all his future seed, both Jews and gentiles. God’s promise is a prominent theme. It will be discussed further in Rom 9. In Rom 4, Paul uses proof from the scriptures, particularly Gen 15:16,777 to state that Abraham believed or trusted in God, and it was reckoned to him into righteousness. Abraham received the promise that he would become father of many nations (ἐθνή). This was independent of the works (of the law) since the promise was given at a time when Abraham was still uncircumcised. Only afterwards did he receive the sign of circumcision as a seal of the righteousness of faith. According to Paul, this makes Abraham the forefather of those uncircumcised (gentiles) who have faith, and of the circumcised (the Jews), of all those who are following in the footsteps of the faith of Abraham.778 The good news is that the promise applies to both Jews and gentiles, to all who believe and trust in God, who has raised Jesus from the dead for the justification and vindication of all human beings. In the second textual unit, Paul continues and deepens the discussion that began in the first textual unit.

The third textual unit (iii), in Rom 5:1-21, is a continuation of the discussion in 3:21-31 and 4:1-25, and it marks a progress of thought as well. The passage describes the new situation with Jesus Christ, in contrast to the circumstances of mankind described in 1:18-3:20.779 In Rom 5:1-2, Paul infers (οὖν) first that since the believers in Christ have been made righteous from

776 Paul uses a similar question marker, τί οὖν (ἐροῦμεν), e.g. in Rom 6:1, 15, 7:7, 8:31.
777 Besides Genesis, Paul also quotes Ps 31:1-2 in order to explain that the blessing of God is given to the one whom God counts righteous apart from works.
778 There is a somewhat similar argument in Rom 2:25-29, that, besides circumcision, a Jew must also behave as a Jew should. Here in Rom 4, besides being circumcised a Jew must follow in the footsteps of the faith of Abraham.
779 The arguments for a connection and a continuation of Paul’s line of thought that begun in 3:21-4:25 are convincing, for example Dunn, J. D. G. 1988, 242; Wolter, M. 2014, 319, 338.
faith, they have peace with God through the Lord Jesus Christ. The believers have gained access to the gracious gift in which they now stand, and they take pride in the hope of the glory of God. In the first part of the textual unit, in 5:1-11, the focus is on Jesus Christ and on the meaning and characteristics of this new situation with Christ for the believers. This is made possible through Jesus Christ. God demonstrated his love through Jesus Christ when the believers were still ungodly sinners. The love of God has been poured out into their hearts through the holy spirit, and it still is. It is Jesus Christ, who has redeemed them with God, or maybe better, completely changed their relationship with God. The new situation is characterised by peace, the gracious gift, pride, hope, and love, but also by affliction that leads to endurance, through ordeals that shape character. Paul concludes that, since they have been made righteous through Jesus Christ, they who are in the life of Jesus Christ will be saved from the wrath of God. In the second part of the textual unit, in 5:12-21, Paul contrasts Adam with Christ. Both are typological characters and examples. Sin came into the world through one human being, through Adam, and death came through the sin and reached all humans. After Moses and the law, sin and death ruled because the law made sin known, and by this made the violation greater. However, through the abundance of the gracious gift of God, which rules through the one (person) Jesus Christ, the many were brought to life. Through the hearkening of Jesus Christ, the many will become righteous. Paul infers that the gracious gift has overflowed, and it will lead to eternal life through Jesus Christ, the Lord.

The fourth textual unit (iv), in Rom 6:1-23, further explains what it means to be righteous and to live a new life in Jesus Christ. It consists of two sub-units, one begins in 6:1 and one in 6:15. Both begin with Paul’s rhetorical questions, “so what (shall we say)?” (τί οὖν (ἐροῦμεν)), together with his elaborated answers.

In Rom 6:1-14, Paul describes that the righteous life is death to sin. Since the believers have been baptized into Christ, they have also been baptized into his death. Consequently, they have been buried together with him, and in the likeness of Christ they will also be raised from death and walk (or live) in
the newness of life. The theme of identification with Jesus Christ is significant and very much in focus. The believers will share the same nature in the likeness of both Christ’s death and resurrection, and of his life. The old person has been crucified together with Christ in order that the body of sin shall no longer have any effect. Since they have been made righteous, they must be dead to the sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. In 6:12-14, a short admonition concludes. The believers should neither hearken their desires, nor present their bodily members as unrighteous instruments for the sin. They should instead present themselves as alive and as instruments of righteousness for God, since they are not under (the) law (ὑπὸ νόμον), but under (the) gracious free gift (ἀλλὰ ὑπὸ χάριν). One possibility is to interpret the prepositional phrases with ὑπὸ as “under the domain of” or “under the shelter of” the law and the grace respectively. However, ὑπὸ can also be interpreted as preposition of time, as “during” or “at the time of” the law and the grace respectively. This can indicate two different periods of time or aeons, one from Moses to Jesus Christ, and one after the coming of Jesus Christ, the Messiah.

However, in 6:15-20, Paul states that even though they are now not “under” the law, but “under” the gracious gift, they must still choose between either to hearken sin and to be a slave of the sin, or to be set free from sin and to be a slave of the righteousness. The right choice is to serve righteousness, which leads into holiness. In 6:21-23, Paul concludes that since they have been made free from sin, and slaves to serve God, their fruit will now (νῦν, emphatic) lead to holiness. The gracious gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus, the Messiah.

In the fifth textual unit (v), in Rom 7:1-25, Paul continues the discussion from 6:1-23, about the relationship between the law (of Moses), the sin and human beings. To repeat from 6:14 and 6:22-3, Paul said that the believers in Christ are now not under the law, but under the gracious gift. They have died and become freed from sin and are “in Christ Jesus” to serve the righteousness and God. Then, in 7:1-6 Paul gives an additional and immersed argument. Scholars are divided on whether it is an allegory, a parable, a metaphor, an analogy, an illustration, or a syllogism. Regardless of form, Paul now writes directly to those who know the law (of Moses). He explains by an example of a married woman that the law rules over her as long as her husband is alive, but when he is dead, she can remarry. Similarly, according to Paul, since the

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786 Wassén, C. 2011; Regev, E. 2001; ibid. 2018; for a discussion of holiness in contemporary Judaism. A similar view on holiness was probably part of the context and the thought world of Paul in his understanding of the believers in Christ and their relationship to holiness.


788 Nanos, M. D. 1996, 27 note 12. For Nanos, those who know the law are students of Israel’s Scriptures familiar with the Torah. This is valid. However, they are not necessary gentiles only. The view in this thesis is that the addressees are a mixture of both Jewish and gentile believers, see Ch. 2.3. Longenecker, R. N. 2016, 631, also argues that Paul’s reference to “the law” (ὁ
addressees are dead with respect to the law through the body of Christ, they can now “become” (one) with the raised Christ, possibly even be “married” to Christ. All in order to bear fruit to God. So now (νυνί, emphatic), in this new eschatological time, the addressees are released from the law (ἀπὸ τοῦ νόμου) and serve in the newness of spirit. This rather difficult argument of Paul, in Rom 7:1-6, has been understood in many different ways by interpreters. Paul argues that believers in Christ have become released from the law, in order to serve and to bring fruit to God by living a new life with, or as “married” to, Jesus Christ. Paul’s argument depicts an important time shift, from the previous time of the dominion of the law, to the eschatological new time of the gracious gift in the holy spirit. In the past the believers lived in the flesh and their transgressions during the time of the law (διὰ τοῦ νόμου) brought a deadly fruit. The prepositional phrase with διά can be understood as causal, through or by the law (LSJ διά, A.III, 389), or maybe better here as a phrase of time, during or throughout the time of the law (LSJ διά, A.II, 389).

Next, in Rom 7:7-25, Paul explicitly exclaims that the law is definitely not sin. He repeats his argument from Rom 2 and 3 that with the law came knowledge of sin and desire. Even though the law comes from God and shows the will of God, “the sin” also came alive and took advantage through the law and deceived human beings. Paul is expressing himself here as “I”, in first person singular, which refers to a rhetorical human being. Paul states four νόμος) is to “the Mosaic law”, and “those who know the law” are the addressees in Rome, “whether ethnic Jews or ethnic gentiles”. If there are Gentile believers who know the Mosaic law, they must have been associated with the Jewish synagogues for quite a long time to be able grasp and relate to the teaching Paul alludes. Further, scholars generally agree that there is no perfect written reference for Paul’s opinion in Rom 7:2-3. Longenecker refers to “an almost verbatim parallel in the teaching of Rabbi Johanan”, c. 140-165 C.E., who in b.Shabbat 30a and b.Niddah 61b is quoted to say: “When a man dies, he is free from the law and the commandments”, a teaching based on LXX Ps 87:5, ἐγενήθην ὡς ἄνθρωπος ἀβοήθητος ἐν νεκροῖς ἐλεύθερος. For Jewett, R. 2007, 431, this is something that “Paul takes to be the principle implicit in the Torah”. See also Byrskog, S 2006, 154-5, 171, 175-6.

789 Compare the analogous expressions, in Rom 7:3c, τοῦ μὴ εἶναι αὐτὴν μοιχαλίδα γενομένην ἀνδρὶ ἑτέρῳ, and in 7:4b εἰς τὸ γενέσθαι ὑμᾶς ἑτέρῳ τῷ ἐκ νεκρῶν ἐγερθέντι. Longenecker, R. N. 2016, writes “the time of the eschatological ‘now’”; Jewett, R. 2007, 437, refers to “the eschatological present”.

790 King, J. 2017, “Rhetorical Chain-Link Construction and the Relationship between Romans 7.1-6 and 7.7-8.39: Additional Evidence for Assessing the Argument of Romans 7-8 and the Identity of the Infamous ‘I’”, JNT 39.3, 258-278, gives an overview of different interpretations, but also of many scholars’ view of the “structural and/ or logical deficiencies in Rom 7.1-6 and 7.7-8.39”. King’s position that “7.1-6 anticipates the structure and content of 7.7-8.39” is valid, and so too is an immersed discussion of the previous topics of the law and sin.

791 Krister Stendahl gives a rather nuanced interpretation in “The Apostle Paul and The Introspactive Conscience of The West”, in ibid. 1976, especially 92-96. Stendahl points to the diatribe style of the argument, and that the “I” is a rhetorical character. According to Stendahl, Paul is of course aware of “the precarious situation of man in this world”. Instead of Paul’s pronoun “I” to represent the experience of a “pre-Christian or Christian” or human beings in general, the rhetorical “I” is part of “a very special argument about the holiness and goodness
times in 7:10, 11, and 13 (twice) that the human being is killed by “the sin.” However, Paul also declares in 7:11-12 that the law is holy, and the commandment of God is holy and righteous and good. But the sin and desire have taken the law as base of operation (in war)\textsuperscript{793} because of the human predicament, and the sin kills and bears fruit to death. Paul elaborates this in 7:13-20 and declares that it is not the law, but “the sin” that generates all the evil that leads to death. The law is spiritual, but human beings are fleshly. In Rom 7:21-23, Paul summarises that (ἀρα) while the will of a human being is directed towards the law to do good, evil lies before or close to him or her. While the human being rejoices and serves the Law of God with the mind of the inner person, that same person goes to war against the law of the mind with the outer and fleshly members of the body, and is captured (in a battle of war), and becomes a slave to the law of sin.\textsuperscript{794} Asyndetically, Paul ends the argument and describes the dilemma with both a frustrated exclamation and a joyful shout in 7:24-25a, and in 7:25b with a conclusion that therefore (ἀρα οὖν) the human being serves a law of God with the mind, but serves a law of sin with the flesh.

The continuity and progress in Paul’s flow of argument, so far, is evident throughout Rom 3:21-7:25, and the line of thought continues in 8:1-39. In 7:25b and in 8:1 there is a new transition with both closing and opening markers (ἀρα οὖν … ἄρα νῦν), that signal the end of the previous fifth (v) textual unit in 7:1-25, and the beginning of the sixth textual unit (vi) in 8:1-39, which ends Paul’s argument in the entire second section in Rom 3:21-8:39.

In Rom 8:1-6, Paul infers that there is no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus, and he explains why in four γάρ-sentences (ἀρα νῦν … γάρ … γάρ … γάρ). First, the law of the spirit of the life in Christ Jesus (ὁ νόμος τοῦ πνεύματος τῆς ζωῆς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ) has freed them from the law of sin and death (ὁ νόμος τῆς ἁμαρτίας καὶ τοῦ θανάτου). Second, because of the inability of the law, which became weak through the human flesh, God has sent his Son (the Messiah) and sentenced the sin in the flesh. This was to fulfil the righteous requirement of the law for those who live not according to the flesh but according to the spirit. Third, those who are of the flesh are minded towards fleshly things, but those of the spirit are minded towards spiritual things.

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of the Law” and the “distinction between the good Law and the bad Sin”. See also Byrskog, S 2006, 183-86, for understanding the “I” as a rhetorical character.\textsuperscript{795} Rom 7:11 ἡ γὰρ ἁμαρτία ἀφορμὴν λαβοῦσα διὰ τῆς ἐντολῆς ἐξηπάτησέν με καὶ δι’ αὐτῆς ἀπέκτεινεν. LSJ, ἀφορμή, 292, starting point, esp. in war, base of operation; ἐξαπατάω, 586, deceive (thoroughly), beguile.

\textsuperscript{794} Rom 7:23, βλέπω δὲ ἕτερον νόμον ἐν τοῖς μέλεσιν μου ἀντιστρατεύομεν τὸν νόμον τοῦ νόμον μου καὶ αἰχμαλωτίζοντα με εἰς τὸν νόμον τῆς ἁμαρτίας τῷ ὄντι εἰς τοὺς μέλεσιν μου. LSJ, ἀντιστρατεύομαι, 163, make war against; αἰχμαλωτίζω, 45, take prisoner. The terminology of war is prominent in the passage and refers to a war that takes place within the human beings themselves. This is perhaps an eschatological war that rages within human beings between “the sin” and “the spirit”, where “the sin” seems to have captured the mind of people, but the last word has not been said, as Paul declares further in Rom 8.
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Fourth, the fleshly mind generates death, but the spiritual mind generates life and peace.

In 8:7-8, Paul elaborates the problem of the fleshly mind (διότι ... γὰρ ... γὰρ ... δέ), but states, in 8:9-11, by contrast (δὲ) that the spirit of God, and of Christ, does indeed sojourn in those who are in the spirit. The spirit is life, because the righteousness and the spirit of God, who raised Christ Jesus from the death and who dwells within the believers, will similarly make them alive.

Therefore, in 8:12-17, Paul raises the expectations of the addressees (ἄρα οὖν ἀδελφοί) by giving his message an urgent eschatological flavour. All those who are led by the spirit of God will live and become sons (and daughters) of God with the spirit of sonship shouting “Abba, Father”! If they are children of God, they are heirs of God together with Christ. If indeed (εἴπερ) the believers suffer with Christ, they will also be glorified with him, and the glory will be revealed into them. Paul explains, in 8:18-27, that the whole creation anxiously, patiently, and persistently cry out in birth-pangs awaiting for the revelation of the sons (and daughters) of God, and all hopes to reach the freedom of the glory of the children of God. This will be accomplished by the help of the spirit who supports human beings in their weakness. In addition, Paul explains in 8:28-30 that God will help all those who love him. They will be formed in the likeness of the Son of God, those whom God has appointed and called, those whom he has made righteous and has glorified.

