

# CHAPTER 14

## INTRODUCTION TO ROMANS 14

The apostle, having finished his exhortations to duties of a moral and civil kind, proceeds to the consideration of things indifferent, about eating some sorts of meats, and keeping days; to which he might be led by the last clause of the preceding chapter, lest that should be interpreted as referring to those who used their Christian liberty in eating every sort of food; in the use of which it was requisite to exercise that love which is the fulfilling of the law, he had so much pressed and recommended in the foregoing chapters. The church at Rome consisted both of Jews and Gentiles: and the former, though they believed in Christ, were not clear about the abrogation of the ceremonial law, and thought they ought still to observe the distinction of meats and days, which were made in it; the latter looked upon themselves under no manner of obligation to regard them; and even among the Jews, some might have greater light and knowledge in these things than others, and used their Christian liberty, when others could not; and this occasioned great animosities and contentions among them; and some on account of these things were called strong, and others weak: and the chief view of the apostle in this chapter, is to give advice to each party how to behave one towards another; how the strong should behave to the weak, and the weak to the strong: and he begins with the strong, and in general exhorts them to a kind, tender, and affectionate regard to their weaker brethren, and not to perplex their minds with disputations about things to little profit, (<sup><514B></sup>Romans 14:1), then a distribution of the members of this church into two parts is made, (<sup><514D></sup>Romans 14:2), showing the reason of the above exhortations; the one sort being strong believers, the others weak, the one eating all things, the other herbs; when some advice is given to each, that the strong should not despise the weak, nor the weak judge the strong; for which reasons are given: and the first is taken from the common interest they both have in the affection of God, and in divine adoption, (<sup><514B></sup>Romans 14:3), And another is taken from the relation which believers stand in to God, as servants; and therefore not to be judged and condemned, but to be left to their Lord and master, which is illustrated by a simile of such a relation among men, (<sup><514D></sup>Romans 14:4), and then another

instance of different sentiments about Jewish rites and ceremonies is given, (<sup><5145></sup>Romans 14:5), respecting the observation of days, in which also the members of the church were divided, some observing them, and some not; and the apostle's advice is, that every man should act as he was persuaded in his own mind, and not be uneasy with another: the reason for which he gives, (<sup><5146></sup>Romans 14:6), because the end proposed by the one, and the other, is the honour and glory of God, and which is the same in the man that eats, or does not eat meat, since both give thanks to God. And this is further confirmed from the general end of the Christian's life and death likewise, which is not to himself, but to the Lord, (<sup><5147></sup>Romans 14:7,8), from whence it is concluded, that they are the Lord's in life and death, and all their actions are devoted to him; who by dying, rising, and living again, appears to be the Lord of quick and dead, and will judge both, (<sup><5149></sup>Romans 14:9), and therefore to his judgment things should be left, and one should not condemn or despise another, since all must stand at his bar, (<sup><5140></sup>Romans 14:10), which is proved (<sup><5141></sup>Romans 14:11), from a passage in (<sup><2853></sup>Isaiah 45:23), from all which it is concluded, (<sup><5142></sup>Romans 14:12), that an account must be given by everyone to God, at the general judgment; wherefore it is right and best, not to judge and condemn one another, but to judge this to be the most reasonable and agreeable to Christian charity, that care be taken not to offend, or cause a brother to stumble, (<sup><5143></sup>Romans 14:13), and whereas it might be objected, that nothing was impure in itself, and therefore might be lawfully eaten, which the apostle allows, and as for himself, was fully persuaded of, yet it was impure to them who thought it so, (<sup><5144></sup>Romans 14:14), and therefore should not eat; nor should others, when it gave offence to such persons; and which is dissuaded from, because to eat to the grief of the brethren, is contrary to Christian charity; and because it destroys the peace of such persons, and they are such whom Christ has died for, (<sup><5145></sup>Romans 14:15), besides, hereby reproach might be brought upon them, the Gospel they professed, and the truth of Christian liberty they used, (<sup><5146></sup>Romans 14:16), and moreover, the kingdom of God did not lie in the use of these things, but in spiritual ones, (<sup><5147></sup>Romans 14:17), and which should be chiefly regarded, since the service of God in them, is what is grateful to him, and approved by all good men, (<sup><5148></sup>Romans 14:18), wherefore the things which make for peace and edification should be followed after, things much preferable to meats and drinks, (<sup><5149></sup>Romans 14:19), for the sake of which the peace of a brother, which is the work of God, should not be destroyed, (<sup><5140></sup>Romans 14:20), for though all things are pure in themselves, and

lawful to be eaten, yet it is an evil to eat them to the offence of another, and for another to eat them against his conscience, which he may be drawn into by the example of others; wherefore it is best to abstain from eating flesh or drinking wine, and everything else that is stumbling and offensive to a weak brother, (<sup><5142></sup>Romans 14:21), and whereas the strong brother might object and say, I have faith in this matter, I believe it is lawful for me to eat anything, and why should I not? the apostle answers, by granting that he had faith, but then he observes, he ought to keep it to himself, and not disturb his weak brother, by putting it into practice openly; but should keep it to himself, it being his happiness not to condemn himself by using his liberty with offence, (<sup><5142></sup>Romans 14:22), and then some advice is given to the weak brother, not to eat with a doubting conscience, (<sup><5143></sup>Romans 14:23), because in so doing, he would be self-condemned, and because it would not be of faith, and therefore sinful.

**Ver. 1.** *Him that is weak in the faith*, etc..] This address is made to the stronger and more knowing Christians among the Romans, how to behave towards those that were inferior in light and knowledge to them, with regard to things of a ritual and ceremonial kind: and by “him that is weak in the faith”, is meant, either one that is weak in the exercise of the grace of faith, who has but a glimmering sight of Christ; who comes to him in a very feeble and trembling manner; who believes his ability to save him, but hesitates about his willingness; who casts himself with a peradventure on him; and who is attended with many misgivings of heart, faintings of spirit, and fluctuation of mind, about his interest in him: or one that is weak in the doctrine of faith; has but little light and knowledge in the truths of the Gospel; is a child in understanding; has more affection than judgment; very little able to distinguish truth from error; cannot digest the greater and more sublime doctrines of grace; stands in need of milk, and cannot bear strong meat; is very fluctuating and unsettled in his principles, and like children tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine: or rather one that is weak in his knowledge of that branch of the doctrine of faith, which concerns Christian liberty; and that part of it particularly, which respects freedom from the ceremonial law: it designs one, and chiefly a Jew, who though a believer in Christ, and an embracer of the other truths of the Gospel, yet had but very little knowledge of Gospel liberty; but though that believers were to observe all the rituals of the Mosaic dispensation, not knowing that they were abolished by Christ. The phrase is Jewish; it is <sup>f252</sup>said,

“what is the meaning of the phrase, in Rephidim, (<sup>(צפון)</sup>Exodus 17:1) it signifies such as are of weak hands; as if it had been said, because the Israelites were μτνωμαβ μυπρ, “weak in their faith”.”

