



# **unfoldingWord® Simplified Text**

**Romans**

**Version 34**

[en]

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## **unfoldingWord® Simplified Text**

**Date:** 2022-04-29

**Version:** 34

**Published by:** unfoldingWord

## **unfoldingWord® Hebrew Bible**

**Date:** 2021-09-07

**Version:** 2.1.23

**Published by:** unfoldingWord

## **Tischendorf Greek New Testament 8th edition**

**Date:** 2019-06-28

**Version:** 2.7

**Published by:** Door43

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# Romans

## Chapter 1

<sup>1</sup>{I,} Paul, who serve the Messiah Jesus, {am writing this letter to the church in the city of Rome}. Jesus summoned me to personally represent him and specially chose me to proclaim God's good news. <sup>2</sup>God previously promised this good news. God's spokesmen prophesied about this good news {that was recorded} in the sacred writings. <sup>3</sup>{This good news is} about God's Son. As it relates to his Son's human nature, he was born a descendant of King David. <sup>4</sup>{As it relates to his divine nature,} God {the Father} powerfully demonstrated Jesus to be his divine Son by resurrecting him after he died. The Holy Spirit confirmed the divine nature of God's Son! {God's Son is} Jesus the Messiah, who is our Lord. <sup>5</sup>Jesus favored us by authorizing us to personally represent him, in order that all the nations would become obedient {to God} by trusting {in Jesus the Messiah, and} in order to make his name famous. <sup>6</sup>Jesus the Messiah has also summoned you who are {living} among the nations. <sup>7</sup>{I want} all of you {believers in Christ} who live in Rome to know that God loves you. He summons you to live like those who belong to him. I pray that God our Father and the Lord Jesus the Messiah {will continue to} act graciously toward you. I also pray that they {will continue to} keep you safe and secure.

<sup>8</sup>{Now, the} first {thing to tell you, is how much} I am constantly thanking my God for all of you {believers in the Messiah}. I {can only} thank my God because Jesus the Messiah chose me to personally represent him. I thank my God because {people} throughout the whole inhabited world are proclaiming how you trust {in God}. <sup>9</sup>Certainly it is God whom I devoutly serve, by proclaiming the good news about his Son. God testifies that I am telling the truth, {when I say that} I constantly mention you, <sup>10</sup>whenever I pray. I {keep} begging God that somehow he would now finally will that I journey so that I can visit with you. <sup>11</sup>{I pray for this} because I deeply desire to see you {in person}, so that I can share some gracious gift with you from the Holy Spirit, that will help spiritually support you. <sup>12</sup>In other words, {I want to share some gracious gift with you} so that we can mutually help one other. Both you and I can help each other by sharing how we mutually trust in God. <sup>13</sup>My fellow believers in Messiah, I certainly want you to know that many times I planned to visit you. But until the present time, {God} has prevented me from visiting you. I planned to visit so that I could help you to spiritually grow, the same way {the churches} among the rest of the nations {have} also {grown spiritually}. <sup>14</sup>I am obligated {to proclaim the good news}: to people who are culturally Greek and people who are not culturally Greek, to people who are culturally sophisticated and people who are culturally unsophisticated. <sup>15</sup>So then, if it was my choice, I would also be ready and willing to preach the good news to you believers in the Messiah who live in Rome.

<sup>16</sup>Certainly, I am deeply honored to proclaim God's good news! Because when his good news is proclaimed, God demonstrates how powerfully he saves any type of person who continues to trust in him. God first proclaimed the good news to save the Jews, now he proclaims the good news to save the pagans too. <sup>17</sup>Indeed, whenever God's good news is proclaimed, God continues to show how he makes people right with himself: trust {in God's promises} leads to trust {in God's good news}. This is what the holy scriptures mean when they say, "But the person God makes right with himself will live by trusting in God."

<sup>18</sup>Indeed, from where God dwells, he is showing how furious he is. He is furious with all people who reject God and refuse to become right with him. By refusing to become right with him, these same people are {actually} suppressing the things that God says are true.