In Rom 8:31-39 comes a strong closing paragraph of the sixth textual unit (vi), which is also a conclusion and a summary of the entire second section of the letter body in 3:21-8:38. First there are rhetorical questions and answers in 8:31-37, where Paul speaks of the might and power of God, who did not spare his own Son, but handed him over for the sake of all the believers. God can and will achieve what he wants. God is the one who makes people righteous through Christ. Christ is the one who has died and who has also been raised, and he now sits at the right hand of God, and he is the one who condemns and who also intercedes for the believers. Through Christ they have all have gained an overwhelming victory. Paul ends with a hymnic exclamation in 8:38-39, for he is convinced that nothing has the power to separate them from the love of God and the love in Christ Jesus our Lord.

In the second section, in Rom 3:21-8:39, Paul elaborates and explains primarily the important themes of righteousness, to be (made) righteous. Also

795 Note the similarity in structure with Rom 1:19-20, following 1:15-18. In Rom 8:1-8, Paul continues his explanation and elaboration by four γὰρ-sentences after the inference ἀρχὴ τῶν in 8:1, which are then followed by a sub-ordinate paragraph using διότι in 8:7a, and by an explanation in two additional γὰρ-sentences in 8:7b, and c.
faith, to have faith, to be faithful are predominant in Paul’s argument throughout 3:21-8:39,\textsuperscript{796} even though they are not the only important themes.\textsuperscript{797} In particular, the theme of to live and life comes to the fore in 5:1-8:39.\textsuperscript{798} Both God’s gracious act in and through Jesus Christ, and the response of the believers in Christ with a new righteous life in imitation of Christ, are prominent in the section. I therefore conclude that it is plausible to view the second section in 3:21-8:39 as a coherent argument and continuous line of thought. Paul’s message is related to all human beings, both Jews and gentiles, and Abraham is the forefather of them all. The good news is about God’s plan in history for the salvation of humanity through Jesus Christ. There is no sharp contrast between the law and the good news. The good news was announced in the past and is supported by the Torah. The good news of God is about Jesus life, death and resurrection for the sake of all who believe, both Jews and gentiles, and includes the ethical demand that the believers should live a righteous new life in and with Christ.

\textbf{Rom 9:1-11:36}

In Rom 9:1, Paul makes an asyndetically new meta-communicative statements, “I am telling the truth in Christ, I am not lying. My consciousness is witnessing for me in or with the holy spirit”. This asyndetic opening statements together with the previous strong closing paragraph indicate a new opening of a unit at a higher textual level. It is the opening of the third section of the first main part of the letter body. It consists of three closely connected textual units, (i) Rom 9:1-30, (ii) 10:1-21, and (iii) 11:1-36. This delineation differs from many of the more recent commentaries. Jewett, for example, delineates the section into ten (10) units or pericopes; Longenecker, Dunn and Cranfield into five units; and Fitzmyer into four units. Further, the delineation in this thesis has a break and transition between Rom 9:30-33, and 10:1 and forward, which will be argued below.\textsuperscript{799} Paul quotes extensively from the scripture (LXX) throughout the section in order to strengthen his argument.\textsuperscript{800}


\textsuperscript{797} Other themes such as the law, sin, spirit, gift, etc, are also important, throughout the section.

\textsuperscript{798} Of the 23 times of ζάω, and 14 times of ἡ ζωή in Romans, a majority 65% (24/37) of them are in 5:1-8:39, and once in 1:17, once in 2:5, three times in 9:1-11:36, and eight times in 12:1-15:13.


\textsuperscript{800} Despotis, A. 2011, 339, argues that Paul’s intent is “zu beweisen, dass seine Verkündigung in Übereinstimmung mit der Schrift steht”, and particularly for Rom 9-11 that “hier Paulus die meisten seiner Stellungnahmen aus der Schrift heraus zu belegen versucht”.

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Overall there is a continuously flow of argument and progress in Paul’s line of thought throughout Rom 9:1-11:36.801

In the first textual unit (i), in Rom 9:1-33, Paul begins with a discussion of Israel and God, and of God’s all-mighty power. First, in 9:1-13, Paul describes the situation of his fellow kinsmen according to the flesh that is of the Jews. The focus is on God’s word, through which the Jews are given the sonship, the glory, the covenants, the law, the sacred service of God, and the promises to the fathers. The Christ, the Messiah, comes from the Israelites. At the same time, Paul argues with support from the scripture that those who are called to be children of God are also the children of the promise to Abraham. Paul infers, in 9:14-18, with the help of Exod 33:19; 9:16, that it is all a matter of God’s mercy. In Rom 9:19-29, with support from Hos 2:23; 1:10; Isa 10:22-23; 1:9, Paul claims that God has called all the believers in Christ to be vessels of mercy, not only the Jews, but also the people of the nations. Paul concludes, in Rom 9:30-33, by describing how this has led to a somewhat precarious situation because (ὅτι) the people of the nations (ἔθνη), who did not pursue righteousness, have received a righteousness from faith. But (the people of) Israel, who earnestly pursued a law of righteousness, did however not come first to the law, as in a running competition,802 since it was not in accordance with faith but as by works. Paul explains, with Isa 28:16; 8:14, that Israel stumbled upon a stumbling-block, which is reasonable interpreted as Jesus Christ, the Messiah.

Paul continues the discussion in the second textual unit (ii), in Rom 10:1-21, which begins asyndetically, in 10:1-2a, with the address brothers and sisters in vocative, the preparatory particle μέν, and the expression of his wish, prayer and witness. This indicates a slight break as well as progress. Contrary to the view of most scholars, there is a μέν … δέ paragraph constructed in 10:1-13, which begins with ἡ μὲν εὐδοκία in 10:1, and is followed by the corresponding ἡ δὲ ἐκ πίστεως δικαιοσύνη in 10:6.803 These two balanced clauses contain different matters that are correlated but not necessary in opposition to

801 The continuous flow of argument in the letter body, and scholars’ criticism of this view, are discussed below.
802 Rom 9:31b, εἰς νόμον οὐκ ἔφθασεν. LSJ, φθάνω, 1926, I., to be beforehand, overtake, outstrip (in running).
803 Most scholars does not recognise this μέν … δέ construction in Rom 10:1 and 10:6. Longenecker, R. N. 2016, 845; Jewett, R. 200, 614; Dunn, J. D. G. 1988, 599-600, Cranfield, C. E. B. 1979, 512-13. Jewett, for example, argues that Rom “9:30-33 provides the ‘theme’ discussed in chap. 10, and the summary of 10:4 requires the references to ‘righteousness’ and ‘law’ in 9:30-31”, and that “9:30-10:4 constitutes an independent pericope”. However, the required “righteousness” can be found in 10:3, 4, 5, 6, and 10, and 10:5 with the coordinating particle γάρ. This is the fourth γάρ sentence in a row, and it explains and strengthens the previous statements. Rom 10:6 with the adversative particle δέ begins a new paragraph more naturally. All this gives credit to the argument that 10:6-13 is the second part of the μέν … δέ construction, where 10:1-5 is the first part. See a similar argument in Casson, S. H. 2019, 187-202, but she only discusses 10:1-6(8) more extensively.
each other. In Rom 10:1-13, Paul elaborates on the situation and the problem just depicted in 9:1-33. First in 10:1-5, he states that his desire and his prayer to God is for the sake of Israel and their salvation. With four coordinated causal γάρ-clauses, Paul explains that he is a witness that Israel had a zeal towards God, but not according to proper knowledge. Being unknowing or unaware of the righteousness of God, and seeking to establish or validate their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God. Christ is the fulfilment of the law, which leads to righteousness for everyone who believes. Paul argues on the basis of Lev 18:5 about the righteousness (that comes) from the law, that Moses writes that (ὅτι) the human being, who follows the righteous commandments, will live by them. However, in Rom 10:6-9, with support from quotations from Deut 9:4; 30:14, where the righteousness from faith is explained, Paul states that the word of faith, which they proclaim, assures that a person will be saved if she or he acknowledges that Jesus is Lord, and is convinced in hers or his heart that God has raised Jesus from the dead. Then, in Rom 10:10-13, four additional coordinated causal γάρ-clauses, including scriptural quotations from Isa 28:16; Joel 3:5, provide further explanations. It is especially significant that there is no distinction between people, it is the same for both a Jew and a Greek. All human beings who call for help or who ally themselves to the name of the Lord will be saved.

Thus, Rom 10:1-13 is a complex μέν ... γάρ ... γάρ ... γάρ ... δέ ... γάρ ... γάρ ... γάρ ... γάρ construction, by which Paul’s argument is supported by quotations and interpretations of Lev 18:5; Deut 9:4; 30:14; Isa 28:16; Joel 3:5.

Next, in Rom 10:14-21, Paul continues (πῶς οὖν) the argument and the line of thought, by using questions and answers argumentatively in combination with additional scriptural quotations. Paul’s concern is why the majority of the Jews has not recognized and come to believe in Jesus as the Messiah, the Christ. Paul explains, in 10:14-18, that in order to believe they have really to hear/listen, and with support from Isa 53:1; LXX Ps 18:5 he states that not all of Israel responded to the good-news. For Paul, the faith comes from what is heard, but what is heard comes through the word of Christ, and the message has definitely been spread around. However, most of Israel still does not understand. Why? Paul gives a final answer in Rom 10:19-21 in three steps. First, with Deut 32:21, he explains that God’s intention was to provoke and make

804 LSJ, μέν, 1102, A.II.2, to connect a series of clauses that contain different matters, though without opposition; ibid., A.II.4, one of the correlative clauses is sts. independent, while the other takes the participle or some other dependent form.

805 The meaning of Rom 10:3-4 has been a major issue for scholars. See the discussion by Longenecker, R. N. 2016, 844-52; Jewett, R. 2007, 617-20; Dunn, J. D. G. 2009, 911-14.

806 Similarly previously in Rom 1:16; 2:9-10; 3:9, 22, 29; 4:11-12; 9:24, and forwards in 11:32. See also Sanders, E. P. 2016, Paul, The Apostle’s Life, Letters, and Thought, London: SCM Press, 615, 619-22, who understands that “(t)he major theme of Romans … is the equality of Jew and gentile before God” (italic orig.).
Israel jealous of a senseless and foolish nation. Second, with LXX Isa 65:1, that God/Jesus ("I"?) was instead found among those who did not search or ask for him, that is among the nations. Third, with LXX Isa 65:2, that God should not be blamed, since he has reached out his hand to an unconvincing and reluctant people, that is to Israel. However, this is not the end of Paul’s message nor of his line of thought.

Paul continues the explication in the last textual unit (iii), in Rom 11:1-36, on why the majority of Israel does not believe and remain unconvincing, but he also gives a solution. First, in 11:1-12, he states that God has indeed not pushed aside his people. Paul himself is a proof of that. God’s promises and what was announced before in the scripture are still valid, but only the chosen ones of Israel have as yet reached what they strived for. The majority have become hardened or have closed their minds, and although they stumbled, they have not fallen. Their false step became salvation for the nations. Thus, God’s purpose is to make Israel jealous. Next, in 11:13-16, Paul takes up a somewhat different but related problem. The people of the nations may now think that they have become the first priority in the eyes of God. Paul addresses the nations directly, as the apostle to the nations. He gives praise and honour to God, if somehow, his work might make his kinsmen jealous, and thus he might save some of them. Paul explains that, if Israel’s (initial) rejection means redemption for the world, then their (Israel’s) future acceptance or enrolment will be nothing less than life from death. If the first-fruit is holy, so also will the mixture or the dough be. If the root is holy, so also will the branches be.

Paul presents, in Rom 11:17-19, the analogy of the olive tree. Paul argues that the wild branches (the believers of the nations) have been grafted on among the natural branches (the Jews, Judaeans, Israel), and so have become participants of the root of the rich olive tree. Also that, even if some of the natural branches (the unbelieving Jews) have been broken or pruned, or maybe better, have grown weak or have become enfeebled, the believing gentiles must take care not to boast of their situation, since it is still the root (Israel) that carries them. Paul says, in Rom 11:20-24, that some of the wild olive branches have been grafted on the olive tree, but only through their faith. Therefore, the gentile believers should show respect. Paul concludes that it is all up to God’s uprightness and generosity, whether the gentiles stay on the tree or are cut off again. However, and according to Paul very central, if the natural branches (the unbelieving Jews) do not abide in unfaith, they will be grafted on again. God is able and has the power to do this.

Next, in 11:25-36, comes the conclusion of what began in 11:1, and also the conclusion of the entire third section in Rom 9:1-11:36. It begins with the

807 Paul is an Israelite, of Abraham’s seed, and of the tribe of Benjamin.
808 LSJ, ἐκκλάω, II. Pass, 509, to grow weak, to be enfeebled; See Nanos, M. D. 2018, 126-133.
address brothers (and sisters), in combination with the meta-propositional clause “I want you to now”. It is similar to the opening in 1:13 and must be regarded as the beginning of the conclusion of the third section. With the connecting causal particle for (γάρ) a final explanation of what have previously been discussed begins. Paul wants the addressees to know this mystery that the hardening, the blindness or the callousness on a part of Israel, though not all of them, will remain a fact until the time when the full number of the nations have come in. “So also”, or “and so” (καὶ οὕτως), Paul states in Rom 11:26-27 that all Israel (πᾶς Ἰσραήλ) will be saved. Paul provides arguments from Isa 59:20-21; 27:9; Jer 31:33-34, that Gods covenant with Israel is still valid. Paul declares (rhetorically) in Rom 11:28-31 that part of Israel has become enemies, according to the good news, for the sake of the nations, but also that Israel is (God’s) beloved according to the free choice of God, and for the sake of the promises to the fathers. It is not possible to change the graciously given gifts and the calling of God. Since it is true that all the believers addressed were once unconvinced, but have now received mercy and compassion from God, so too is it true that the majority of Israel are still unconvinced. However, Israel will eventually have mercy and compassion as well. For (γάρ), in 11:32, God have confined all humans into disbelief and unconviction, in order to have mercy and compassion on all (πάντες), both Jews and Greeks.

Finally, in 11:33-36, comes Paul’s joyous exclamation and hymnic praise of God and his wisdom, knowledge, judgment, and incomprehensible ways. Paul quotes from Isa 40:13 and Job 41:3 in the concluding glorification: “Who can understand the mind of the Lord or who can give him advice or give him (anything) or require (anything) from him in return. For out of him and through him and into him are all things! To him is glory for ever, Amen!” And with the major opening next in Rom 12:1 (see below), it is reasonable to understand 11:25-36 as the closing of the section that began in Rom 9:1.

So, in the third section in Rom 9:1-11:36, Paul explains about the relationship between Israel and the gentile nations in God’s overall plan to save the world. He explains the current precarious situation that only a minority of Israel are believers and have accepted Jesus as the Christ, the Messiah.

Paul also expresses the omnipotence and power of God. According to the good news about Christ proclaimed by Paul, God will eventually save all who believe, both Jews and gentiles, by showing his mercy and compassion to all. Paul, the apostle into the nations, hopes that his work for the good news

809 LSJ, πώρωσις, 1561, callus, (metaph.) obtuseness, blindness; Thayer, J. H. 2007 (1896), ibid., 559, the covering of by a callus, obtuseness of mental discernment, dulled perception, hardening; BDAG, ibid., 900, a state or condition of complete lack of understanding, dullness, insensibility, obtuseness; Nanos, M. D. 2018, 153-78.

810 The themes of the good news and the power of God are most central in the third section, in Rom 9:1-11:36. Likewise the theme of faith, and the opposite lack of faith” or “unconviction.”
will in some way help to provoke some of his fellow Jews to accept the good news of God regarding Jesus Christ. All this is not something Paul is ashamed of, rather he cannot help giving a joyous exclamation and praise to God for his plan to save the world, as he expresses in the conclusion in 11:33-36. With this the first main part of the letter body in Rom 1:8-11:36 ends. It is followed by the second part of the letter body in Rom 12:1-15:13.