The advice the apostle gives, in reference to such a person, is to

*receive* him; not only into their affections, and love him equally, being a believer in Christ, as one of the same sentiments with them, only in this matter, but also into church fellowship with them. The Syriac version reads it, adya hyl wbh, “give him the hand”: in token of communion, a form used in admission of members. The Gentiles were apt to boast against, and look with some contempt upon the Jews, and were ready to object to their communion, because of their want of light and knowledge in these matters; but this was no bar of communion, nor ought a person to be rejected on account of his weakness, either in the grace, or in the doctrine of faith, when it appears he has the true grace of God; and much less on account of his weakness in that branch of it, concerning Christian liberty; for since Christ does not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax, nor despise the day of small things, churches should not: it may also intend a receiving of such into intimate conversation, at their private meetings and conferences; taking particular notice of them; giving them proper instructions; praying with them and for them; endeavouring to build them up in their most holy faith, and to bring them into the knowledge of those things they are weak in; bearing their weaknesses patiently, and bearing with them in great tenderness: thus such should be received,

*but not to doubtful disputations*; to vain jangling and perverse disputings, such as will rather perplex than inform them; and will leave their minds doubtful and in suspense, and do them more harm than good.

**Ver. 2.** *For one believeth that he may eat all things*, etc..] He is fully persuaded in his mind, that there is nothing in itself common, or unclean; that the difference between clean and unclean meats, commanded to be observed by the law of Moses, is taken away; and that he may now lawfully eat any sort of food; every creature of God being good, and none to be refused, because of the ceremonial law which is abrogated, provided it, be received with thanksgiving, and used to the glory of God:

*another who is weak eateth herbs*; meaning not one that is sickly and unhealthful, and of a weak constitution, and therefore eats herbs for health's sake; but one that is weak in the faith, and who thinks that the laws

concerning the observance of meats and drinks are still in force; and therefore, rather than break any of them, and that he may be sure he does not, will eat nothing but herbs, which are not any of them forbidden by the law: and this he did, either as choosing rather to live altogether on herbs, than to eat anything which the law forbids; or being of opinion with the Essenes among the Jews, and the Pythagoreans among the Gentiles, who thought they were to abstain from eating of all sorts of animals.

**Ver. 3.** *Let not him that eateth, despise him that eateth not*, etc..] Such who had a greater degree of Gospel light and knowledge, and made use of their Christian liberty in eating any sort of food, were not to despise as they were apt to do, such as abstained therefrom on account of the ceremonial law, as weak, ignorant; superstitious, and bigoted persons; or were not to set them at naught, or make nothing of them, as the word signifies, have no regard to their peace and comfort; but, on the other hand, were to consider them as brethren in Christ, though weak; and as having a work of God upon their souls, and therefore to be careful how they grieved them, destroyed their peace, or laid stumblingblocks in their way:

*and let not him which eateth not, judge him that eateth*: such who thought it not their duty to eat anything, but to forbear the use of some things directed to in the law, were not to censure and condemn, as they were apt to do, those who used their liberty in these things, as profane persons, and transgressors of the law of God; but leave them to the last and righteous judgment, when every one must be accountable to God for the various actions of life: the reason used to enforce this advice on both parties is,

*for God hath received him*: which respects both him that eateth, and him that eateth not, him that is despised, and him that is judged; and is a reason why one should not despise, nor the other judge, because God had received both the one and the other into his heart's love and affection, into the covenant of grace, and into his family by adoption: they were received by Christ, coming to him as perishing sinners, according to the will of God; whose will it likewise was, that they should be received into church fellowship, as being no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and God had also received them into his service, and they were made willing to serve him, as well as to be saved by him; and did serve him acceptably with reverence and godly fear, in righteousness and holiness; and this is the rather to be taken into the sense of this passage, because of what follows.

**Ver. 4.** *Who art thou that judgest another man's servant*, etc..] This is another reason, dissuading from censoriousness and rash judgment, taken from civil things; one man has nothing to do with another man's servant; he has no power over him, nor any right to call him to an account for his actions; nor has he any business to censure or condemn him for them, or concern himself about them: so the believer supposed to be judged, does not belong to him that takes upon him to judge and condemn him; he is another's servant, he is the servant of God: he is chosen by God the Father for his service, as well as unto salvation; he is bought with the price of Christ's blood, and therefore not his own, nor another's, but Christ's, he is bought with his money; and he is also born in his house, the church; the Spirit of God in regeneration forms him for himself, for righteousness and holiness; under the influence of whose grace he voluntarily gives up himself to the service of God, and is assisted by him to keep his statutes and do them; and what has another to do with him? what power has he over him, or right to judge him?

*to his own master he standeth or falleth*, the meaning of which is, either if he “stands”, that is, if he serves his Lord and master, of which “standing” is expressive; and continues in the service of him, whose servant he professes to be; this is to his master's advantage and profit, and not to another's: and if he “falls”, that is, from his obedience to him, as such who profess to be the servants of God may; they may fall off from the doctrine of grace they have embraced; and that either totally and finally, as such do who never felt the power of it in their hearts; or partially, from some degree of steadfastness in the faith: and such also may fall from a lively exercise of the graces of faith, hope, and love, and into great sins, which is to their master's dishonour, and cause his ways and truths to be evil spoken of; and so it is to their own master they fail: or else the sense is, to their own master they are accountable, whether they stand or fall, serve or disobey him; and it is according to his judgment and not another's, that they “stand”, or are and will be justified and acquitted, and will hear, well done, good and faithful servant; and according to the same they will “fall”, or be condemned, and hear, take the slothful and unprofitable servant, and cast him into outer darkness: so the words “standing” and “failing” are used by the Jews in a forensic sense, for carrying or losing a cause, for justification or condemnation in a court of judicature, and particularly in the last judgment: and so they explain (<sup>19005</sup>Psalm 1:5), “the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment”: the Targum paraphrases it,

“the wicked shall not be justified in the great day;”

and Jarchi upon the place says, there shall be no **l gr tmqh**, “standing of the foot” of the wicked, in the day of judgment; (see <sup><Q13></sup>Luke 21:36 <sup><Q13></sup>1 John 2:28).