<sup>19</sup>In fact, what {all nations} acknowledge about God is obvious to these people. Because God has made it obvious to them. <sup>20</sup>Indeed, {although} people cannot see God with their eyes, {all} people can clearly perceive what he is like by observing what he made. Since the time when God first created the universe, {he has shown how} he ceaselessly controls {all things}. {He has shown that} he is {the only} God. For this reason, none of these people can excuse themselves {from acknowledging that God exists}. <sup>21</sup>Although these people know that there is {one} God,

they do not honor him as God. They also refuse to thank him. On the contrary, they ponder worthless things {about him}. They also are unable to understand spiritual things. <sup>22</sup>{By} asserting that they are wise, they become morons! <sup>23</sup>So they stop glorifying the God who can never perish, so that they can glorify perishable idols that resemble: people, birds, four-footed animals, and creatures that creep and crawl.

<sup>24</sup>So, God permits these people to indulge in the lustful acts that they deeply desire, causing these people to become controlled by these acts. Then these people become impure when they {sexually} dishonor their bodies with one another. <sup>25</sup>These people stop believing what is true about God and start believing what is false about God. They reverently honor and religiously worship things that God creates, instead of the God who creates those things. {They did these things, even though} people should always praise God. May it be so!

<sup>26</sup>Because {these people exchange what is true about God for what is false, God permits them to become controlled {by what is false}. This happens when they dishonor themselves by lusting after whatever they desire. In fact, their females exchange natural {sexual} acts {with males} for unnatural {sexual} acts {with females}.

<sup>27</sup>Similarly, the males also abandon the natural sexual acts with females. They begin to intensely lust for other males. They commit homosexual acts. {This kind of behavior is} morally indecent. They are repaid by receiving what they deserve in their own bodies. They are penalized for how they pervert {God's natural sexual acts}.

<sup>28</sup>These people think it is worthless to acknowledge God. So, God allows them to become controlled by being inclined toward worthless things. As a result, they practice inappropriate things. <sup>29</sup>These people have become completely controlled {by inappropriate things}: they refuse to be made right with God, they are wicked, they are greedy, they are evil. They are totally inclined: to envy others, to murder, to argue, to act deceptively, to commit evil deeds. They gossip, <sup>30</sup>they slander. They hate God, they are violent. They are arrogant, they boast. They invent {new kinds of} evil things. They disobey their parents. <sup>31</sup>These people are unreasonable, they break promises. They do not care {about anyone except themselves}, they do not show mercy {to others}. <sup>32</sup>These people fully understand the kind of right living that God requires, {and} that people who keep doing such {inappropriate} things deserve to die. Even though they fully understand these things—they still continue to live inappropriately. Not only that, but they even fully approve of those people who practice such {inappropriate} things!

## Chapter 2

<sup>1</sup>This is why any of you who judges another person is defenseless when God will judge you. This is because when you judge someone else, you are actually condemning yourself—since you who judge someone else do the exact same things as they do! <sup>2</sup>Certainly, we acknowledge that it is entirely fair that God will finally judge those people who keep doing such {inappropriate} things. <sup>3</sup>You who judge, you actually think that you will be able to escape when God finally judges! You keep judging the people who practice such {inappropriate} things—even though you keep doing the same things yourself! <sup>4</sup>You actually despise {how} lavishly kind, and tolerant, and patient he is! You know that when God shows how kind he is, {it is meant} to lead you to change how you live. <sup>5</sup>Instead, you stubbornly refuse to deeply repent. This is why God will severely punish you. {This will happen} at the final time God punishes and reveals how justly he judges.

<sup>6</sup>God will repay each and every person for whatever they do. <sup>7</sup>Indeed, living eternally {is how God repays} those people who persist in doing good. {These are} the people who keep striving to glorify {him}, to honor {him}, and to preserve themselves. <sup>8</sup>But, God is fiercely furious with those people who are hostile towards what he says is true. {God is} also {fiercely furious} with those people who {continually} refuse to do what he says is true. In fact, these people {continually} refuse to become right with God. <sup>9</sup>{God will cause} every human being who {habitually} acts evil to become distressed and troubled. {This will happen} first to the Jew who {habitually} acts evil, and also to the pagan. <sup>10</sup>But God will glorify, and honor, and reconcile every person who {habitually} acts good. {This will happen} to the Jew first, and also to the pagan. <sup>11</sup>Because God is impartial {when he judges}.