Before the study of the second part, there is a need to discuss Rom 1:16-18 and its special function for the flow of argument in the letter body at large. As we saw in Ch. 4.2 observation (D), Rom 1:16-18 includes a description of the significance, effect, and reason for the good news of God about Jesus Christ, including Paul’s eagerness to proclaim the good news. However, the content of the four γάρ-sentences seems to be of particular importance for different sections of the letter body as well.

**Rom 1:16-18 and its special function for the flow of the argument in the letter body**

A short thematic overview of the four γάρ-sentences in Rom 1:16-18 indicates their special function for the flow of the argument in the letter body at large.811

There are two significant terms, the noun εὐαγγέλιον, and the verb ἐπαίσχυνομαι, in Rom 1:16a. First, the good news (τὸ εὐαγγέλιον) with cognate terms are central throughout Romans. The good news (τὸ εὐαγγέλιον, εὐαγγέλλω) occurs explicitly in Rom 1:1, 9, 15, 16; 2:16; 10:15, 16; 11:28; 15:16, 19, 20; and 16:25, and the cognate διαγγέλλω in the quotation of Exod 9:16 in 9:17. Other terms used in expressions directly or indirectly related to the good news are proclamation, to proclaim (κήρυγμα, κηρύσσω) in 10:8, 14, 15; 16:25; the saying, statement (ῥῆμα) in 10:8-9, 17-18; word (λόγος) in 3:4; 9:6; 13:9; 15:18; teaching, instruction (διδασκαλία, διδαχή) in 6:17; 12:7; 15:4; 16:17; to learn (μανθάνω) in 16:17; to confess (ὁμολογέω) in 10:9-10; to witness (μαρτυρέω) in 3:21; and finally, related to the good news is to speak, to talk (λαλέω, λέγω) in 4:9; 9:1; 10:6; 11:1-2; 12:3; 15:8, 18. These references in Romans are more or less related to the good news, which is described as promised or announced beforehand in the scriptures, e.g. in Rom 1:2; 4:3, 9; and 16:26. The scripture quotations throughout the letter are part of Paul’s argument and give additional evidence of the significance of the good news, for example in Rom 1:17b; the many quotations in Rom 9-11; and the two unique catenas of quotations in Rom 3:10-18 and 15:9-12. So, the good news of God and Jesus Christ is firmly grounded and preannounced in

811 For the occurrences of these themes or terms in the letter, see e.g. Moulton, W. F. and Geden, A. S. 2002.
the holy scripture and seems to be the basic content explained and elaborated throughout the letter body of Romans.

Second, the verb to be ashamed (ἐπαισχύνομαι) occurs only in Rom 1:16a and 6:21, but the cognate verb καταισχύνω is used in 5:5; 9:33; and 10:11. There are a number of additional terms used in analogous expressions, for example to hold in dishonour, disgrace (ἀτιμάζω, ἀτιμία) in 1:24, 26; 2:23; 9:21; discomfiture (ήττημα) in 11:12; become foolish, folly (ματαιώω, ματαιότης) in 1:21; 8:20; possibly also to perish, to be lost (ἀπολλύω) in 2:12; 14:15; and affliction, ruin (συντρίμμα, συντρίβω) in 3:16; 16:20. Since Paul uses the negation “not to be ashamed” (οὐ ἐπαισχύνομαι) in 1:16a, its meaning should be understood also in relation to the opposite terms to boast, boasting (καυχάομαι, καύχησις, καύχημα) in 2:17, 23; 3:27; 4:2; 5:2, 3, 11; and 15:27, and with the parallel terms good repute, honour, glory (δόξα), esteem, honour, dignity (τίμη), etc. They all occur frequently throughout Romans.

So, the two terms of 1:16a with cognates are used and elaborated significantly in the entire letter body. The indication is that Paul wants to explicate in the letter body why he is not ashamed, or rather, why he is proud and eager to bring and to proclaim the good news also to those in Rome, as stated in Rom 1:15.

As regards the γάρ-sentence in Rom 1:16b, the term power (δύναμις) in relation to God is significant in the third section in Rom 9:1-11:36. God’s power to establish and fulfil his will is clearly stated in 9:17, 9:20-23, 11:21-24. Likewise, the theme of faith (the πιστ-words), and the opposite unfaith, occur frequently in the third section, even though the term faith is more dominant in the previously second section, see below. In the third section, the verb πιστεύω and the noun πίστις are found fourteen times in Rom 9:30, 32, 33; 10:4, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 14 (x2), 16, 17, and 11:20. Their opposites ἀπιστία, ἀπείθεια, and ἀπειθέω are found seven times in Rom 10:21; 11:20, 23, 30 (x2), 31, and 32. In addition, the words to save, salvation (σώζω, ἡ σωτηρία) occur predominantly eight times in 9:1-11:36 compared to three times in total in 1:16; 3:21-8:39, and once in 12:1-15:13. The related verb to rescue, save (ῥύομαι) occurs three times in Rom 7:24; 11:26; and 15:31. Finally, the expression “the Jews and also the Greeks” (to Ἰουδαῖος τε καὶ Ἕλλην) and similar phrases are prominent throughout the letter. However, the relationship between Jews and gentiles is especially significant in the discussion in Rom 9:1-11:36, as we saw above, including the problems that the majority of Jews are not convinced that Jesus is the Christ, the Messiah.

So, Rom 1:16b, with the statement that the good news is the power of God for the salvation of all who believe, for Jews first and also non-Jews, is something of a theme particularly for the third section in 9:1-11:36.

Regarding the terms and expressions in Rom 1:17, the term right, righteousness (the δικ-words) occur forty-one times in the second section in Rom 3:21-8:39, compared to nine times in the first, eleven times in the third, and once in 12:1-15:13. The expressions that include faith and cognates (the πιστ-
words) occur twenty-eight times in 3:21-8:39, all except three in the 3:21-4:25, compared to twice in 1:18-3:20, and as we saw fourteen times in 9:1-11:36, and nine times in 12:1-15:13. Finally, the words to live, being alive, life (ζῶω, ἡ ζωή etc.) occur a total of thirty-seven times in Romans. The majority, twenty-four, are in the second section, and all of these are in 5:1-8:39, besides once in 1:17, once in the first section, three in the third, and eight times in the 12:1-15:13.

Thus, it is reasonable to believe that the terms and themes within the compact and ambiguous expressions in 1:17 are discussed further in the letter body, primarily in the arguments of the second section in Rom 3:21-8:39. It is even more striking that 1:17a seems to be the subject matter for 3:21-4:25, that is how the righteousness of God (δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ) is revealed from faith to faith (ἐκ πίστεως εἰς πίστιν). Likewise, that 1:17b is the subject matter for 5:1-8:39, that is as an elaboration and interpretation of the first scripture quotation in the letter, Hab 2:4, and how the righteous one (ὁ δίκαιος) from faith (ἐκ πίστεως) shall live (ζήσεται) in the light of Jesus Christ.


So, the content of Rom 1:18 seems to be predominantly discussed and elaborated in the first section in 1:18-3:20, but not exclusively. With the repetitions and allusions of these themes later in the letter, it is plausible that what is stated in 1:18 is a background statement, and Paul’s assessment of the situation among human beings, and the reason for and a pointer towards the necessity of the good news of God regarding Jesus Christ.812

As discussed in Ch. 4, a majority of scholars understand Rom 1:16-17 to be the thesis statement of the entire letter, whereas Rom 1:18 is the beginning of something new, the first proper argument in the main part of the letter body. Rom 1:18 is treated as more of an antithesis or a contrast to the thesis statement of the good news in 1:16-17.813 However, it is more correct to treat the four γάρ-sentences in Rom 1:16-18 as closely related, and 1:18 as an essential

812 Cranfield, C. E. B. 1975, 103-112; Jewett, R. 2007, 151; Ábel, F. 2016, 198; Casson, S. H. 2019, 231-9; All see the revelation of God’s wrath as part of, or related to, the good news of God.
813 Note that Cranfield distinguishes between 1:16a, and b. Cranfield has 1:16a as part of the introduction beginning in 1:8. He treats only 1:16b-17 as the thesis statement.
part of to the good news, rather than as an antithesis. The position in this thesis is not unique among scholars.\textsuperscript{814}

The suggestion that the content of the four γάρ-sentences are of particular importance for different parts or sections of the letter body of Romans is not altogether new. That the content of Rom 1:18 is something of the headline or theme-statement for the first section up to 3:20 is often agreed, even when it is treated as an antithesis to the good news of God.\textsuperscript{815} It has also been proposed by other scholars that 1:17 and 1:16 respectively relate to other sections in the letter, but in reverse order. For example, Paul B. Fowler thinks that Rom 1:18 is the primary theme up to 2:29, followed by 3:1-20 as a summary; that Rom 1:17 is expanded in 3:21-5:21; and Rom 1:16 throughout Rom 1-5 and in 9-11. Similarly, Desta Heliso in his dissertation, which focuses on the analysis of Rom 1:17, thinks that 1:18 is elaborated in the text up to 3:20, and 1:17 in 3:21 and forward.\textsuperscript{816} In addition, some of Fowler’s other insights regarding the structure of Romans are quite valid, for example that all of Rom 1:13-18 is the thesis statement of the letter and important for the purpose of Romans.\textsuperscript{817} But there are other conclusions by Fowler that differ to this thesis. First, his view of the overall structure of Romans differs in some major respect. Even though Fowler’s position on the opening and ending of Romans is mostly valid, my analysis does not agree with his view that Rom 1:19-2:29 is a separate textual unit and the premise of the letter, and that Rom 3:1-15:13 is the heart of the letter, where 3:1-9a is the main question raised with extended answers given in 3:9b-11:36 and exhortations in 12:1-15:13.\textsuperscript{818} My view (see Ch. 9 below) also differ from Fowler’s conclusion that the purpose of Romans was “to address pressing issues in Rome”, which are twofold, “the precarious nature of living as Christians in Rome” and “the strained relationship between Jews and gentiles.”\textsuperscript{819} Even though there is a similar view of the function of Rom 1:16-18, we differ on how the letter introduction impacts on the purpose of Romans.

The conclusion here is that the four γάρ-sentences are both the cause and the explanations for what was stated in 1:15 and before, and they point forward by expressing what will be elaborated and explained further in the letter body. This can be illustrated for Rom 1:16b-18 schematically in fig 12 below.


\textsuperscript{815} Dunn, J. D. G. 1988, 36-51, 54; Longenecker, R. N. 2016, 200-1; Campbell, D. A. 2009, 542-3.

\textsuperscript{816} Fowler, P. B. 2016, 170-77; Heliso, D. 2004, 73-74.

\textsuperscript{817} Fowler, P. B. 2016, 171, 173. This is significant, but Rom 1:8-12 is equally important.

\textsuperscript{818} \textit{ibid}., 81-84, 165-87.

\textsuperscript{819} \textit{ibid}., vii, 7, 186.
The three γάρ-sentences in Rom 1:16b, 17, and 18 each has the function of theme-statements or a superscript to what will be discussed in the first three sections of the letter body, but in reverse order. Rom 1:16b is the main subject matter or the head line for Rom 9:1-11:36; and 1:17 for 3:21-8:39, or maybe better, 1:17a for 3:21-4:25 and 1:17b for 5:1-8:39; and finally 1:18 for the argument up to 3:20.

The problem is that this focuses more to the first doctrinal part of the letter and does not cover the exhortative part of Romans. However, as we saw above, the specific terms and expressions in Rom 1:16a with their cognates are more evenly spread throughout the entire letter. Also, and as discussed in Ch. 4, it is plausible to understand 1:16a as a direct continuation and explanation of 1:13-15. This alternative gives attention to the good news throughout the entire letter body, including its ethical demand discussed primarily in the hortatory second main part in Rom 12:1-15:13, but also earlier in the letter body in Rom 1-2 and 5-8.820

In conclusion, together with what have been stated previously in the introduction in 1:8-15, all four γάρ-sentences in Rom 1:16-18 are crucial for Paul’s further line of thought and his continuous flow of the argument throughout the letter body.

To summarise the first part of the letter body: There is a continuous flow of argument and line of thought throughout the three sections, the first up to

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820 The ethical demands come to the fore explicitly in Rom 2:6-11, 13, and Rom 5-7. O’Reilly, B. 2017, 122-23, 131, 141, discusses a number of key passages in Rom 5-7 and argues that these key passages show “the decisiveness and the ethical implications of the transition to a life ‘in Christ’” for the believers.
Rom 3:20, the second in 3:21-8:39, and the third in 9:1-11:36. It seems that Rom 16b, 17, and 18 present the subject matters for these three sections in the reverse order, whereas Rom 1:16a is a direct explanation of 1:13-15 and is related to the entire presentation of the good news of God in the letter body, both in its doctrinal message and in its ethical demands. The ethical demands are found throughout the letter and are prominent in the second main part of the letter body, which will be analysed next.

The second main part of the letter body

Commentaries differ in their delineation of the second hortatory or imperative main part of the letter body in Rom 12:1-15:13. Some separate between the general admonitions in 12:1-13:14, and the more specific appeals in 14:1-15:13. It is often suggested that the specific ones refer to the situation in Rome with conflicts among the believers in Christ. Other scholars divide the sections in several units.821 Next follows the arrangement of the second main part suggested in this thesis, including considerations of the overall content and the flow of the argument.

Rom 12:1-15:13

The position of this thesis is that the second main part consists of three textual units, first (i) in Rom 12:1-13:14, second (ii) in 14:1-15:6, and a final closing textual unit (iii) in 15:7-13.

The first textual unit (i), in Rom 12:1-13:14, begins with a new opening at a high level in 12:1-2, as argued above. A change in topic with Paul’s general exhortations to the addressees, together with the inferential conjunction, so, therefore, consequently (οὖν), indicates both that something new is introduced and that the content is connected and consequential to the previous discussion.

In 12:1-12:21, Paul admonishes the addressees to present or to offer their bodies as a living, holy and well pleasing sacrifice to God. This offering is their rational service of God. The addressees are also urged not to conform to this aeon or to the current time, but rather to transform or to change themselves through the renewal of their mind, in order to test or make a critical examination of God’s will. Scholars often understand Rom 12:1-2 to be the theme, the introduction, the summary, or a title paragraph of the second main part.822 This

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822 See Jewett, R. 2007, 724, who gives several references to other scholars.
is plausible, but it is also a continuation that states the consequence of Paul’s line of thought presented in the previous first part of the letter body. In 12:3-8, Paul explains and further urges the addressees to be of a sound mind and to show self-control, according to the measure of faith that God has given to each person. Because, just as (καθάπερ γὰρ) their bodies have many members, so (οὕτως) they are members of one body in Christ, the Messiah, and as such, are closely related. They have graciously been given different gifts, either the gift of prophecy, serving, teaching, admonishing, generosity to those in need, the gift of leadership, to be a benefactor or to exercise compassion. In addition, in Rom 12:9-21, Paul takes up the theme of love (ἡ ἀγάπη), a theme that recurs in 13:8-10. The theme of love was first introduced in Rom 5:5, 8, and was part of the argument in 8:35, 38, where the love of God and the love of Christ were for sake of the believers. Here in 12:9-21, Paul elaborates on how the love of the addressees should be characterised in response to the love of God and Christ. Their love should be sincere and without pretence. It should manifest itself in several ways that will distinguish the good moral behaviour of all the believers in Christ. They should take into consideration the good of all human beings and make peace with everyone. Those who are the beloved ones, should not take revenge, but leave the revenge to the wrath of God (cf. Rom 2). Paul finds support from the scriptures in Deut 32:35; Prov 25:21-22, and he concludes that they should not be conquered by the evil but conquer evil with the good.