*Yea, ye shall be holden up*; which words seem to be a sort of correction of the apostle's, as if he should say, why do I talk of falling, one that is a true servant of the Lord's shall not fall, at least not totally and finally, nor in the last judgment; for he is holden by the right hand of God, by the right hand of his righteousness, and is kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation:

*for God is able to make him stand*; and will make him stand: words of power oftentimes include willingness as well as ability; (see <sup><Q13></sup>Judges 5:24). God will make such to persevere to the end, because he has loved them with an everlasting love, chosen them in Christ, made a covenant with them in him, and has put them into his hands, and made them his care and charge; Christ has redeemed them by his blood, now intercedes, and is making preparations for them in heaven; they are united to him, and are built on him, the sure foundation; and the Spirit of God has begun that good work, which shall be performed. God will make such to stand in judgment with intrepidity, and without shame, being clothed with the righteousness of his Son; and shall therefore have the crown of righteousness given them, and an abundant entrance administered into his kingdom and glory: hence they ought not to be judged by man's judgment, nor need they regard it. The Alexandrian copy reads, “the Lord is able”, etc..

**Ver. 5.** *One man esteemeth one day above another*, etc..] This is another instance of the difference of sentiments in this church, about the observation of rituals; and is not to be understood of days appointed by the Christian churches for fasting, or abstinence from certain meats, either once a year, as the “Quadragesima”, or Lent; or twice a week, as Wednesdays and Fridays; for these are things of much later observation, and which had never been introduced into the church of Rome in the apostle's time; nor were there any disputes about them: much less of days of Heathenish observation, as lucky or unlucky, or festivals in honour of their gods; for the apostle would never say, that a man who regarded such a day, regarded it to the Lord; nor would have advised to a coalition and



Christian conversation with such a man, but rather to exclude him from all society and communion: it remains, therefore, that it must be understood of Jewish days, or of such as were appointed to be observed by the Jews under the former dispensation, and which some thought were still to be regarded; wherefore they esteemed some days in the year above others, as the days of unleavened bread, or the passover; particularly the first night, which was a night to be observed throughout their generations; and in their service for it to this day, use these words, **twl yl h l km hzh hl yl h hntçn hm**, “how different is this night from every other night” <sup>f253</sup>? and the feast of tabernacles, especially the last and great day of the feast, and the day of Pentecost; also one day in a month above others, the first day of the month, or new moon; and one day in a week, the seventh day sabbath: now there were some, who thought that the laws respecting these days were still in force, particularly the latter, and therefore esteemed it above another: but let it be observed, that the man that did so was one that was weak in faith; the same man that ate herbs, because he would not be guilty of violating those laws, which ordered a distinction of meats to be observed, the same weak man esteemed one day above another, imagining the laws concerning the distinction of days were still obligatory, not rightly understanding the doctrine of Christian liberty, or freedom from the yoke of the ceremonial law:

*another esteemeth every day alike*; that is, one that is strong in faith, and has a greater degree of the knowledge of the Gospel, and of evangelical liberty, knows that the distinction of days, as well as of meats, is taken away, since the word was made flesh, and tabernacled among us, Christ the passover is sacrificed for us, the firstfruits of the Spirit have been received, and light by the church from the sun of righteousness, and Christ the true sabbath and rest is come; and therefore, being firmly persuaded there is no more holiness in days than there is in places, has the same regard for one day as another. The difference between these two lay here, the weak brother regarded a day for the sake of a day, as having by a positive law, he supposed to be in force, a superiority to another, and he regarded worship for the sake of this day; the stronger brother, though he also observed a day for divine worship, which is the Lord's day, since there must be some time for it as well as place, yet he observed the day for the sake of worship, and not worship for the sake of the day:



*let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind*; this is the advice the apostle gives to both parties; his sense is, that he would have each of them fully enjoy their own principle and practice undisturbed; he would have the weak brother, that esteemed one day above another, indulged in his way, since it arose from weakness, until he had better light, nor should he be despised for his weakness; he would have the stronger Christian also peaceably enjoy his sentiment, and pursue what he believed to be right; nor should he be judged, censured, and condemned, as a profane person, and a transgressor of the law: his counsel is, that they would sit down and carefully examine the word of God, and act according to the best light they should receive from thence; and take care especially, that they did not act contrary to their own consciences, with doubt and hesitation; they ought to be thoroughly satisfied in their own minds, and being so, should content themselves with their different sentiments and practices, without despising or censuring one another.

**Ver. 6.** *He that regardeth the day, regardeth it to the Lord*, etc..] The apostle strengthens the above advice with this reason, because what is done both by one and the other, is done unto the Lord. The weak brother that esteems one day above another, and regards the passover, pentecost, and feast of tabernacles, a new moon, or a seventh day sabbath, does it in obedience to the commands of the Lord, which he thinks are still binding, not knowing that they are disannulled by Christ; and the worship performed by him on any of those days is done in the name and strength of the Lord, with a view to his glory, and as believing it was pleasing in his sight; and whether he is right or wrong, it is to the Lord he does it, and to his own master he stands or falls. The following clause is omitted in the Alexandrian copy and some others, and in the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions, but is in most Greek copies, and retained in the Syriac and Arabic versions.

*And he that regardeth not the day, the Lord he doth not regard it*; believing it is the will of the Lord, that all distinction of days should cease; and that the law of commandments contained in ordinances, respecting such Jewish days, is abolished by the Lord Jesus Christ; and that it is to the honour the Lord not to observe them: for to regard the days of the feast of tabernacles, is tacitly to say, that the Word has not tabernacled among us; and to observe he days of the passover, is virtually to deny that our passover is sacrificed for us; and to keep the day of Pentecost, is all one as to affirm, that the firstfruits of the Spirit have not been given; and to regard

a new moon, is in effect to say, that the church has not received evangelical light from Christ, the sun of righteousness; and to keep a seventh day sabbath, is a strong insinuation, as if Christ the true sabbath, in whom we have our spiritual and eternal rest, is not come; however, it is to the Lord that the stronger brother and more confirmed believer disregards any of those days; and it is to his own master he stands or falls, nor is he to be judged of man's judgment: and the same is the case of the eater, or non-eater of meats forbidden by the law:

*he that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks.* The man that is strong in faith, and is fully persuaded by the Lord Jesus that all distinction of meats, as of days, is ceased, eats any thing, and every sort of food, that comes in his way, without making any difference; and when he eats or drinks at any time, it is all to the glory of God; which is a clear case, by his giving God thanks, as becomes him, for the food he eats: he acknowledges that these are the creatures of God, and his gifts to him; he gives him thanks for the right he has given him to eat of them, and for taking away the distinction of meats, and giving him the free use of his creatures; and the more thankful he is when he considers how unworthy he is of the least of these mercies: and

*he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth, or, and giveth God thanks.* The man that is weak in faith, that eateth not food forbidden by the law, abstains from such food, purely on account of the Lord, in obedience to his will, and with a view to his glory, supposing such a law to be in full force; and is thankful to God for the herbs he allows him to eat, or for other food not forbidden by the law: and therefore since each party shows such a religious concern for the glory of the Lord, the apostle argues they ought to be easy one with another. The Alexandrian copy reads, “and giveth the Lord thanks”.

**Ver. 7.** *For none of us liveth to himself,* etc..] That is, none of us believers; others may, but these do not, at least they ought not, nor do they when under the influence of the grace of God: they do not live, neither to righteous, nor to sinful self; they do not live upon their duties and services; nor do they ascribe their life, righteousness, and salvation to them; nor do they live to their own lusts, or make provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof, and much less to the lusts and wills of others:

*and no man dieth to himself;* every man dies, and must, or undergo a change equivalent to death; believers die as well as others, not eternally, or

the second death, but corporeally, or a temporal death, but not to themselves; as they do not seek their own will and pleasure, and profit in life, so neither in death; they do not die to their own advantage only; death is gain unto them, it frees them from all their sorrows, toil, and labours, and introduces them into the presence of Christ, and the enjoyment of everlasting happiness; but this is not all their death issues in, but also in the glory of Christ: moreover, no man has the power over life or death; as his life is not from himself, he has no power to lengthen or shorten it, nor to hinder or hasten death; this belongs to another Lord and master, whom life and death are both to subserve. This is an illustration of the above reason, by which the apostle confirms his advice.

**Ver. 8.** *For whether we live, we live unto the Lord,* etc..] As natural, so spiritual life is derived from the Lord, and believers live by faith upon him, and according to his will revealed in the word; find to his honour and glory; at least they desire so to do:

*and whether we die, we die unto the Lord;* resigning up life unto him, whenever it is his pleasure; magnifying of him, as by life, so by death; dying to be with him, to be raised again by him, and live with him for evermore; in the faith and hope of this, the believer both lives and dies, and so glorifies Christ both in life and death: hence this conclusion follows,

*whether we live therefore or die, we are the Lord's;* by the gift of the Father to him, by his own purchase, and the power of his grace, making them willing to give up themselves to him: and hence it is, that under a sense of this, that they are his, and not their own, nor another's, they do all they do for his glory; whether they observe, or not observe a day, it is to the Lord; whether they eat, or not eat things formerly forbidden, it is to him; and whether they live or die, it is to the Lord, whose they are: and hence also it is, that they are not to be despised and set at nought, or to be judged and censured by one another, since they belong to another master, who is their Lord, and will be their Judge.

**Ver. 9.** *For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived,* etc..] This last word “revived” is omitted by the Vulgate Latin, but very naturally placed by the Syriac, between Christ's dying and rising. The Alexandrian copy reads, “died and lived”: and the Ethiopic version, “died and revived”: the end of all which was,

*that he might be the Lord both of the dead and living*; that is, of believers, whether dead or alive; for though he is Lord of all, as God and Creator, yet his appearing to be Lord by his dying, rising, and living again, can only have respect to them, for whom dying he has abolished death, and destroyed Satan; whom he has redeemed from sin, and delivered from this present evil world; and so having freed them from those other lords which had the dominion over them, shows himself to be their one and only Lord: and by rising again from the dead, ascending to heaven, and sitting at the right hand of God, all creatures and things being subject to him, he is made or declared both Lord and Christ; and living again, and continuing to live for ever, he appears to have the keys of hell and death; and will open the graves, and raise from thence, and judge both quick and dead, those that will be found alive at his coming, and such as he will cause to rise from the dead then; till which time, the apostle suggests, the decision of these differences about meats and days was to be left; and in the mean time the saints were to cultivate peace and love among themselves.

**Ver. 10.** *But why dost thou judge thy brother?* etc..] These words are spoken to the man weak in faith, that scrupled eating of certain meats, and chose rather eat none, and live on herbs, and who esteemed one day above another; and was very apt to censure and condemn such as made use of their Christian liberty in these things, though they were brethren, not in a natural or civil, but in a spiritual relation:

*or why dost thou set at nought thy brother?* these words, on the other hand, are directed to the stronger believer, who believed he might eat all things, and esteemed every day alike; being fully persuaded, that the distinction of meats and of days was now ceased; and such were apt to be puffed up with their superior knowledge and faith, and were ready to treat with an air of contempt those that were weak; showing little or no regard to their peace and edification, though they stood in the same relation to each other. The emphasis lies upon the word “brother”, in both branches of the expostulation; and the force of the apostle's reasoning is that they should not judge or despise one another, because they were brethren, stood in the same relation to God and Christ, belonged to the same family, were partakers of the same grace, and had no pre-eminence one over another; they had but one master, and all they were brethren: and which he further enforces with the following reason or argument,

*for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ*; at the last day, when he shall sit on his throne of glory, and all nations shall be gathered before him, and he shall pronounce and execute the decisive sentence on each of them: there is a particular, and a general judgment; a particular judgment at death, when the soul is immediately consigned to bliss or woe; and a general one in the end of time; which may be proved both from reason, as from the relation creatures stand in to God, from the inequality of things in this life, and the conscious fears of men with respect to a future one; and from divine revelation, Christ will be the Judge, he is so appointed by his Father, and is every way fit for it, being God omniscient and omnipotent; and when he shall appear in his glory, he shall sit on his judgment seat, the dead will be raised, the books will be opened, and all shall be summoned to appear before him, of every age and sex, of every rank and degree, and of every character, good or bad: here the saints are particularly designed, “we shall all stand”; whether ministers or private Christians, weak or strong believers; they that are apt to judge, and others that are too ready to despise; they shall all stand before the tribunal of Christ, who is sole Judge, and shall render to every man according to his works, and from whom they shall all receive their sentence. The allusion is to human courts of judicature, in which the judge sits upon a bench, and they that are tried stand before him; (see ~~47510~~ 2 Corinthians 5:10). The Alexandrian copy reads, “the judgment seat of God”.