Some scholars regard Rom 13:1-7 with its change of content as an interjection that was not part of the original letter. However, Paul declares in this paragraph that each soul or living being should subordinate him- or herself to the powers and authorities because there is no power which is not appointed by God. Their command or regulation must be followed, including tax payments and other civil obligations.

In Rom 13:8-14, the elaboration of the theme of love resumes, beginning, in 13:8-10, with the exhortation to love one another. This “golden rule” is the most important of all the commandments. Paul states, with support from Lev 19:18, that anyone who loves another human being has fulfilled the law. In Rom 13:11-14, Paul concludes the first textual unit with an urgent eschatologically statement. All believers should know that now is the time for them to wake up, and to arise from sleep, since salvation is now closer than when they first came to believe. The “night” will soon be ended, and the “day” will dawn.

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823 Paul shifts from “you”, second person plural, to “we”, first person plural, and he refers to all believers, which includes the addressees, himself, and other believers in Christ.

Therefore (οὖν), they must all put off the works of darkness and clothe themselves with the armour of the light. The believers should all clothe themselves with the Lord Jesus Christ.

In the second textual unit (ii), in Rom 14:1-15:6, Paul discusses what scholars usually understand as the more specific problems among the Roman assemblies. Some of them may have been related to the situation in Rome, but it is also reasonable to assume that the problems mentioned were more or less general in character. Paul’s discussion is about the relationship between Jews and gentiles, who live close to one another, for example in the vicinity of the Jewish synagogues, and also issues regarding the relationship in general between believers in Christ and non-believers, regardless of their ethnic background. To be more specific, in 14:1-15:6, Paul discusses the issues between the “weak” and the “strong,” that is between different persons or groups, who hold different faiths and convictions regarding regulations about food, times and calendar days. The reference is probably to issues regarding eating meat offerings and keeping the Sabbath and other special days. Paul gives advice how to handle these problems. The overall admonition, in Rom 14:1-12, is to receive or welcome one another, rather than to create separations because of their different convictions. They should not disregard, scorn, or judge one another because of food and calendar issues. God has received them all, which is the most important thing. Each person must be fully assured or satisfied with their own mind, and regardless of belief or conviction should give thanks to God. Then Paul broadens the discussion and explains that no-one lives for him- or herself, and no-one dies for him- or herself. Regardless of whether “we” live or die “we are of the Lord”. It was for this reason that Christ, the Messiah, both lived and died, in order that he shall be the Lord and rule over both the living and the dead. At the end, they will all stand before the tribunal of God. Paul supports this explanation by scriptural quotations from Isa 49:18; 45:23 and infers that everyone will have to give a reckoning of him- or herself before God.

Therefore, according to Paul in Rom 14:13-23, they should no longer judge one another, nor place any obstacle in front of a brother (or a sister). Paul knows and is convinced in the Lord Jesus that nothing is common or unclean in itself. However, if someone counts something as common or unclean, it will

826 Problems that Paul encountered on several occasions during his previous apostolic work in the East. The specific admonitions here are directed to the addressees, even if the problems may be more general.
827 Most scholars regard the “strong” to be predominantly gentile believers, whereas the “weak” are Jewish believers, e.g. Longenecker, R. N. 2016, 995-6; Jewett, R. 2007, 835-38; Jewett points to the possibility that the “weak” also include “ascetics from pagan background”. By contrast Nanos, M. D. 1996, 107, 113, 119-44, argues that the “weak” are Jews in Rome who were not believers in Christ.
be so for that person. If a brother or a sister is distressed or feels pain because of another one’s food, then the one who still eats that food no longer walks according to love. You must not destroy a person by your food. Christ, the Messiah, has died for this person. Paul continues to remind them that the kingdom of God does not consist of food or drink, but of righteousness, peace, and joy in the holy spirit. Anyone, who serves Christ with these things, is accepted by God and trustworthy among human beings. They should all pursue peace and the things that builds up one another. They should not destroy God’s work on account of food. All things are clean or pure, but it is better not to eat or to involve oneself with the things that make your brother or sister stumble. Each one’s faith is in the end between that person and God.

In Rom 15:1-6, Paul concludes the second textual unit by stating that the able or the strong ones are obliged to lift up and carry the weakness or the weak things of the unable ones, and not just to please themselves. Everyone must please their neighbour with the good things in order to build them up. For Cranfield, this last statement is an ethical qualification in relation to other human beings. Paul then argues with reference to the scripture in LXX Ps 68:10 that the Christ, the Messiah, did not please himself, but suffered reproach for the sake of others. Paul concludes with a wish that the God of endurance and admonition may give the addressees the ability to have the same mind that was in Christ Jesus. The mind of Christ is the mind to strive for, in order that they may all glorify God by being of one and the same mind speaking with one voice.

So, in both the first (i) and the second textual unit (ii) of the fourth section of the letter body, Paul exhorts the addressees about how to behave correctly in accordance with the demands of the good news of God regarding Jesus Christ. It is most important to walk or to live according to love. People may have different faiths and convictions regarding food-regulations or calendar issues etc. but they should welcome one another regardless and seek to build up their neighbour. They should not judge the other, nor cause a fellow human to fall. The judgement is up to God. All in all, Jesus Christ is the one to serve and the example to imitate and follow, Christ who died and offered himself for the sake of them all.

Even though some commentators understand the third textual unit (iii), in Rom 15:7-13, to be directly connected to and a conclusion of 15:1-6, most commentaries regard 15:7-13 as a separate textual unit. The close connection to the previous unit in 15:1-6 and the ethical discussion that begun in 14:1 is evident. The use of the inferential conjunction therefore (διό), and the admonition in 15:7 repeated from 14:1 that the addressees should welcome or receive one another (προσλαμβάνεσθε), attest this connection. In addition, in

15:3a, 5 and 7, the Christ, the Messiah, is the one to imitate. As in 15:3b, Paul uses quotations from scripture in 15:9-12, to support his argument for the central theme of unity among believers. The terms glory and to glorify God are repeated in 15:6, 7, and 9. The textual unit ends in 15:13 with a benediction or a wish that God may fill the addressees with all happiness and peace, in order to abound in hope in the power of the holy spirit. This is similar to the wish in 15:5-6. Some scholars therefore regard Rom 15:7-13 as a summary and a conclusion of the admonitions that began in 14:1. However, several expressions and themes throughout the letter body recur in 15:7-13. The truth of God occurs in 1:25, 3:7 and is implicit in 1:18, 2:8, 20; 9:1; the promise of the fathers was discussed and reiterated in 4:9-22; 9:4, 8-9; God's mercy is prominent in 9:15-18, 23; 11:30-32; the theme to have faith, to believe, in 15:13, occurs frequently throughout the letter e.g. in 1:16-17; 3:21-31; 4:5-5:2; 9:30-32; 12:3, 6; 14:1-2, 22-23; similarly the glory or to glorify God in 15:7, 9, are common phrases, not only in 15:1-6 immediately before, but in the entire letter; likewise the discussion of the nations (τὰ ἔθνη) in 15:9, 10, 11, 12, and the relationship between Jews and non-Jews (Greeks, uncircumcised, gentiles) is a prominent theme in the letter body at large.

A number of themes and expressions in 15:7-13 are allusions to the content of the entire second main part of the letter body that began in 12:1, if not to the whole letter. For now it is sufficient to state that Rom 15:7-13 is the final textual unit before the end and closing of the letter in 15:14-16:27.

To add some further details, Rom 15:7 begins with the inferential conjunction therefore (διό), and Paul's admonition that the addressees should welcome and receive one another, as also (καθὼς καί) the Christ, the Messiah, has welcomed and received them for the glory of God. In 15:8-9a, Paul gives a lengthy explanation why. The grammar of the passage is somewhat problematic, but the solution proposed by Jewett seems fair. Christ became a servant of the Jews for the sake of the truth of God in order to confirm the promises to the fathers. Similarly, Christ became a servant of the people of the nations (τὰ ἔθνη), for the sake of the mercy of God with the aim to glorify God. Paul supports this explanation with a catena of scriptural quotations, LXX Ps 17:50 (2 Sam 22:50); Deut 32:42; Ps 116:1; Isa 11:10. The textual unit ends, in Rom 15:13, with a wish that the God of hope may fill the addressees with all joy and peace, in or because of their faith and trust, so that they may all abound in hope and the power of the holy spirit.

Therefore and to conclude, Rom 15:7-13 is a summary and recapitulation of at least the exhortations of 14:1-15:6\textsuperscript{833} and most probably of the whole fourth section in 12:1-15:6. According to Jewett and Dunn, the passage provides a “coda”, a concluding unit, of the entire argument of the letter.\textsuperscript{834}

In summary, the second main part of the letter body in Rom 12:1-15:13 consists of three textual units at a sub-ordinate level, 12:1-13:14, 14:1-15:6, and 15:7-13. Paul admonishes the addressees extensively to behave properly as members of the one body in Christ. Regardless of the gift given to each person, their task should be to build up, to welcome and receive one another, and all their activities should be marked by the overall importance of love. By loving their neighbour, they fulfil the law. Many scholars understand the second main part to deal with the specific situation and the issues among the addressees in Rome, especially the textual unit in 14:1-15:6. It is possible that Paul had heard about the situation in Rome, and that he sought to help by writing this letter. It is however equally probable that the issues discussed are more general ones, which Paul had experienced elsewhere during his apostolic work in the East. Regardless of which, the unity among all believers and the demand of proper moral behaviour among both Jews and gentiles in accordance with the good news of God about Jesus Christ are of utmost importance in this second main part of the letter body. This is central to the question of the purpose of Romans.

To conclude the analysis of the textual arrangement and content of the letter body at large, which was delimited to Rom 1:16-15:13, some concluding observations on the content and the flow of the argument in the letter body at large should be discusses before the assessment and test of the preliminary thesis in Ch. 8.2 below.

Some concluding observations on the content and flow of argument of the better body at large

The text in the letter body is arranged in three main parts. The first main part of the letter is divided in three sections, with mostly a dogmatic or indicative content. The second main part has a hortatory or imperative content. As we have seen in the analyses above, though, there are important admonitions and ethical discussions in the first part of the letter body as well. In the same way, there are central theological themes discussed and recapitulated in the second part, but here they are related to the conduct of the believers in Christ.

The arrangement and syntactical structure between and within the letter body at large, together with the thematic content, constitute a coherent flow

\textsuperscript{833} Longenecker, R. N. 2016, 1014.
\textsuperscript{834} Jewett, R. 2007, 887; Dunn, J. D. G. 1988, 844-45.
of argument and smooth progress in Paul’s line of thought throughout the letter body. The function of Rom 1:16a, b, 17, and 18 seems to be of special importance, and may be seen as the headlines or summary statements of the content of the different sections. The good news of God's action in and through Jesus Christ, and its saving impact, as well as the accompanying demand on all believers to live a new ethical life in Christ, including the reasons why, have an overarching significance throughout the letter. Thus, Paul’s description of the good news and his explanation of its consequences are given a lengthy and rather detailed expression in a coherent flow of argument in the letter body of Romans.

There are however scholars who argue against the view that Paul provides well-reasoned arguments in the Letter to the Romans. According to Ed P. Sanders, Charles H. Dodd, and Heikki Räisänen, Paul is inconsistent and even contradicts himself in the letter. See the previous research in Ch. 1.3.

If the Letter to the Romans is incoherent or even contradicts itself in some places, it could affect our understanding of the purpose of Romans, depending on where these incoherencies or contradictions may be found. Several scholars have therefore claimed that Romans has several purposes. See for example the suggestions by Longenecker and Dunn, in Ch. 1.3.

The view that there are some major incoherencies and contradictions in Romans can be disputed. Even so, a cohesive arrangement and syntactical structure with a thematic continuity does not exclude the possibility of some (theo)logical contradictions. Nor would it require Paul to be always consistent in every detail and passage of his letter. However, the overall logical and coherent flow of the argument within a cohesive textual arrangement and syntactical structure including thematic continuity in the text is a prerequisite. As proved through the reading of the letter text above, there is essentially a continuous progress in the line of thought with well-reasoned arguments throughout the letter. There are five particular points in favour of the presence of this prerequisite in Romans.

First, if my analyses of the textual arrangement in the letter in Chs. 3, 4, 5, 6 and here in 8.1 are well-founded, there is only one major transition with a closing and an opening in the text at the highest level in Rom 11:33-36 and 12:1-2 respectively, besides the introduction and the end of the letter body. This transition indicates the end of the indicative first part, and the beginning of the imperative second part. The second part is a direct continuation of what have been discussed before. Some of the content and themes in the second part have directly or indirectly been part of the message and flow of the argument

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Paul is of course not always easy to understand. A lot of things are obscure and not possible to grasp for us today. There is too much distance both in time and context fully to understand Paul’s argument, especially when he alludes to things or is somewhat vague in his argument. It seems that this vagueness is often on purpose in order to draw attention to his argument. Most of the times, Paul’s flow of argument and line of thought are clear.

835
in the first part. This supports the view that there is continuity and successive progress of thought throughout the two main parts of the letter body.836

Second, in the discussion of the four γάρ-sentences in 1:16a, b, 17, and 18, it was concluded that they provide reasons and explanations for what have been stated in the introduction, with the inference in Rom 1:15. The γάρ-sentences are also summary statements and headlines for what to expect in different sections later on in the letter body. This indicates that the letter is a well thought-out and conceived text with a continuous flow of argument.

Third, the transitions in the letter body between Rom 3:20-21, 8:39-9:1, 11:36-12:1, and 15:13-14, and their sub-ordinate textual units, together with the content in each section, provide further evidence that Paul’s arguments are well arranged and closely interrelated. There is a continuous progress in the line of thought. More specifically, the good news of God regarding Jesus Christ is perhaps the most prominent theme, which occur directly or indirectly throughout the four sections of the letter body. The good news is God’s salvation-historical plan for all who believes. Paul applies it to the current situation among human beings, depicted in Rom 1:18-32, and the situation originates from the earliest time of Adam. God’s plan of salvation extends throughout the time of the Patriarchs of Israel, especially Abraham, 4:1-25, and Moses and the law, 5:14; 9:15; 10:5, and all the way to the current (Paul’s) time now (vovô) and the revelation of Jesus Christ, 3:21-26, 5:1-8:39, and points forward to the eschaton, and the end of time. The promise of rescue and salvation includes all who believes, both Jews and gentiles, all those who are in and with Christ. This is elaborated extensively in Rom 2, 5, 6, 8, 11, and 12-15.

Fourth, Paul makes extensive use of scriptural quotations throughout the letter body to explain, elaborate, and support his arguments. This also provides a progress in the line of thought and supports the view that Paul’s flow of argument in the letter body, including Rom 9-11, is well conceived.837 Similarly, Paul’s repeated use of (rhetorical) questions, which are followed by his own answers, primarily in the first main part of the letter body are also well founded. They are used either to introduce some new topic or discourse, to begin an immersed argumentation of a subject in a previous paragraph, or to enlarge on the topic of the ongoing discussion. The questions asked by Paul could very well be issues or misconceptions that he had to discuss previously during his apostolic work in the East. The answers are the arguments and clarifications of Paul’s position that he wants to give in advance, before coming to Rome in person. These questions and answers indicate further a progress in

836 Longenecker, R. N. 2016, 918-9; Jewett, R. 2007, 724-5, 727; See also McKnight, S. 2019, for the importance of Rom 12-15 for understanding the message of Rom 1-11.
837 Despotis, A. 2011, 339-358, who see the use of quotations as a fundamental part of the flow of the arguments. Cf. Räisänen, H. 2010, 262-64, who sees the arguments in Rom 9-11 as contradictory.
the flow of the argument, e.g. in Rom 3:1, 9, 27; 4:1; 6:1, 15; 7:1, 7; 8:31; 9:14, 30; 10:14-21; 11:1, 11; 14:10.