**Ver. 11.** *For it is written*, etc..] In (~~23623~~ Isaiah 45:23); though Justin Martyr <sup>f254</sup> cites a like passage with what follows, as out of Ezekiel 37, but no such words appear there, either in the Hebrew text, or Septuagint version:

*as I live, saith the Lord*; the form of an oath used often by the Lord; who because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself, by his own life; signifying, that what he was about to say, would as surely come to pass, as that he lived; and in the original text in Isaiah it is, “I have sworn by myself”; which being generally expressed, the apostle, perfectly agreeable to the meaning of it, gives the particular form of oath he swore, as in (~~23498~~ Isaiah 49:18);

*every knee shall bow to me*; which is not to be understood literally of bowing of the knee at the name of Jesus, which has no foundation in this, nor in any other passage of Scripture, but figuratively, of the subjection of all creatures to Christ, both voluntary and involuntary. The Complutensian edition adds, “of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the

earth”, as in (<sup>1910</sup>Philippians 2:10), from whence these words seem to be taken:

*and every tongue shall confess to God*; that is, everyone that has a tongue, every man, be he who he will, a good or a bad man, shall own at the last day, that Christ is God and Lord of all; (see <sup>1910</sup>Philippians 2:10,11). It may be asked, how this passage appears to be a proof of what the apostle had asserted, for which purpose it seems to be cited, since here is nothing said of Christ, nor of his judgment seat, nor of all standing before it? to which may be returned, that it is clear from the context in the prophet, that the Messiah is the person speaking, who is said to be a just God and Saviour; and is represented as calling upon, and encouraging all sorts of persons to look to him for salvation; and as he in whom the church expected righteousness and strength, and in whom all the seed of Israel shall be justified, and shall glory; and which the Chaldee paraphrase all along interprets of *yjd armym*, “the Word of the Lord”; the essential Word of God, the true Messiah: moreover, the bowing of the knee, and swearing, or confessing, to him, relate to his lordship and dominion over all; and suppose him as sitting on his throne of glory, as Lord of all, or as a judge on his judgment seat, in a court of judicature, where such like actions as here mentioned are performed; and whereas every knee is to bow, and every tongue to confess to him, which include all mankind, it follows then, that all the saints shall stand before him, bow unto him, own him as their Lord, and be judged by him. Kimchi says <sup>f255</sup>, that this shall be *uymyh trj ab*, “in the last days”: and which the apostle rightly refers to the day of the general judgment. This place affords a considerable proof of Christ's true and proper deity, being in the prophet styled “Jehovah”, and by the apostle “God”; and such things being ascribed to him, as swearing by himself, which no creature may do, and the subjection and confession of all creatures to him, whether they will or not.

**Ver. 12.** *So then everyone of us*, etc..] this is the conclusion, drawn from the foregoing account of things, that there will be a general judgment, that Christ will be Judge, and all must appear at his bar; from whence it necessarily follows, that every man, and so every Christian, strong or weak, whatever may be his gifts, talents, and abilities,

*shall give an account of himself to God*; that is, to Christ, who is God; which is another proof of his deity, for he will be the Judge, the Father will judge no man; it is before his judgment seat all shall stand; and therefore

the account must be given to him by every one, of himself, and not another; of all his thoughts, words, and deeds, which will be all brought into judgment; and of his time and talents, how they have been spent and used; and of all his gifts of nature, providence, and grace, how they have been exercised for the glory of God, his own good, and the good of others: the formal manner in which this will be done is unknown unto us; however, this is certain, that the saints will have upon this reckoning, in what sort soever it may be, a full and open discharge, through the blood and righteousness of Christ. The Jews<sup>f256</sup>, say, in much such language as the apostle does, that

“when a man removes out of this world, then **hyraml anbcwj byhy**, “he gives an account to his Lord”, of all that he has done in the world.”

**Ver. 13.** *Let us not therefore judge one another more*, etc..] With respect to the observance or non-observance of the laws relating to meats and drinks, and days, and times; the apostle means, that they should not judge rashly, nor anything before the time; they should not censure and judge each other's characters and states, on account of these things, but leave all to the decisive day, to Christ the Judge, and to his bar, before which all must stand:

*but judge this rather*; or reckon this to be the most proper, fit, and advisable:

*that no man put a stumblingblock or occasion to fall in his brother's way*; as in the former part of the advice the apostle seems to have respect more especially to the weak brethren, who were ready to judge and condemn such as neglected the observance of the laws about meats and days, as transgressors, and as wicked persons, that ought not to be in the communion of the church; so in this he seems more principally to have regard to the stronger brethren; who, through their imprudent use of their Christian liberty, offended weaker minds, and were the occasion of their stumbling and falling, which it became them to be careful to prevent; and rather than be a means of anything of this nature, it was much better, as he afterwards observes, neither to eat flesh, nor drink wine, and entirely drop or forego the use of their liberty.



**Ver. 14.** *I know and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus*, etc..] As for the apostle's own sense and judgment about the distinction of meats, it was this,

*that there is nothing unclean of itself*; that every creature, as originally made by God, is good; that what is eatable, or fit for food, may be eaten, whatever the Mosaic laws, being now abrogated, say to the contrary; and that whatever physical or natural difference there may be between the creatures of God, one being naturally fit for food, and another not; yet there is no moral distinction between them, there is nothing in any of them that can morally defile a man by eating them; nor indeed is there now any ceremonial distinction between them, and so no ceremonial pollution by them. This was not a bare conjecture, nor a mere opinion, but a point of certain knowledge, a matter of faith, and of full assurance of faith; the apostle was thoroughly persuaded of the truth of it, and had not the least doubt nor difficulty in his mind about it; he was as fully assured of it, as he was of his salvation by Christ, and of his interest in the love of God, from which he could never be separated, and therefore expresses it in language equally as strong; and this he came to the knowledge and persuasion of, “by the Lord Jesus”; by his express words, (<sup><4051></sup>Matthew 15:11,17,18); or by a revelation from him, in which way he had the whole Gospel: he might be informed of this matter in like manner as Peter was, by a vision from heaven, (<sup><4100></sup>Acts 10:10), or he knew this through the abrogation of the whole ceremonial law by Christ, who abolished the law of commandments contained in ordinances, and so these laws relating to the difference of meats among the rest; and he knew, that all the creatures in their original creation were good, and though cursed, for man's sake yet Christ had removed the curse, and sanctified them for the use of his people, who, under the Gospel dispensation, might make use of them at pleasure, without distinction: and the Jews themselves own, that what before was unclean, shall in the days of the Messiah be clean: so they explain (<sup><4347></sup>Psalm 146:7); “the Lord looseth the prisoners”, which they would render, “the Lord looseth that which was forbidden”; and give this as the sense <sup>f257</sup>