Finally, Rom 15:7-13, the final textual unit of the letter body before the ending and closing of the letter is central. It summarises and recapitulates some of the important themes of the second main part, if not of the entire letter body. Especially the message to imitate Christ is significant. The Messiah became a servant of the Jews for the sake of the truth of God, and to manifest the promises of the fathers. The Christ also became a servant to the people of the nations for the sake of the compassion and the glorification of God among all the nations. According to Paul, the people of the nations, together with the Jews, should therefore all rejoice and praise the Lord. The shoot of Jesse will come and rule and give hope to all the nations. This final textual unit is a summary of the well-conceived arguments and lines of thought in the letter body at large.\textsuperscript{838}

Thus, all these points are evidence, at least that the prerequisite is present, for a well-reasoned and continuous flow of arguments in the letter. It is fair to conclude that Paul gives an extraordinary long and overall coherent and consistent presentation of the good news throughout the letter body. This will be considered in the assessment and test of the preliminary thesis about the purpose of Romans next.

8.2 Assessment and Test of the Preliminary Thesis about the Purpose of Romans

Based on the textual arrangement and the content in the letter body with its flow of arguments and progress in the line of thoughts discussed in Ch. 8.1, it is important to address the following questions in the assessment and test of the thesis: What can be noted from the letter body that is in line with and support the preliminary thesis? What goes against or causes problems for the thesis? What can be observed in addition in the letter body that is significant and has a direct impact on the thesis? The assessment in Ch. 8.2 will be performed through a discussion of what can be noted from the letter body that supports, causes problems or adds to the six points (A) – (F), defined in Ch. 7.2, which were the basis for the formulated preliminary thesis about the purpose of Romans.

\textsuperscript{838} The view that Rom 15:7-13 is a recapitulation of the entire hortatory section in 12:1-15:6 is common. It has also been suggested that it is a summary of the entire letter body, for example by Jewett, R. 2007, 887; Dunn, J. D. G. 1988, 844-45.
The assessment and test will be made for each of these six points (A) – (F) respectively and in sequence. Based on the result of this assessment, a summary discussion of the entire dissertation and a formulation of the final thesis will follow in Ch. 9.

(A) Paul writes the letter to the romans as an apostle, called by God to serve Jesus Christ and to proclaim the good news among all the nations including the Romans.

As was noted in the introductory and closing parts of the letter, there is an obvious focus on Paul himself, who is an apostle, called by God to serve Jesus Christ, and to proclaim the good news among the nations, including the Romans. In the opening and in the introduction, Paul speaks directly in first person about himself and of his call as an apostle, his thankfulness and his prayers to God, his plans and eager desire to come to Rome to proclaim the good news. This focus continues all the way up to and including Rom 1:16a, where Paul declares that he is not ashamed of the good news. By contrast, from 1:16b through the rest of the first two main parts of the letter body, this focus on Paul seems to diminish significantly, all the way to the end of the letter. In Rom 15:14 and forward, the focus on Paul becomes prominent again. This observation could possibly indicate that the content of the letter body speaks against the first point (A) and weakens the basis for the proposed preliminary thesis about the purpose of Romans.

It should however be noted that the focus on Paul himself is not altogether absent in the letter body. Even though the content of the message regarding the good news becomes the most urgent focal point in the letter body, Paul is still central in some passages where he reconfirms and re-establishes his own role and authority as an apostle, which will be illustrated by six examples.

First, in the concluding passage about the last judgment in Rom 2:16, Paul declares that this is “according to my good news through Christ Jesus” (κατὰ τὸ εὐαγγέλιόν μου διὰ Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ). Paul’s good news is plausibly both what he is explicitly writing about in the letter, and the good news that he proclaims as an apostle.

Second, following the long and strong hymnic conclusion in 8:31-39, Paul begins the next section in 9:1 by stating that “I speak the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience testifies together with me in the holy spirit” (ἀλήθειαν λέγω ἐν Χριστῷ οὐ ψεύδομαι συμμαρτυρούσης μοι ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ). Paul most probably refers to his proclamation of the good news, both in the written letter, and in his proclamation in person as an apostle.

Third, in 10:8b, he refers to the word of faith (τὸ ῥῆμα τῆς πίστεως), which we proclaim (ὅ κηρύσσομεν). Paul refers to the message of Jesus Christ, to which the law of Moses has testified.
Fourth, Paul elaborates on the apostolic calling in a general sense next in 10:14-18, where he speaks about the call, to have faith, and to hear the word that is proclaimed (κηρύσσω), by those who are sent (ἀποστέλλω) to proclaim or bring the good news (εὐαγγελίζομαι). Paul talks about all the apostles, all those sent out for the good news of God regarding Jesus Christ. Paul naturally includes himself in this context.

Fifth, soon after in 11:13-14, Paul explicitly speaks about his own apostolic call to the nations (εἰμι ἐγὼ ἐθνῶν ἀπόστολος), which he regards as his special call to serve by which he glorifies (God) (τὴν διακονίαν μου δοξάζω). Paul even hopes to save some of his fellow Jews by his apostolic work and service.

Sixth, the final example is in Rom 12:3, where Paul begins his admonitions by declaring that he speaks through the gracious gift given to him for (the benefit of) everyone who is among the addressees (λέγω γὰρ διὰ τῆς χάριτος τῆς δόθεισις μοι παντὶ τῷ ὄντι ἐν ὑμῖν). The gracious gift given to Paul refers most reasonably to his apostolic calling to proclaim the good news of God to all the nations, including the Romans.

Thus, even if the focus on Paul himself and his apostleship are not as prominent in the letter body as it was in the introductory and concluding parts of the letter, it never disappears completely. It recurs or is alluded to in several ways and passages in the letter body.

In addition, Paul’s use of rhetorical questions is important in this respect. Rhetorical questions occur in Rom 3:1, 9, 27; 4:1; 6:1, 15; 7:1, 7; 8:31; 9:14, 30; 10:14-21; 11:1, 11; 14:10, where Paul also answers the questions himself, often with emphatic phrases added, such as the characteristic: “Not at all!” or “that will never happen!” (μὴ γένοιτο). This signals that Paul is in charge of both the questions and the answers, both the flow of the argument and the progress of the thought in the letter body. He argues and answers with authority, often with extra support directly from the scriptures (the Torah). Paul even summarises and explains, e.g. in Rom 15:4, that “all that is written” that is in the scripture, “have been written for our teaching” (ὅσα γὰρ προεγράφη εἰς τὴν ἡμετέραν διδασκαλίαν ἐγράφη). The message of the Letter to the Romans should reasonably be considered as if the apostle Paul was already in Rome, proclaiming the good news of God about Jesus Christ.

Further, Paul does not hesitate to exhort and admonish the addressees in Rome, even though he has never been there and most of the believers are personally unknown to him. The admonitions are not only good, positive, and polite pieces of advice, but also includes harsher exhortations, even threats and warnings about judgement, condemnations, total destruction, wrath, and afflictions for those who do not follow what he writes. The admonitions, counsels and warnings occur not only in Rom 12:1-15:13, but throughout the letter body, e.g. in 2:3-13; 6:10-14, and 8:12-13.

Finally, Paul often concludes important passages with long hymns, doxologies, praises and wishes, for example in Rom 8:31-38; 11:32-36; 13:11-14;
15:5-6, 13, and elsewhere. They are evidence of Paul’s commitment, conviction, and assurance of the significance and effect of the good news of God and Jesus Christ. The conviction and the assurance is not only for the benefit of himself, but for all the addressees in Rome, even for all humans beings in the nations, for both Jews and gentiles.

So, even if the explicit focus on Paul himself diminishes somewhat in the letter body, it is still very significant, at least implicitly, and comes to the fore in several ways. One possible explanation is that at the beginning and the end of the letter, Paul expresses the significance of his call to be an apostle. However, in the letter body he allows the message to speak for itself, which proves the importance of both his message directly and of his apostleship more indirectly. The message in the letter about the good news of God and Jesus Christ is what the addressees should expect to hear more about when Paul arrives in Rome in person for his future apostolic work. In a way, Paul begins his work as an apostle proclaiming the good news in the West already by sending his Letter to the Romans. When he arrives in Rome in person, this will continue with word and deed, by the power of wonders and miracles, through the power of the holy spirit, as was the case previously in the East, depicted in Rom 15:18c-19a. Thus, Paul delivers his message in the letter from the position of an apostle called by God to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ among all the nations, including the Romans. With this letter, Paul already begins the proclamation in Rome.

The conclusion is that the first point (A) is still a valid basis for the preliminary thesis.

(B) The good news of God’s action in and through Jesus Christ, which is the power of God for the salvation of all who believe, is an intrinsic and essential part of the message of the letter.

In the letter body, the good news is presented as God’s plan from the earliest times in history to the eschaton in order to rescue the world. After the letter introduction, Paul takes his departure from the human situation as a consequence of Adam’s trespassing, Rom 1:23; 5:12-21; 8:19-22, 28.839 The result is that all human beings are liable to sin, 1:28-31; 2:8-9, 12; 3:23; 5:12, 19; 6:12-22; 7:14-24, and therefore subject to the judgement of God.840 However, the good news in the letter body also includes God’s promises to the Patriarchs, particularly to Abraham and to all his seed, which give hope for all who believes, Rom 4:13-17; 8:20-21, 24; 9:9; 15:4. According to Paul, Moses and

839 Sun, W. 2019, 43-55, 77-90, 98-103.
840 For a thorough study of the importance of the last judgement in Paul’s thinking, see Stettler, C. 2017.
the law are further witnesses and pre-announces the good news regarding Jesus Christ, 5:14; 9:15; 10:5-21. God’s action in and through Jesus, the Messiah, including his life, death and resurrection is for the sake of the salvation of all who believe.

The significance of faith, righteousness, and life, revealed in and through Jesus Christ is evident, particularly in the second section of the letter body in Rom 3:21-8:39. That 3:21-31 is an elaboration of 1:17a is uncontested. The thematic and linguistic similarities between 3:22 and 1:17a have been noted since the earliest interpretations of Romans. The theme of faith, righteousness, and of God’s promise to Abraham and his seed, are elaborated further, in 4:1-25. So, the close thematic relationship between 1:17a and 3:21-4:25 should be noted. The key issue is how to understand the central term faith and the verb to have faith, to believe (πίστις, πιστεύω) in relation to God, Jesus Christ, and what faith means for human beings, both Jews and gentile people. Under this point (B), it is sufficient to state that there is no conflict here in the letter body between the law and faith. As we have seen, Paul uses quotations from the Torah frequently, and to have faith, to be faithful, is a prominent theme in the Torah as well. Faith, faithfulness together with righteousness are described as characteristics of God, and they are also central characteristics of human beings, in their relationship to Jesus Christ and to God.

As a term, the good news is not explicitly mentioned in Rom 3:21-4:25, but given the close thematic connection to 1:17a, it is reasonable that Paul here too elaborates on the important themes of the good news of God regarding Jesus Christ. It is about God’s active response through Jesus Christ to the situation among human beings, described in 1:18-3:20. The closing paragraph in 3:19-20, and the new opening in 3:21 and forward, are evidence of both the continuity and the contrast in Paul’s flow of argument, and the progress of his line of thought. The flow of argument continues in the letter body in Rom 5-8 and 9-11.

Four remarks are valid: First (i), Paul expands on the theme of life, to live (ζωή, ζάω) in Rom 5-8. The words life and to live occur predominantly, a total of 37 times, in this passage. The central δικη-words, to make righteous, to be righteous, and righteousness, together with the continuous relevance of faith, makes it fair to conclude that in 5:1-8:39 Paul begins his further elaboration and interpretation of the scriptural quotation of Hab 2:4 in Rom 1:17b.

842 LXX 1 Sam 3:20-21; 27:12; Ps 77:22, 32; 105:24; 115:1; 118:66; Hab 2:4; Is 49:7; 53:1; Jer 5:1-3; Gen 15:6; Exod 4:31; 14:31; Num 20:12; Deut 9:23; 32:20; Wis 3:9; Sir 11:21; Pss.Sol. 8:28; 14:1; 17:10.
843 The terms ζωή, ζάω occur twice before Rom 5, thrice in Rom 9-11, once in 12:1 and seven times in 14:7-11.
It is an explanation of what characterizes the righteous one and what it means to live from faith.

Second (ii), in 5:9-10, Paul introduces the verb to save (σῴζω) for the first time in the letter. This means to be saved from the wrath and into the life of the Son of God. The message links back to 1:16, 17, and 18, with salvation (σωτηρία), wrath (ὀργή), and life (ζωή), and to the entire previous part of the letter, in 1:16-4:22. However, it is also a pre-announcement of the important theme of salvation (σῴζω, σωτηρία) of all who believes, both Jews and gentiles in Rom 9:1-11:36.

Third (iii), in Rom 5:5, 8, the term the love (ἀγάπη) of God, which is poured out in the believer’s heart through the holy spirit (διὰ πνεύματος ἁγίου), is introduced in Romans for the first time. The theme of love is repeated in Rom 8:28, 35, 37, 39, and becomes an important part of the admonitions in 12:1-15:13.

Finally (iv), Paul uses Adam and Christ as important typological characters in 5:12-21. Their characterization, and the contrast between them, point out the corresponding negative and positive consequences for human beings. Paul’s entire message is set in a salvation-historical perspective, all the way from the beginning of God’s creation up until the “current” eschatological time, when God gives his gracious gift in and through Jesus Christ, the Messiah.

In Paul’s discussion besides Abraham, who was introduced in Rom 4, both Adam and Moses are explicitly introduced with names in 5:14 for the first time. Moses is of course related to the arrival of the law, but also to a specific previous historical point in time. Moses is explicitly referred to later in Rom 9:15 and in the quotation from Exod 33:18, where God speaks through Moses with proof that there is no unrighteousness in God, since it is God’s own decision to be merciful and to show compassion. This quotation is part of the narrative of Israel at Sinai and the Exodus story. In Rom 10:5-6, Paul discusses the righteousness from the law and from faith. Regarding the former, Paul quotes Lev 18:5 where God again speaks through Moses saying that those who keep God’s commandments, that is the law, shall live by them. Further, in Rom 10:19, with the quotation of Deut 32:21 and related to God’s plan for salvation, God says through Moses that he will provoke Israel through a people, or even through a foolish nation. This provocation will ultimately lead to God’s salvation of all people, both Jews and gentiles in Rom 11:25-32 (see more on this in point (D) below).

Thus, these four remarks (i) – (iv) are indications of how the good news of God about Jesus Christ are now in progress and, according to Paul, have always been part of God’s plan throughout the history for the salvation and rescue of human beings. Not only the saving of the chosen people of God, who follow in the footstep of the faith of Abraham, but in the end also of all the believers in Christ among the nations. This is a manifestation of the “one” God
and his gracious love for all his creation. Thus, the good news of God regarding Jesus Christ is an overall and significant theme in the letter body.

In summary: the second point (B) has been largely reaffirmed by the content and flow of argument in the letter body. The good news of God and Jesus Christ is the foundation for Paul’s apostleship and message in the letter. This supports and strengthens the preliminary thesis about the purpose of Romans. The good news of God does not only consist of God’s actions in and through Jesus Christ. It also includes an ethical demand for proper moral behaviour in the believers’ new righteous life in Christ, which will be discussed in greater detail under the next point (C) below.

(C) The good news is not only a doctrinal message of God’s action and salvation in and through Jesus Christ, but also includes a demand for proper moral behaviour among all the believers and to live the new righteous life in Christ.