“every beast which was unclean in this world (the Jewish state),  
awbl dyt [I htwa rhj m hb” h, “God will cleanse it in the  
time to come” (in the times of the Messiah), when they shall be  
clean as at the first, to the sons of Noah.”

So they observe, that the Hebrew word for a hog, *ryzj*, comes from *rzj*, which signifies to return; because, say they <sup>f258</sup>, hereafter God will cause it to return to the Israelites; and even now, as formerly, they allow of eating anything that is torn, or dies of itself, or hog's flesh to an army entering into a Gentile country, and subduing it, where they can find nothing else <sup>f259</sup>:

*but to him that esteemeth anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean;* such a man that thinks the laws concerning clean and unclean meats are still in force, and binding upon him, ought to refrain from eating them; because he would act contrary to his conscience, and so violate and defile it; wherefore though the apostle was so fully satisfied in his own, mind, yet he would not have weak and scrupulous consciences do themselves any hurt through his faith; for if they ate doubtingly, and without faith, it was an evil. Capellus <sup>f260</sup> mentions a rule laid down by the Jews, but does not direct where it is to be found, nor have I yet met with it, very agreeable to this of the apostle's, which runs thus:

“this is the grand general rule in the law, that every thing which thou dost not know, *rwsa Æyl [ rwsa wa rtwm awħ µa,* “whether it is lawful or unlawful, to thee it is unlawful”, until thou hast asked a wise men concerning who may teach thee that it is lawful.”

**Ver. 15.** *But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat,* etc..] The apostle proceeds to give reasons why, though he was so fully persuaded that nothing was unclean of itself, and so he, and any other of the same persuasion, might lawfully eat anything; yet they should forbear, and not make use of this liberty; because if a brother should be grieved by it, that is, either should be concerned and troubled at it inwardly, both because the person that eats is thought by him to have transgressed a command of God, and because he himself is not only despised as a weak brother, but as if he was a “judaizing” Christian, and walked not uprightly, according to the truth of the Gospel; or else should be emboldened thereby to eat, and so wound and defile his weak conscience; or be so galled and offended at it, as to stumble and fall off from his profession of Christianity, and withdraw his communion, as judging there is nothing in it, no regard being had to the law of God:

*now walkest thou not charitably;* this is a breach of the rule of charity or brotherly love; such an one is a brother, and though a weak one, yet he is

to be loved as a brother, and to be charitably walked with: true charity, or love, vaunts not itself over, nor is it puffed up against a weak brother; nor is it unconcerned for his peace, but bears with his weaknesses, and forbears the use of things grieving to him:

*destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died.* This is to be understood, not of eternal destruction, that can never be thought to be either in the will or power of any man; such a degree of malice can never arise in the heart of any, to wish for, desire, or take any step towards the eternal damnation of another; and could any thing of this kind be among the men of the world, yet surely not among brethren of the same faith, and in the same church state; and were there any so wicked as to desire this, yet it is not in their power to compass it, for none can destroy eternally but God; (see ~~4008~~ Matthew 10:28); besides, it is not reasonable to suppose, that eternal damnation should follow upon eating things indifferent, or be caused by an offence either given or taken through them; moreover, though such as only think themselves, or profess themselves, or are only thought by others to be such, for whom Christ died, may be eternally destroyed, yet none of those can, for whom Christ really died; for they are his special people, his peculiar friends, his own sheep, his body the church, which can never perish; and he, by dying, has procured such blessings for them, such as a justifying righteousness, pardon of sin, peace with God, and eternal life, which will for ever secure them from destruction: besides, should anyone of them be destroyed, the death of Christ would be so far in vain, nor would it appear to be a sufficient security from condemnation, nor a full satisfaction to the justice of God; or God must be unjust, to punish twice for the same fault: but this is to be understood of the destruction of such a man's peace and comfort, which is signified by grieving, stumbling, offending, and making him weak; and the words are a fresh reason, why they that are strong in the faith of Christian liberty, should nevertheless forbear the use of it, to preserve the peace of a weak brother; which is a matter of importance, and the rather to be attended to, since it is the peace of one that belongs to Christ, whom he has so loved as to die for, and therefore should be the object of the regard and affections of such as believe in Christ and love him.

**Ver. 16.** *Let not then your good be evil spoken of.*] The Vulgate Latin reads it, “our good”, and so the Syriac version; the sense is the same, and to be understood either of the Gospel in general, which is good in its author, matter, effects, and consequences; is good tidings of good things,

and which might be blasphemed by the men of the world, on account of the divisions and contentions among the professors of it, about such little trivial things, as eating this or the other sort of food; and therefore care should be taken, that it be not evil spoken of through such conduct: or else the doctrine of Christian liberty in particular, which is a good thing; Christ has procured it, and bestows it upon his people; it is a valuable blessing in itself, and is attended and followed with many considerable privileges and immunities; but may be evil spoken of by those, who do not so well understand it, through an imprudent use of it by those who do; and who therefore should guard against any reproach that may be cast upon it; and rather than this should be the case, forego the use of it, in things of an indifferent nature; (see ~~408~~1 Corinthians 10:30); so that this is another of the apostle's reasons, why though nothing is of itself unclean, yet it should be abstained from on account of others.

**Ver. 17.** *For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink,* etc..] Neither the kingdom of glory, nor the ultimate glory and happiness of the saints in the other world, is attained to by any such things; for neither eating and drinking, nor not eating and drinking, can recommend to the divine favour, or give a meetness for heaven, or a right unto it; (see ~~408~~1 Corinthians 8:8), nor does the kingdom of grace, the principle of grace, lie in such things, nor in anything that is external; nor does the Gospel, or Gospel church state, which frequently go under this name of the kingdom of God, consist of such things as the ceremonial and the legal dispensation did, but the Gospel and the dispensation of grace are opposed unto them; (see ~~800~~Hebrews 9:10 13:9).