The ethical perspective of the good news is explicit already in Rom 1:18-3:20. First negatively in 1:18-32, with a description of improper human behaviour, which can be summarised by the two words unrighteousness (ἀδικία) and ungodliness (ἀσέβεια). Next, in Rom 2, the ethical perspective is found in connection with God’s coming judgement of all people, both Jews and gentiles, where the outcome depends on the behaviour of the human beings. Paul argues that if someone’s behaviour is according to the will of God, not only hearing the law, but also doing the law, which means to behave like a Jew should behave, the result will be positive. The coming righteous judgement of God, discussed in 2:1-16, may be perceived very negatively, but it is not entirely so. Paul envisages a future hope of glory and honour, indestructibility, and peace, for all the righteous ones, who demonstrate that the works of the law is written in their hearts. This is hope for all who believes, for both Jews and gentiles. Further, the connection of the good news (τὸ εὐαγγέλιόν) to God’s impartial judgement (κρίνω), in Rom 2:16, indicates a close relationship between the two. The judgement relates to the power (δύναμις), the righteousness (δικαιοσύνη), and the wrath (ὀργὴ) of God in 1:16-18, as discussed in Ch. 4. Even though the message in 1:18-32 and 2:1-16 consists of the negative outcome or effect of God’s power, righteousness, and wrath, as part of the good news of God, the positive side and the hope are not neglected. Most significantly, the good news (τὸ εὐαγγέλιόν) with its ethical demand relates to all human beings without partiality. See point (D) below.

845 The positive side of the gospel is described by Paul later in the letter body, but the negative side is never absent even though the balance between them shifts. Both the positive and the negative sides are part of the good news throughout the letter body.
The ethical demand for proper moral behaviour is elaborated in Rom 3:21-8:39 as well. Paul explains what it means to be righteous and to have a new life in Christ. The identification with Jesus Christ is explicit and significant, and the “fruit” of this new life in Christ, in imitation and following Christ, by service and living a life free of sin, ultimately brings holiness and eternal life. To be more specific, God’s righteousness is revealed in the good news from faith, or through faith, to all who have faith in Christ, Rom 1:17, 3:21-22, and the message has the power to save, 1:16b, but it demands a response to live a new ethical life as the righteous one in Christ (ἐν Χριστῶν) and with Christ (σὺν Χριστῷ), Rom 6:8, 11, 23. Moreover, Paul expresses that there is no condemnation for those in Christ, 8:1-2, 10-11, 39. Through the gracious gift of God in Jesus Christ, all the believers may become the eschatological children of God by imitating and establishing Christ in their life. The συν-language to be with and in the likeness of Christ is strongly highlighted in 8:17, 29, 32, 35, 39, as it was in the previous passages. Thus, to be in and with Christ means life (ζωῆ), in 5:10, 17; 6:4, 11, 13, 22-23; 8:2, 6, 10, 12-13, and peace (εἰρήνη), in 5:1; 8:6, for the believers through the holy spirit who dwells in them. Thus, Paul gives a long and rather detailed description of the good news of God, as part of God’s plan, through his Messiah Jesus Christ, to save and rescue all human beings who believe and trust in God and Jesus. Paul’s description of the good news is the essence of both the content and the effect of the message and underlines its ethical demands. This is in line with and strengthens point (C), as a foundation for this thesis.

Likewise, the second part of the letter body, in Rom 12:1-15:13, includes explicit ethical demands and exhortations. It is fair to say that these demands are both a part and a consequence of Paul’s good news of God about Jesus Christ. First, the themes of offering and sacrifice in connection with the mercy of God is prominent in Rom 12-13, as throughout the letter body. The exact term sacrifice (θυσία) occurs only here in 12:1. Even though the term sacrifice or offering does not occur frequently in Romans, the idea of personal sacrifice as part of the good news of God about Jesus Christ is central, e.g. in Rom 3:24-25, 4:25; 5:6, 8-11; 6:6-11; 8:3-4; and in 15:16. Jesus Christ is the one who sacrificed himself for the redemption of human beings from their sins. In Rom 12:1, Paul urges the addressees to present themselves as a holy and living sacrifice that pleases God, which is their rational service. This is an urge to imitate and to follow Christ. Similarly, the theme of compassion and mercy, both the Greek οἰκτιρμός and other words with a related meaning, 846 The cognate θυσιαστήριον is used, in Rom 11:3, in a different context in quotations from 1 Kgs 19:10, 14.
847 Words for different kinds of suffering (θλίψις, στενοχωρία, διωγμός, with cognates), and words for personal sacrifice, occur frequently in Romans, e.g Rom 5:3, 8:35-36, 12:12. However suffering and hardship are not always related to the sacrifice of oneself. It can also be the negative outcome of sin, e.g. Rom 2:9.
χάρις, ἔλεος, etc., are prominent elsewhere in the letter, e.g. in Rom 1:5, 7; 3:24; 4:4, 16; 5:2, 15-21; 6:1, 14-17; 9:15-23; 11:5-6, 30-32. Here in Rom 12, the addressees are urged to present themselves as a living sacrifice with the help, or being aware, of the compassions of God. The sacrifice implies that they should not conform themselves to this aeon or to the current times but should rather transform themselves with renewed minds so that they are able to discern the will of God. The argument in Rom 12:1-13 presents the consequence of Paul’s previous line of thought in the first part of the letter body. Paul exhorts the addressees to behave properly. The admonitions are general in character, and state what is expected of all the believers in Christ, including the Romans. The overall principle should be love (ἡ ἀγάπη), a theme introduced earlier in Rom 5 and developed in Rom 8. Here in 12:1-13, the starting point is the love of Christ. Christ is the one with whom the believers should identify themselves, and the love of Christ should be established in the believers in response to the love of God. Jesus Christ is the one who makes this possible. He is their protection and armour against evil, and the believers shall clothe themselves in the Lord Jesus Christ. So, the ethical demands of the good news of God about Jesus Christ are part of Paul’s argument in the letter body as a whole and it is a prominent theme in 12:1-13:14.

Next, in Rom 14:1-15:13, Paul discusses some additional issues, possibly regarding the relationship between Jews and gentiles. More to the point, he discusses the relationship between people of different faiths or convictions, regardless of ethnicity. Paul continues to give advice by several admonitions on how to behave and treat one another. This is also part of the ethical demands of the good news of God regarding Jesus Christ and how the believers, including the addressees in Rome, should behave and have the same mind as Christ in their common life in Christ. The necessity to cooperate, to serve and to help and welcome one another are requirements for all believers. Their new life should be characterised by the love by following Christ. In Christ, they are all children of God. The significance of having Jesus Christ as an example, the imitation of Christ, was developed earlier in 3:21-8:39. The central message in 14:1-15:13 is that all believers in Christ should not separate and saw dissonance among one another because of differences in faiths and convictions. Believers in Christ are urged rather to accept and to help one another, to be united with Christ Jesus to give glory to God. So, in Rom 14:1-15:13, the ethical demands of the good news of God are an intrinsic part of Paul’s argument.

In summary: the good news includes ethical demands for proper moral behaviour among believers “in Christ”, and this is evident throughout the letter body. It is a dominant theme in Rom 12:1-15:13, but significantly as well in 1:18-3:20 and 3:21-8:39. The letter body therefore further strengthens the third point (C) as a foundation for the thesis about the purpose of Romans.
The good news is for all human beings, both Jews and gentiles, including the addressees in Rome, who were a mixture of Jewish and gentle believers in Christ.

The good news is for the salvation of all who believes, both Jews and gentiles, since there is no partiality in God. This includes the addressees in Rome, both Jews and gentiles. The motif of both Jews and gentiles, in relation to different aspects of the good news of God, recurs throughout the letter body in Rom 1:16; 1:18-32; 2:1-16; 3:9, 20; 3:22-23, 28-30; 4:11-12, 16-17. It is a dominant theme in much of Rom 9-11, particularly in 9:24; 30-33; 10:10-13; 11:11-12, 25-26, 32. The theme is part of the conclusion in 15:7-13.\(^{848}\) The motif is implicit as well in the references to all human beings, all believers, the strong and the weak etc. in the letter body.\(^{849}\)

To elaborate further, in Rom 1:18-3:20, Paul discusses the situation of all human beings (ἄνθρωποι), who since the creation of the world have not recognised the truth and the knowledge of God, which can be seen and perceived through the work of God. Instead, the human beings have changed their behaviour to an unrighteous and ungodly way of life and are all under sin. Contrary to the opinion in this thesis, several scholars regard the discussion in 1:18-32 as Paul’s depiction of the situation among the gentile people only, in accordance with characteristic Hellenistic Jewish polemics against non-Jews, found for example in Wis 11-15.\(^{850}\) Even if allusions from the Jewish Wisdom literature on evil and immoral behaviour among non-Jews may be found, it should be noted with Richard N. Longenecker, in Rom 1:18-32, that Paul uses “the more generic expression ἄνθρωποι”, and thus plausibly speaks “about all humanity”, including both Jews and gentiles.\(^{851}\) In a recent dissertation, Wendel Sun points to the allusions in 1:18-32, both to the narrative about Adam in Gen 1-3, and to Israel in LXX Ps 105:20. The latter relates to the golden-calf incident in Exod 32. Cf. also Jer 2:11. According to Sun, this is an indicating that Paul also has the sin of Jews in his mind.\(^{852}\) In my opinion, these latter

\(^{848}\) Olsson, B. 1973, 267, similarly states that the good news is “ett budskap för både judar och greker”.

\(^{849}\) Sanders, E. P. 2016, 615, 619-22, states that “the equality of Jew and gentile before God” is even “the leitmotif of Romans” (italic is original).


\(^{851}\) Longenecker, R. N. 2016, 196; Also Jewett R. 2007, 152-3; who believes that Paul insinuates that “Jews as well as Romans, Greeks, and barbarians are being held responsible”; See also Barclay, J. M. G. 2015, 461-74; Ábel, F. 2016, 235-8; Linebaugh, J. A. 2011, “Announcing the Human: Rethinking the Relationship Between Wisdom of Solomon 13-15 and Romans 1.18-2.11”, NTS. 57.2, 214-237.

arguments are more convincing. It is reasonable to conclude that Paul in Rom 1:18-32 refers to the situation among all people, both Jews and gentiles.

Further, the theme of God’s judgement on all humans equally, both Jews and gentiles, is explicit in Rom 2. The law and its role for both Jews and gentiles is discussed as well. Paul states that the gentiles do not need to be circumcised, but a gentile must behave according to God’s will, and then he or she will be regarded similar to a Jew. Paul concludes in Rom 2:25-29 that what matters regardless of ethnicity is that all behave according to God’s will. Paul states also in 3:9 and 3:19-20 that all humans are under sin, and no one can become righteous before God through “the works of the law”, since the law only gives knowledge of sin and proves the existence of sin.\(^{853}\)

In Rom 3:21-8:39, Paul gives a description of God’s action through Jesus Christ in response to the situation of humanity just depicted. God’s righteousness is revealed through faith in Christ, or the faithfulness of Christ, for all who believe, that is for both Jews and gentiles, since there is no partiality in God, 3:22-23, 29-30. God’s action is for the benefit and rescue of all. Further, both Jews and gentiles, who are believers in Christ, are heirs of Abraham and entitled to the promise of God in 4:13-16, and they are described as co-heirs with Jesus Christ in 8:17. To follow the example of Christ in contrast to Adam’s trespassing, and to be in and with the Messiah is a prominent theme in 5:12-21. Consequently, the new righteous life of faith in Christ is crucial for both Jews and gentiles in Rom 6 and 8. For more on the ethical demands see the previous observation (C).

In Rom 9:1-11:36, the dominant theme is the relationship between Jews and gentiles in God’s overall plan to rescue all who believe, to save the whole world. Paul first highlights and explains the current precarious issue that the majority of Jews do not believe in Christ, the Messiah, while gentiles have the opportunity to become righteous before God through their faith. Paul explains that this is part of God’s mysterious plan to save all, both Jews and gentiles. Paul concludes that God had put everyone under sin, so that in the end, he can have mercy on everyone, both Jews and gentiles.

In Rom 12:1-15:13, Paul exhorts the addressees, both Jews and gentiles, to following the example of Jesus Christ and to behave in the same righteous way towards other people. It is most significant that, even if they differ in beliefs and convictions about e.g. food regulations or calendar issues, they should still strive for unity in their new life in Christ. The unity between people of different ethnic groups, or people with different beliefs and convictions, both Jews and gentiles, is a crucial aspect of the good news. This unity, as members of one body in Christ, includes all.

Most scholars argue that Paul’s apostolic responsibility was primarily to the gentiles, that is to the uncircumcised, the non-Jews, as defined for example

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\(^{853}\) Byrskog, S. 2006, 89; Longenecker, R. N. 2016, 366-70; on the meaning of “works of law”.

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in Gal 1:16; 2:7a, and analogous to Peter’s apostleship to the Jews in Gal 2:7b-8.\textsuperscript{854} As we saw in Ch. 2.3, scholars usually point to the expressions in Rom 1:5, 13 and 11:13 as evidence for this, and translate the term τὰ ἔθνη as the gentiles. In their view, these expressions strengthen the understanding that Paul’s apostleship was primarily or only directed to gentiles. Some therefore argue that Paul’s exposition of the good news in the Letter to the Romans is directed to gentiles, not to Jews.\textsuperscript{855} This might lead to the thought that the good news presented by Paul in Romans is not for the Jews as well, or in Stanley K. Stowers words that there are “separate but related ways of Jews and gentiles” how Jews and gentiles are saved.\textsuperscript{856}

However, as was argued in Ch. 2.3, always to equate the term (the people of) the nations (τὰ ἔθνη) with gentiles that is only with non-Jews is not a certain conclusion in Paul’s Letter to the Romans. It is likely that in his apostolic work in the East, outside Judaea and Galilea, Paul always began his work among the Jewish groups in the synagogue if possible. That was part of his working strategy. Why not so also in Rome? The addressees in Rome, both Jews and gentiles, are already believers in Christ who live among, or close to, the Jewish congregations in Rome. Most Jews in Rome did not believe in Jesus as the Christ. It is plausible that, when writing to the addressees in Rome, Paul would have expected that Jews would also listen to the message, both Jewish believers and non-believers in Christ. With the recurring motif of “both Jews and gentiles” in the letter body, it is fair to assume that the Jews listening

\textsuperscript{854} Scholars refer to Gal 2:7-9. Paul explicitly states that at the Jerusalem meeting he was entrusted with the good news of the uncircumcised, while Peter was entrusted with the good news of the circumcised. God gave the apostleship of the circumcised to Peter, and to Paul the apostleship εἰς τὰ ἔθνη (literally “into the nations”), often translated as the apostleship to the gentiles. They all shook hands at the meeting that Paul and Barnabas should work for or into the gentiles or the nations (εἰς τὰ ἔθνη), and James, Peter, and John for the uncircumcised (εἰς τὴν περιτομήν). Dunn, J. D. G. 2009, 454-61. See the discussion on Gal 2:7-9 in Ch. 2.3.

\textsuperscript{855} Nanos, M. D. 1996, 75-84; Stowers, S. K. 1994, 30, 287; Fredricksen, P. 2017, 155-57. Even though there may have been Jews listening to the message of the letter it is, according to them, explicitly addressed to gentiles.

\textsuperscript{856} This issue is discussed by Sandnes, K. O. 2018, 11-15. The view that the good news of God regarding Jesus Christ is not for Jews is expressed more directly by e.g. Eisenbaum, P. 2009, 242, “Jesus saves, but he only saves the Gentiles”; Likewise Gager, J. G. 2015, 28, declares “so, [Paul] does not imagine salvation for Jews through their acceptances of Jesus”; Stowers, S. K. 1994, 205, states, somewhat differently that “Israel does have a relation to Christ’s faithfulness, although Paul speaks as if it differs from that of the gentiles”. They “share in the blessings of Abraham brought about by his heir, Christ, [but] Paul does not assimilate the two into a single scheme”, rather Paul discusses two “separate but related ways of Jews and gentiles”; \textit{Ibid.}, 133, 152, 189, 229-30. See also the recent discussion in Boccaccini, G. 2020, \textit{Paul’s Three Paths to Salvation}, Wm. B. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, MI. Boccaccini argues that Paul’s concern was to present the good news of God and Jesus as salvation for sinners primarily. He concludes: “Rather, Christ is the \textit{third} path to salvation offered specifically to sinners (Jews and gentiles alike), who ‘under the power of sin’ failed to live according to the torah and the natural law, which God gave to Jews and gentiles, respectively, as effective paths to salvation for the righteous,” Boccaccini, G. 2020, 162.
would have understood that the good news and the message of the letter also was related to them. And Paul explicitly expresses his hope in Rom 11:14-16 that, by his message and apostolic work, he might make the unconvinced Jews “jealous”, in order to convince at least some of them of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Messiah.

Even if Paul’s apostolic obligations were to proclaim the good news among the nations, and primarily to the uncircumcised, to the non-Jews, it is not unreasonable to think that the good news of God regarding Jesus Christ presented by Paul in the Letter to the Romans is intended for all human beings, both Jews and gentiles. It is important to separate between, on the one hand, Paul’s special assignment, which at least in the East was directed especially to the non-Jews, while other apostles were responsible for the Jews, and on the other hand, the good news of God regarding Jesus Christ, which is for all human beings, both Jews and gentiles. It is incongruous to argue that the good news of the (Jewish) Messiah was for the purpose of saving “only” gentiles, and “not” to save Jews. It is, however, possible that some Jews or gentile believers at the time of Paul would have argued that the Messiah was for the purpose of saving people with a gentile background as well, but only if they were circumcised, and so became Jews (cf. Galatians). If Paul’s message was controversial in those circles, it was probably because he explicitly argued that the good news of the Messiah was for the purpose of saving the gentiles as well, but without any need for them to be circumcised, that is to become Jews. Therefore, the letter body does not contradict point (D) but adds to and strengthens it. This supports the thesis about the purpose of Romans.

(E) Paul’s future plan is missiological in character and involves his coming westwards, particularly to Rome to bring and to proclaim the good news of God regarding Jesus Christ.

It was noted in the analyses in Chs. 3-6 that Paul’s future missiological plans is to come to the West and to Rome. Paul’s plans are however NOT explicitly mentioned or referred to in the letter body. This could weaken the basis for the preliminary thesis about the purpose of Romans. There are allusions though and other aspects of Paul’s message in the letter body that can be related to his future geographical missiological plans.

First, in Ch. 8.1, we saw the rather smooth transitions from the introduction of the letter body, beginning in Rom 1:8, through 1:13-15 and the four γάρ-sentences in 1:16-18 and further on throughout the first and second main parts of the letter body, all the way to the end of the letter body in 15:33. There is continuous progress in Paul’s line of thought with a well-reasoned flow of argument in the entire letter body in 1:8-15:33. Therefore, the different sections of the letter body should not be read separately and in isolation of each
other, nor should the letter body at large be understood and interpreted in isola-
tion from the four introductory and concluding letter parts. It is necessary to
read all parts together to ensure a reasonable idea about the reason why Paul
wrote the Letter to the Romans.

In point (A) above, it was argued that Paul delivers his message in the letter
body from the position of an apostle, called by God to proclaim the good news
regarding Jesus Christ among the nations. In the successive transitions from
the introduction to the main arguments of the letter body, Paul explicitly ex-
presses his eagerness to proclaim the good news to the Romans in 1:15. He
then, in fact, seems to do just that. He proclaims the good news to the audience
in Rome throughout the letter body. Thus, Paul sends the long and detailed
presentation of the good news in the letter body and this can be seen as the
beginning of his apostolic work in the geographical West, beginning among
the addressees at the geographical centre of the Empire, in Rome.

Even if there is no explicit reference to Paul’s geographical plan for his
future missiological work, the ambiguous term τὰ ἔθνη is mentioned several
times in the letter body. As we saw in Ch. 2.3, it is not impossible that τὰ ἔθνη
is a geographical term that refers to people who live in geographical areas
outside Judaea and Galilee. So, the use of the term τὰ ἔθνη shows that the
message of the letter body, the good news of God, is meant to be presented,
not only to the addressees in Rome, but to all people, to both Jews and gentiles
who live in different geographical nations and areas outside Judaea and Gali-
lee. This is relevant for the assessment of the thesis of the letter purpose.

A related issue pertains to the fact that Paul’s description and arguments in
favour of the good news are extraordinary long and full of subject matters.
Why such a long message and why so many details, if he only wanted to in-
troduce himself as an apostle, or to give an overview of his future geographical
plans, and/or a summary of the good news, especially if at a later stage he
wants to proclaim the good news in person in Rome and further West? The
four introductory and concluding parts would have been sufficient, together
with a much shorter letter body, as stated by James Dunn, see Ch. 1.3 above.
Instead, Paul wrote such a long letter body.

What is perhaps special about Romans is its unified and overall theme
about the good news of God and Jesus Christ for the salvation and rescue of
all who believe. The explication of the good news is the central theme through-
out the letter body of Romans. However, the question remains why Paul wrote
such a long exposition if he was planning to come in person to Rome later. A
related question is: If Paul began his apostolic work in the West with the Letter
to the Romans, as indicated above, why did he send it to addressees who were
already believers in Christ?

One possible answer to these questions could be the mixed origin of the
addressees in Rome, with both Jewish and gentile believers in Christ, who
were still associating with or were living close to the Jewish congregations in
Rome, of whom the majority were not believers in Christ, see Ch. 2.2 and 2.3.
This would make it necessary for Paul to spell out a number of issues and themes in order to be sufficiently complete, but not to induce in advance too many rumours and false interpretations before he could come in person and clarify the message himself. In addition, Phoebe and the many prominent persons and leaders in Rome, whom Paul knew, greeted, and had worked with, would probably help to introduce, and explain the message for the addressees.

Even though Paul writes primarily to believers in Christ to strengthen them and for mutual encouragement, non-believers would most probably also hear the message before he could come to Rome himself. It is possible that some information and opinions about Paul as a controversial apostle were already present in Rome, cf. Acts 28:21-22. There is some evidence for this in the letter body. For example, Paul’s view that gentile believers did not need circumcision could have been an issue. There may also have been those who held the opinion that he was against the law, or that the law no longer has any function in the new life in Christ. Thus, he would have to elaborate his views on the law, sin, etc. in some detail, and on how these issues affect the relationship between human beings. Similarly, Paul states that there are different opinions and convictions among believers on food regulations and on calendar and time issues, but he also argues that in these eschatological and urgent times, they must solve these differences with respect and in accordance with the love of God in Christ.

Romans is a long exposé of the good news of God regarding Jesus Christ, but it does not cover all aspects of the good news. Several issues are not included, at least not in detail. However, I understand the descriptions and explanations in the letter body to be a good example of how Paul would normally have introduced the good news of God regarding Jesus Christ to people and in assemblies that he had not visited before. The good news is presented to the specific addressees in Rome by a rather detailed account, but not in full. Paul’s plan is to continue to elaborate further on the good news, with additional new aspects and more detailed explanations of different topics. It would require him to come in person later and to bring the good news of God regarding Jesus Christ in full, with words and deeds, with the power of signs and wonders, through the power of the holy spirit. This is part of Paul’s future missiological plans when he comes in person to Rome to start his mission to the West.

In summary and to conclude the discussion of the fifth point (E): Paul’s future plans are NOT explicitly mentioned or referred to in the letter body. However, it has been argued above that there are allusions and other aspects of the message in the letter body that can be related to his future geographical missiological plans. Most importantly, the message of the entire letter body is a continuous line of thought with a coherent flow of argument. This means that we cannot read the main parts of the letter body in isolation from the letter opening, the introduction, and the ending and closing of the letter. Further, Paul presents his message in the letter body very much from the perspective of the apostle to the nations. The use of the term the nations in the letter body
also shows that the message is intended to be presented, not only to the addressees in Rome, but is a message directed to all people, both Jews and gentiles, who live in different geographical nations and areas. Also, in line with Paul’s explicitly expressed eagerness to proclaim the good news to the Romans in Rom 1:15, it seems that Paul in fact begins to do just that in the letter body. He proclaims the good news to those in Rome, who live in the geographical centre of the Roman Empire. A possible reason for Paul’s rather long and detailed message in the letter body could be that the addressees are a mixture of both Jewish and gentle believers in Christ, who are still associated with or who live close to the Jewish congregations in Rome, among whom the majority of Jews were not believers in Christ. Therefore, Paul found it necessary to be sufficiently complete, but also not to induce in advance too many rumours and false interpretations of his message. This would not have been beneficial for his mission before he could come in person to clarify the message himself. Therefore, the letter message alludes to and is part of Paul’s coming geographical missiological work, beginning with those who live in Rome, but which will eventually lead all the way to Spain.

(F) Paul wishes to establish a close relationship and co-operation with the addressees for his future apostolic work in the West, with the overall goal being the hearkening of faith among all the nations, from Jerusalem and all the way to the end of the world, where Rome, the geographical centre of the Roman Empire, is the important starting point.

The last and sixth point (F) concerns Paul’s wish to establish a close relationship and co-operation with the addressees for his apostolic work in the West. As we saw in Ch. 2.2, one of Paul’s missional strategies is to work together with others as a team. This teamwork for the good news includes people with different gifts and talents. This strategy could have been adopted, not only by Paul in his apostolic work, but maybe by all or by most other apostles as well. An indication of this is the many apostles, co-workers and other associates of Paul mentioned in Rom 16. Some of them where probably working together, such as Prisca and Aquila, and Andronicus and Junia. It could also be a missiological strategy that might go back all the way to the earliest missionary work by the apostles, even a strategy introduced by Jesus himself, cf. Mark 6:7, Matt 28:18-20; Luk 10:1; Act 19:22. In order that Paul may be successful in his work in the West, which would begin in Rome, it would be necessary for Paul to establish a close relationship and co-operation with the addressees. The question is whether the letter body, with its content and the flow of arguments, provides any evidence of this, point (F), or whether the letter body contradicts this point.
As mentioned in the discussion above, the unity among all believers and that the addressees should respect, welcome, and help one another, is an important part of the good news of God and Jesus Christ. Through his message in the letter body, Paul wants to strengthen this unity. To work for the good news as a team, together with people of different gifts and talents, who are all members of the body of Christ is the ideal expressed in Rom 12:3-8. To achieve this, Paul wants and needs to influence the addressees’ minds and behaviour, which is the aim of the ethical and hortatory parts of the good news, especially in 12:1-15:6, but also elsewhere. The significance of unity among believers in Christ, as members of the body of Christ is an obvious theme, including a demand to receive and welcome one another, and to help to carry other people’s burdens. This is to bring out and to directly manifest the good news of God in action and to imitate and follow Christ.

Considering this, even if it not explicit in the letter body, Paul reasonably expects the addressees to unite with him as well and to help him in his call and service as an apostle when he comes in person to Rome. The overall aim of proclaiming the good news of God, with words, deeds, the power of miracles and wonders in the power of the holy spirit, is the hearkening of faith (ὑπακοή πίστεως) among all the nations, including the people in Rome.

Thus, Paul presents the content of the good news of God about Jesus Christ in the letter body, including its ethical aspects to the Romans. By this, Paul wants to influence the addressees’ mind and behaviour and to strengthen the unity among them by sending the Letter to the Romans. This is for the benefit of all the addressees in Rome, and the strengthening relates to both their faith and their moral behaviour. Even though it is not explicitly stated, the unity among the believers in Rome is a prerequisite for their future work together among all nations. Their help and co-operation are something Paul probably expects to receive from the addressees when he comes to Rome in person to begin his apostolic work in the West. There is no conflict here between Paul’s wish to influence the addressees’ mind and behaviour, and his desire to enlist their help by establishing co-operation with them for his future apostolic work in the West. A prerequisite for a successful apostolic work is that those involved are good examples themselves and show the right mind and proper behaviour in the likeness of Christ. This is not firm evidence, but at least it does not contradict the relevance of the last point (F) for the purpose of Romans.

A summary of the assessment and test of the preliminary thesis

To summarise the assessment and test of the preliminary thesis, through the analysis of the six points (A) – (F) that serve as the basis for the thesis, there is a need to return and provide some answer to the questions stated in the introduction of Ch. 8 – What points are still in line with and support the preliminary thesis? What arguments run against or cause problems? What additional
observations can be made in the letter body that are important and have a direct impact on the thesis?

An obvious result of the assessment is that points (B), (C), and (D) are still in line with and supported or even strengthened by the content and flow of the argument in the letter body. This means that the message of the Letter to the Romans concerns and has its foundation in the good news of God regarding Jesus Christ, which is the power of God for the salvation of all who believe. The good news is not only a doctrinal message, but also includes an ethical demand on all the believers in Christ. The good news is for all human beings, both Jews and gentiles, including those who live in Rome. The good news is an intrinsic part of the message of the letter, and it is part of the reason why Paul wrote the Letter to the Romans.

Points (A), (E) and (F) are somewhat problematic in various degree. First point (A) that the focus is on Paul, who is writing as an apostle, called to serve Jesus Christ and to proclaim the good news of God. This focus diminishes in the letter body but does not disappear completely. The focus on Paul the apostle is still very significant in the letter body, at least implicitly, and comes to the fore in several ways and in several important passages. One possible explanation could be that at the beginning and end of the letter, the significance of Paul’s call to be an apostle is expressed directly, but in the first and second main parts of the letter body Paul’s message and flow of argument are allowed to speak for itself. The message in the letter and the way Paul expresses it, explains it, and argues in its favour, provides proof of his apostleship. In a way Paul already begins his apostolic work in the West by sending his Letter to the Romans, a work which will continue with word and deed, by the power of wonders and miracles, in the power of the holy spirit when he arrives in Rome in person.

Point (E) is more problematic. Paul’s plan is missiological in character and involves his journey to the West, particularly to Rome, to bring and to proclaim the good news of God about Jesus Christ. These plans are NOT explicitly mentioned or referred to in the letter body. There are however allusions in and other important aspects of Paul’s message in the letter body that relate to his future geographical missiological plans. Most importantly, the letter body should not be read in isolation from the four opening and closing parts of the letter, where his plans were expressed explicitly. Rather the flow of argument and the progress in his line of thought in the letter body should be read in the light of Paul’s position as an apostle to the nations, and in the light of both his previous and future apostolic work for the good news of God regarding Jesus Christ. To repeat, it seems that, by sending the Letter to the Romans, Paul is beginning his missiological work in the West.

Point (F) does NOT appear explicitly in the letter body at large. It is unproblematic that Paul wishes to establish a close relationship with the addressees and to strengthen the unity among them. Paul presents the content of the good news, including its ethical aspects, to influence the mind and behaviour
of the addressees, and to strengthen the unity among the believers. This is for the sake of the all the addressees in Rome. The problem is whether the expressions about unity and co-operation with the addressees is for the sake of the coming apostolic work. Paul’s working strategy as an apostle in the East, as argued in Ch. 2.2, was to work together with other apostles, co-workers and associates, as a team. This was reasonable Paul’s aim also in the West. Since the letter body should not be read apart from the opening and closing parts of the letter, where Paul’s apostolic work are in focus, it is plausible to make this connection. Further, a prerequisite for a successful apostolic work is that those involved should be good examples themselves and that they should show both the right mind and righteous behaviour in unity and in the likeness of Christ. The content of the letter body does at least not contradict the final point (F) as a base for the thesis about the purpose of Romans.