*But righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.* The kingdom of glory, which is the kingdom of God, because of his preparing, giving, calling to, and putting into the possession of, is attained unto by righteousness; not the righteousness of men, but the righteousness of Christ imputed by God, and received by faith; and through peace made by the blood of Christ, and rejoicing in him, without having any confidence in the flesh, which is a branch of the Spirit's grace in regeneration. The kingdom of grace, or the governing principle of grace in the soul, and which is of God's implanting there, lies in righteousness and true holiness, in which the new man is created; in truth and uprightness in the inward parts, where the laws of God are put and written; and in peace of conscience, arising from the blood and righteousness of Christ; and in that spiritual joy and comfort the Holy Ghost produces, by leading to a sight of

Christ, and an interest in him and his atonement. The Gospel, which gives an account both of the kingdom of grace and of glory, reveals the righteousness of Christ, and teaches men to live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present evil world: it is a publication of peace by the blood of Christ; it calls men to peace, to cultivate peace one among another, and to seek those things which make for it; and when it comes in power, is attended with joy in the Holy Ghost, and is the means of increasing it; and this is another reason, persuading to Christian forbearance, in the use of things indifferent.

**Ver. 18.** *For he that in these things serveth Christ*, etc..] That is, in righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost; he whose faith is an obedient one, and embraces these things, and from the heart obeys them; who seeks righteousness alone by Christ, and peace and pardon through his blood; who rejoices in Christ Jesus, and puts no trust in the flesh, in moral duties or ceremonial services; and who, from principles of grace, serves Christ in a way of righteousness, wherein he possesses true peace of conscience, and abundance of spiritual joy and comfort: the Alexandrian copy and some others, and the Vulgate Latin version, read, “in this thing”; as if it referred only to the right use of Christian liberty, about things indifferent: such an one

*is acceptable to God*; in Christ the beloved, in whom he believes, from whom he derives all his peace, joy, and comfort; and whom he serves in righteousness and holiness, and through whom also all his services are acceptable unto God:

*and approved of men*; of good men, of such that can discern things that differ, and approve those that are excellent; and even of bad men, for such who live honestly and uprightly, who cultivate peace and friendship among men, and carry themselves cheerfully and civilly to all men, cannot but be approved of by the generality of them, though they may dislike them on other accounts.

**Ver. 19.** *Let us therefore follow after the things*, Since the kingdom of God is in part peace, and the man that serves Christ in this, as in other things, is accepted with God, and grateful to men, the apostle very pertinently exhorts to seek after such things,

*which make for peace*: not with God, for, for a sinful creature to make peace with God is impracticable and impossible, nor is there any

exhortation to it in all the word of God; and if there was, it would be unnecessary here; since the persons here exhorted were such for whom peace with God was made by Christ, and who had a clear and comfortable sense of it in their own souls; and besides, for any to be put upon, or to attempt to make their peace with God, must highly reflect upon the methods of God's grace, in reconciling sinners to himself; and be injurious to the blood, sacrifice, and satisfaction of Christ, by which only peace is made: but the apostle means, either what makes for a man's own peace, or for the peace of others; the things which make for a man's own peace in his own conscience distressed with sin, are looking to, and dealing with the blood of Christ, which speaks peace and pardon; and the righteousness of Christ, which being apprehended by faith, a soul has peace with God through Christ; and also an embracing the Gospel, and the truths of it, which direct to Christ, which publish peace, and are the means of increasing and establishing a solid and well grounded peace, on the free grace of God and merits of Christ: attending on ordinances, and exercising a conscience void of offence towards God and men, are means of continuing and promoting a man's peace; he enjoys peace in them, though he do not derive it from them; yea, in the peace of others, is a man's own peace; and this is what is chiefly meant, a pursuing of things which make for the peace of others; of all men, and especially of saints; this is what should be eagerly followed after, closely pursued, and all ways and means should be made use of, to promote and secure it: this is the will of God; it is well pleasing to Christ, and a fruit of the Spirit; it is one part of the Gospel dispensation; church fellowship cannot be profitable and pleasant without it; it suits with the character of saints, who are sons of peace; and agrees with their privileges they enjoy, or have a right unto, as spiritual peace here, and eternal peace hereafter;

*and things wherewith one may edify another.* The church is often compared to a building, to a temple, a city, an house, and saints are the materials thereof; who are capable of being edified, or built up, yet more and more, both by words and by deeds; by words, by the ministry of the word, which is set up and continued among other things, for the edifying of the body of Christ; by praying with, and for each other; and by Christian conversation, about the experience of the grace of God, and doctrines of the Gospel, whereby saints may be useful in building up one another in their most holy faith; and so likewise by avoiding all filthy, frothy, and corrupt communication; all angry words and wrathful expressions, which

tend not to profit, and are not for the use of edifying, but the contrary: moreover, edification is promoted by deeds, by acts of charity, or love; for charity edifies not by bare words but by loving in deed and in truth, by serving one another in love; for the spiritual body of Christ his church, makes increase unto the edifying of itself in love; and also by laying aside the use of things indifferent, when disagreeable to any of the brethren; for though all things may be lawful to be done by us, yet all things do not edify the brethren; and things which make for the edification of the body, as well as our own, are diligently to be sought after. The Vulgate Latin version, and some copies, read, “let us keep”, or “observe those things wherewith one may edify another”.