Following this assessment and test of the preliminary thesis, it is now time for the concluding discussion and the formulation of the final thesis of this dissertation in Ch. 9.
The aim of the present work is to determine the purpose of the Letter to the Romans, a purpose that does justice to the content and the flow of the argument of the letter as well as to the syntactic structure of the text.

To limit the scope of the work, the entire letter has not been equally meticulously analysed. A close reading and detailed analysis of the letter opening Rom 1:1-7, the introduction of the letter body Rom 1:8-18, the end of the letter body Rom 15:14-33, and the letter closing Rom 16:1-27, has been carried out in Chs. 3-6. The result of these four analyses has been summarised in six points as the foundation for the preliminary thesis about the purpose of Romans that is formulated in Ch. 7. These six points have then been assessed and tested against the overall textual arrangement, the content, and the flow of the argument in the letter body at large in Ch. 8.

Prior to the main analyses, three preparatory studies were conducted – a text critical analysis in Ch. 2.1; an analysis and reconstruction of the historical and social context of the Letter to the Romans, including the identity of the addressees in Ch. 2.2 and 2.3; and an analysis of the overall syntactic structure and textual arrangement at the highest level of the letter in Ch. 2.4. The latter was done to delimit the text, on the one hand, in the four introductory and concluding parts analysed in Chs. 3-6, and on the other hand, to determine the text in the letter body which was used for the assessment and test in Ch. 8.

Below follows, in Ch. 9.1, a final discussion of the work and the result of the preparatory studies, the main analyses of the four introductory and concluding parts of Romans, and the assessment and test of the preliminary thesis. In addition, some more general and significant issues related to this study will also be discussed. Then, in Ch. 9.2 the final thesis about the purpose of Romans will be presented.

9.1 Concluding Discussion
The text critical analysis, in Ch. 2.1, showed that there are no large-scale incorporations of glosses or interpolations that have a direct impact on the purpose of Romans. For example, Robert Jewett’s suggestions that Rom 16:17-20, 25-27 was a later addition and that 16:24 is original were disregarded. The
conclusion and assumption are that the textual basis for this work is the Letter to the Romans in NA28, which has a 16-chapter letter text and the last chapter is 16:1-23, 25-27. This is a common and non-controversial position among scholars on Romans.

Many uncertainties remain regarding the historical and social context of Paul and the assemblies of believers in Rome, including the identity of the addressees of Romans. Some possible reconstructed data were presented in Chs. 2.2 and 2.3. These are used in the main analyses of this work and the most important ones are: Paul was a Jew, called to be an apostle to the nations, to bring and proclaim the good news of God regarding Jesus Christ, the Messiah. Paul was involved in an inter-Jewish debate regarding the good news, but possibly also in discussions with gentiles about his message. He became involved with Roman and Jewish authorities. He met some opposition and was punished for his opinions. He never converted from or left Judaism, even though he became a believer in Jesus as the Christ, the Messiah. The believers in Christ in Rome consisted of both Jews and gentiles at the time of Paul’s letter, and they were associated with at least some of the Jewish synagogues. The believers in Christ in Rome were a tiny minority, who lived among a larger minority of non-believing Jews, and among the great majority of non-believing gentiles from many nations in Rome. The analysis has shown that the common view among scholars today that the identity of the addressees of the letter to Rome were only or predominantly of gentile origin can be challenged. They were a more evenly mixed group of both Jewish and gentile believers, probably 50/50%, even though it is impossible to determine the exact proportions. The premise used for this thesis is therefore that Paul wrote to both Jewish and gentile believers in Christ, to all those in Rome, loved by God and called to be holy.

The positions taken in Chs. 2.2 and 2.3 for this thesis are rather common among more recent scholars, except that (i) the addressees were an evenly mixed group of both Jewish and gentile believers in Rome, and maybe that (ii) the size of the group of believers in Christ was a very small minority, who lived among the great majority of Jews and gentiles in Rome who did not believe in Jesus Christ. Although scholars agree that the group of believers was very small, the impact of such a small size on the purpose of the letter is not expressed. The first point (i) is not decisive for this thesis. If there were at least some Jewish believers among the addressees, although in minority, the main conclusions stand. If the position taken in this work is reasonable, it gives additional strength to the argument and the final thesis. The conclusion in point (ii) is more important for the thesis. The rather small size of the assemblies of believers in Christ in Rome, makes it more probable that Paul would see a need, and would have wished, to begin his future mission in the West by direct apostolic work in Rome and in the surrounding areas, where he would hope to work together in cooperation with all the current believers in Rome.
In the preparatory study of the overall textual arrangement of Romans in Ch. 2.4 the text was divided into the letter opening in Rom 1:1-7, the introduction to the letter body in 1:8-18, the end of the letter body in 15:14-33, and the letter closing in 16:1-23, 25-27, besides the letter body at large, consisting of a first doctrinal and a second hortatory part.

The four introductory and concluding parts of the letter were analysed in detail in Chs. 3-6. The analysis was performed in two steps for each of these four parts of the letter. First, a close reading and detailed analysis in order to understand the textual arrangement, the content, the important themes and the flow of argument and line of thought for each particular part of the letter. Second, a study was conducted of what observations could be perceived from the content and flow of argument that would provide information about the purpose of Romans. This is a feasible approach since the purpose and occasion of a letter are notably first expressed by the author in the introductory parts. Later the message and the purpose are summarised and recapitulated in the concluding parts. This is particularly the case in a first letter sent to the addressees in order to establish a new contact and relationship. This was the case with Paul’s Letter to the Romans.

The results of the main analyses were summarised and brought together in Ch. 7. The following four questions were central: What observations that gives information about the purpose of Romans are related and common in the opening, the introduction, the ending, and the closing of the letter? What additional observations found in the opening and introduction alone indicate and point forward to what can be expected in the discussion and flow of argument in the main parts of the letter body? What observations in the letter ending and closing alone recapitulate, bring further light on, and strengthens the themes and arguments that have been discussed previously? What information regarding the historical and social context of Paul and the addressees in Rome has a bearing on the purpose of Romans? With these issues in mind, the main analyses were summarised in the following six points:

(A) Paul writes the Letter to the Romans as an apostle, called by God to serve Jesus Christ and to proclaim the good news among all the nations, including the Romans.

(B) The good news of God’s action in and through Jesus Christ, which is the power of God for the salvation of all who believes, is an intrinsic and essential part of the message of the letter.

(C) The good news is not only a doctrinal message of God’s action and salvation in and through Jesus Christ, but also includes a demand for proper moral behaviour among all the believers and to live the new righteous life in Christ.

(D) The good news is for all human beings, both Jews and gentiles, including the addressees in Rome, who were a mixture of Jewish and gentile believers in Christ.

(E) Paul’s future plan is missiological in character and involves his coming West, particularly to Rome to bring and to proclaim the good news of God regarding Jesus Christ.
(F) Paul wishes to establish a close relationship and co-operation with the addressees for his future apostolic work in the West, with the overall goal being the hearkening of faith among all the nations, from Jerusalem and all the way to the end of the world, where Rome, the geographical centre of the Roman Empire, is the important starting point.

Based on these six points the preliminary thesis about the purpose of Romans was formulated in Ch. 7.

The above six points (A) – (F), were then assessed and tested in Ch. 8 against the content and the overall flow of argument and line of thought in the first doctrinal part, delimited to Rom 1:16-11:36, and the second hortatory part of the letter body in 12:1-15:13. The function of Rom 1:16-18 in the letter was especially elaborated. The important questions to have in mind for this assessment and test were: What can be noted from the letter body that is in line with and supports the preliminary thesis? What arguments run against or causes problems for the thesis? What additional observations that have a direct impact on the thesis can be made?

The result of the assessment was that points (B), (C), and (D) are still in line with and supported, even strengthened by, the content and flow of the arguments in the letter body at large. Points (A), (E) and (F) proved to be problematic to various degrees. For point (A) the focus on Paul as an apostle somewhat diminishes in the letter body. However, it is never completely absent but remains very significant, at least implicitly, and it comes to the fore in several ways and central passages. In the main parts of the letter body Paul’s message and flow of argument is allowed to speak for itself, and Paul’s position and authority as an apostle is much highlighted in certain points of the exposition. In a way, Paul already begins his apostolic work in the West by sending his Letter to the Romans, a work that will continue later when he arrives in Rome in person. Point (E) is more problematic. Paul’s future apostolic geographical working plans are NOT explicitly mentioned or referred to in the letter body. There are however allusions and other important aspects of Paul’s message in the letter body that relate to his future missiological plans. Point (F) is somewhat problematic for the preliminary thesis as well. What is unproblematic is that Paul wishes to establish a close relationship with the addressees, influence their behaviour, and to strengthen the unity among them. This was probably also in order to prepare for their common work together for the good news among all nations. A prerequisite for a successful apostolic work is that those involved are themselves good examples as believers in the likeness of Christ. Paul’s strategy in the East was to work together with others as a team, and it would be reasonable to assume that this is also his plan for the mission in Rome and further West. Even if point (F) is not directly supported, it is not contradicted by the content and the flow of the arguments in the letter body at large.
So, the assessment and test in Ch. 8 prove, or did at least not contradict, the six points (A) – (F) as a basis for the preliminary thesis. There are two additional observations from the study of the letter body that must be considered in this concluding discussion before the final thesis can be articulated. First (i), the extra-ordinary length of Paul exposition of the good news of God about Jesus Christ. Second (ii), the coherent flow of argument and progress in the line-of-thought throughout the entire letter body.

Scholars agree on the first observation (i) and have noticed the great length of Paul’s exposition in the letter, but they explain it in several ways. The second (ii) is discussed more extensively, and scholars often find contradictions and inconsistences in the letter, see Ch. 1.3. According to some scholars, one reason could be that Paul had several primary reasons for writing to Rome, and each had to be elaborated at some length in different parts of the letter. The incoherencies between different sections and textual units could be the result of different internal textual contexts and could also depend on whether Paul had several reasons for sending the letter. The messages and arguments then do not have to be fully coherent throughout the letter.

There are, however, no distinct marks in the text of Romans to indicate that Paul had several main reasons for writing, especially not in the opening and introduction of the letter, which was argued in Ch. 1.1. This contrasts with the text of First Corinthians and Philippians for example. In Romans, there is a close correlation between what is expressed in the introduction and at the end of the letter, and the fact that this letter was the first Paul wrote to the Romans makes one main purpose more likely. This does not mean that the overall purpose is not characterised by or expressed through several partial reasons or themes that are closely connected and inseparable, and which form the basis for the purpose, as the six points (A) – (F) has shown.

In addition, it was argued in Ch. 8.1 that there is a continuous flow of the argument and line of thought in the letter body. At the syntactical level, the transitions between the textual units show coherence. Paul systematically uses rhetorical questions and answers, dialogue and speech in character. He frequently uses scripture quotations. Important themes recur and there are connections between different themes throughout the letter. All this show the smooth and successive progress in Paul’s message. Paul is reasonably complete in his exposé of the good news, plausibly due to its importance and/or to avoid too many misunderstandings. He elaborates on both its doctrinal content and its ethical demand on the believers, and he discusses some important issues that could be controversial among the Romans. This explains the reason for the great length and the flow of argument and strengthens the view that there is one purpose of Romans. This implies that the letter body with its different sections should not be read in isolation from the other the four opening and closing parts of the letter. The different sections of the letter body must be read in the light of what has been discussed before, both in the letter body itself and previously in the letter opening. Similarly, it is reasonable to assume
that some topics or themes discussed in the long letter body, which are not fully understood or directly explained in the immediate context, must also be seen in the light of what are expressed and elaborated later in the letter body and in the concluding parts of the letter.

Besides giving extra strength and support to points (B), (C) and (D), the two observations (i) and (ii) also give support to, or at least do not contradict, points (A), (E) and (F).

So, the assessment and test of whether these six points can be a reasonable basis for the thesis about the purpose of the Letter to the Romans is strengthened or indirectly supported, or has at least not been directly contradicted, by the content and flow of arguments in the letter body of Romans at large. The concluding step is to formulate the final thesis about the purpose of Romans.

9.2 The Final Thesis about the Purpose of Romans

Paul writes the letter to Rome as an apostle called by God to serve Jesus Christ and to proclaim the good news among all the nations, including in Rome, the centre of the Roman Empire. His mission in the East is almost completed, and Paul plans to continue his apostolic work in the West. Paul wants to strengthen the faith of the addressees in Rome and to influence their mind and behaviour. He wants to work together with the addressees in Rome in his future apostolic work. The addresses in Rome are of both Jewish and gentile origin, and they live close to or are associated with the Jewish congregations in Rome. The Jewish and gentile believers in Rome were at that time a tiny minority, among the great majority of non-believing Jews and gentiles. There was plenty of missionary work to do, first in Rome and in the surrounding areas, before continuing West, all the way to Spain.

The importance of the good news of God regarding Jesus Christ is evident and is the foundation and point of departure both for Paul’s apostolic work and for his Letter to the Romans. He wants to share with the addressees some spiritual gift graciously given by God, and he wants to receive in return some fruit among the Romans just as among the other nations. The good news of God is not only about God’s action in and through Jesus Christ for the salvation and rescue of all who believes. It also includes an ethical demand about proper moral behaviour by all believers. According to Paul, the good news of God regarding Jesus Christ, the Messiah, is for both Jews and gentiles.

The fruit that Paul wants to receive from the Romans is both an additional number of new believers in Christ and a new way of life among them, as righteous believers in Christ. He wants to strengthen those who are already believers, so that they can all be mutually encouraged by one another’s faith. The unity among believers as members of the body of Christ is central to the success of Paul’s coming apostolic work. Therefore, he is eager to proclaim the good news also in Rome. There is no contradiction in Paul’s wish to influence
the addressees’ faith and life in Christ, and their coming apostolic work together. Both are a prerequisite for a successful apostolic work. Those involved should themselves be good examples for other people. They should show the right mind and proper behaviour in the likeness of Christ, as they work together for the good news of God and Jesus Christ.

There are two likely explanations why Paul writes such a long Letter to the Romans. First, since there is a possibility that his imminent trip to Jerusalem could be unsuccessful or could delay his departure for Rome, Paul initiates his apostolic work in the West by this letter. Second, Paul wants to influence the addressees’ mind and behaviour and to strengthen the unity among them, so that they can help one another and work together to fulfil the good news, and to participate in the future apostolic work that will begin in Rome. Thus, through the long Letter to the Romans, Paul already begins the apostolic work in Rome, by proclaiming the good news of God about Jesus Christ to the addressees by a coherent flow of the argument and a continuous line of the thought. The proclamation, though, is not complete by the sending of this letter. There are many more issues to address and to tackle. This is something that Paul will continue later when he comes to Rome in person, and his work will be performed with words and deeds, by marvels and miracles, in the power of the holy spirit.

With these points in mind, the thesis of this dissertation on Romans is:

*Paul writes the Letter to the Romans as an apostle of God called to serve Jesus Christ and to proclaim the good news among all the nations, including to all the people who live in Rome, both Jews and gentiles. Paul wishes to work with the addressees in his future apostolic work in the West for the hearkening of faith and the fulfilment of the good news among all the nations, first in Rome and the surrounding areas, and eventually all the way to Spain at the end of the Roman Empire.*

This is the purpose of Romans.

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