**Ver. 20.** *For meat destroy not the work of God*, etc..] The Syriac reads it, “the works of God”; referring either to righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, of which the kingdom of God consists; or to the weak brother, who both as a creature, and as a new creature, is the workmanship of God; and to the good work of grace, the work of faith upon his soul, which is the work of God; or rather to his peace, and the peace of the church of Christ, which is both the will and work of God; peace is what he calls his people to, and what he himself is the author of; and may be destroyed, and sometimes is, by trifling things; whereas a true believer, though ever so weak, cannot be destroyed, nor the good work of God upon his soul be lost, nor any part of it; not the work of faith, which Christ prays for that it fail not, and is both the author and finisher of; but the work of peace and edification in particular persons, and in a church, may be destroyed, but it is pity it should, by so small a matter, so trivial a thing as meat, or the use of anything that is indifferent:

*all things indeed are pure.* The Ethiopic version adds, “to the pure”; to them that have pure consciences, sprinkled by the blood of Christ, and have no doubt or scruple about eating things indifferent; but this addition seems to be taken out of (<sup>3015</sup>Titus 1:15); though it may serve to explain the sense, which is, that all sorts of food, without any distinction, may be eaten; there is nothing common or unclean, every creature in itself is good, and every Christian may lawfully eat thereof, with moderation and thankfulness. This is a concession which stands thus corrected and restrained,

*but it is evil for that man who eateth with offence.* The Arabic version adds, “of his neighbour”; which is a good interpretation of the passage; for



the apostle means not with offence to a man's own conscience, though so to eat is an evil too, but with offence to a fellow Christian; it is not an evil in itself to eat, but when this circumstance of offending another thereby attends it; it is evil, though not in itself, yet in its consequences; it offends a weak brother, displeases Christ, who would not have one of his little ones offended, and brings a woe upon the person by whom the offence comes. The Ethiopic version reads, "who eats inordinately"; which to be sure is sinful, but is not the meaning here.

**Ver. 21.** *It is good neither to eat flesh*, etc..] Any sort of flesh, even that which is not forbidden in the law, rather than offend a weak brother; and the apostle determines for himself, that he would not, where there was any danger of doing this, (<sup>4813</sup>1 Corinthians 8:13).

*Nor to drink wine*; not only the wine of libations to Heathen deities, but wine in common; which was not prohibited by the law of Moses, but in the case of a Nazarite, and of vows:

*nor anything*, be it what it will,

*whereby thy brother stumbleth*. The Syriac version reads, "our brother"; anyone that stands in such a spiritual relation to any of us; and for which reason care should be taken, that no stumblingblock, or occasion to fall, should be put in his way; particularly that Christian liberty in things indifferent be not unseasonably and imprudently used, and so become a means of stumbling and staggering to weak minds:

*or is offended*; to that degree, as to censure and judge him that eats, as an impious person, and a transgressor of the law; with whom he cannot keep his communion, but withdraws himself from it, and is even tempted to drop his profession of the Christian religion entirely, being ready to think it is not right, since contrary to the law of Moses:

*or is made weak*; more weak in the faith than he was before, and his love is weakened and grows very cold and indifferent to his Christian brethren, that can take and use a liberty which he cannot. These two last phrases are not in the Syriac and Ethiopic versions, nor in the Alexandrian copy, though in others, and are used for the sake of explanation and amplification.

**Ver. 22.** *Hast thou faith? have it to thyself before God*, etc..] Which is to be understood, not of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the doctrines of

the Gospel; for a man that has such faith given him, ought not to keep it in his own breast, but to declare it to others; he ought to make a public visible profession of it, before many witnesses; it becomes him to tell the church of God what great things the Lord has done for him; and as he believes with the heart, so he ought to make confession with the mouth unto salvation; but this faith only designs a full persuasion in a man's own mind, about the free and lawful use of things indifferent, the subject the apostle is upon; (see <sup>6145</sup>Romans 14:5,14); and his advice on this head is, to keep this faith and persuasion in a man's own breast, and not divulge it to others, where there is danger of scandal and offence: he does not advise such to alter their minds, change their sentiments, or cast away their faith, which was right and agreeable to his own, but to have it, hold and keep it, though, within themselves; he would not have them openly declare it, and publicly make use of it, since it might be grieving and distressing to weak minds; but in private, and where there was no danger of giving offence, they might both speak of it, and use it; and if they could not, should satisfy themselves that God, who sees in secret, knows they have this faith, and sees their use of it, though others do not, for from him they have it; so the Ethiopic version reads it, and “if thou hast faith with thyself, thou art secure before God, from whom thou hast obtained it”; and should be thankful to him for it, and use it in such a manner as makes most for his glory, and the peace of his church since to him they must give an account another day: some copies and versions read without an interrogation, thou hast faith; and others, “thou, the faith which thou hast, have it to thyself”, etc.. so the Alexandrian copy and the Syriac version.

*Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth;* or “approves of”; that is, it is well for that man who observes no difference of meats, if either he does not act contrary to his own conscience, and so condemns himself in what he allows himself in; or exposes himself to the censure, judgment, and condemnation of others, in doing that which he approves of as lawful, and is so, but unlawful when done to the offence of others: some understand this as spoken to the weak believer, signifying that he is in the right, who, through example, and the force of the sensual appetite, is not prevailed upon to allow himself to eat, contrary to his own conscience, and whereby he would be self-condemned; but as the strong believer is addressed in the beginning of the verse, I choose to think he is intended in this part of it; and the rather, because the weak believer is taken notice of in the next verse, with a peculiar view to this very thing.

**Ver. 23.** *And he that doubteth*, etc..] Or makes a difference between meats and meats, or is in suspense whether any difference should be observed or not,

*is damned*; not with everlasting damnation, which is not the consequent of, nor connected with such an action, as eating of a thing indifferent, with a scrupulous conscience; but such an one is condemned in his own conscience; he is self-condemned, his conscience condemns him for what he himself does; and he is self-condemned in judging and censuring others, for the same things: so the Syriac renders it, *hl byj ta*, “he becomes guilty”, or he contracts guilt to himself, or is self-condemned; and so the Arabic, “he is already condemned”,

*because [he eateth] not of faith*: or of a full persuasion in his own mind that he is right in eating; he halts between two opinions, and is doubtful in his own mind what is best to do, and therefore, whilst this is his case, he ought to refrain:

*for whatsoever is not of faith is sin*. This is a general rule, or axiom, which is not only applicable to the present case, but to any other, whether of a natural, civil, moral, or evangelic kind: “whatsoever does not spring from faith”, as the Arabic version renders it, cannot be excused of sin; whatever is not agreeable to the word and doctrine of faith, ought not to be done; whatever is done without faith, or not in the exercise of it, is culpable, for without faith nothing can be pleasing to God; and whatever is contrary to the persuasion of a man's own mind, is so far criminal, as it is a violation of his conscience; whatever men do, especially in a religious way, they ought to make faith of it, or to be fully persuaded of it in their own minds, or they act amiss: in the Arabic version, the Complutensian edition, the Alexandrian copy, and some others, (<sup>5165</sup>Romans 16:25-27), “now to him that is of power”, etc.. are here added; which have induced some to think, that the apostle intended to have finished his epistle here; but having more time, and other things occurred to write of, he proceeded.