<sup>12</sup>Certainly, whoever sins without knowing what God has legislated {through Moses}, when they die they will not be held responsible for what they did not know. And whoever sins knowing what God has legislated {through Moses},

God will judge them according to what he has legislated. <sup>13</sup>This is because God does not make right with himself the people who {only} hear his law {that he gave through Moses}. But, God will make right with himself those people who live by his law. <sup>14</sup>There are nations who do not possess the rules that God made in his law. {But, they still} instinctually follow the rules of his law. {Although} these nations do not possess God's law—whenever they do what his law says—it is certain that God considers them obedient to the rules in his law. <sup>15</sup>{By instinctually following the rules of God's law,} these people demonstrate that God has made each person consciously aware of how to obey his law. When they act according to God's law, these actions {also} testify to them. Meanwhile, what a person thinks will either accuse or even defend them {at the time when God finally judges humanity}. <sup>16</sup>{This will happen} at the time when God {finally} judges the hidden thoughts that people have. {God's} good news that I proclaim teaches that he will judge {humanity} through Jesus, the Messiah.

<sup>17</sup>Now, you consider yourself a Jew. You identify yourself with God's law. You boast {that you know} God. <sup>18</sup>You are familiar with what God desires. Also, since you have been educated by God's law, you approve of what is superior. <sup>19</sup>You have even convinced yourself that you can spiritually guide the pagans. {You are convinced that} you can clarify to those who are unaware what God says in law. <sup>20</sup>{You have convinced yourself that} you should instruct people who believe foolish things. {You have convinced yourself that} you should teach {people who know as little as} infants. {You have convinced yourself that} you fully understand what is true, since you think you own the rights to God's law. <sup>21</sup>So {since you actually have convinced yourself about all these things}, why don't you do what you teach others to do?! You keep telling others that they should not steal, but you steal! <sup>22</sup>You keep telling {people} not to engage in adultery, {but} you engage in adultery! You {supposedly} detest {worship of} idols, {but} you ransack temples! <sup>23</sup>You boast in {your knowledge of} God's law, {but} you degrade God by violating his law! <sup>24</sup>In fact, it is exactly as the {holy} scriptures say, "The nations defame God's name because of {how} you {act}."

<sup>25</sup>Because it is certain, that being circumcised can benefit you if you practice God's law. But, if you violate God's law, being circumcised no longer benefits you at all. <sup>26</sup>So then, if the uncircumcised person obeys what God requires in his law, God will regard that uncircumcised person as being circumcised. <sup>27</sup>The person who is physically uncircumcised and fully performs God's law, will judge you {Jews}! Although you are circumcised and know the written rules in God's law, the uncircumcised person will judge you {Jews} for violating God's law! <sup>28</sup>Indeed, being outwardly marked does not reveal who is a true Jew. {Similarly,} you can not reveal true circumcision by marking a body. <sup>29</sup>Actually, a true Jew is inwardly marked by being spiritually circumcised. The Holy Spirit spiritually circumcises a person, not God's written rules. A true Jew only cares that God praises him, not other people.

## Chapter 3

<sup>1</sup>Then {perhaps you might say,} "What makes a Jew special?" Or "How does circumcision benefit a person?" <sup>2</sup>{I would say, "Being a Jew} is quite special! {It actually benefits a person} in many ways!" In fact, the first benefit is that God entrusted the Jewish people to preserve what he announced through prophetic messages. <sup>3</sup>{Perhaps you might say,} "But what if some {of these Jews} acted faithless {toward God}? Faithless people cannot actually invalidate how faithful God is, can they?!" <sup>4</sup>{I would say, "Of course not!" In fact, God {will always} be trustworthy, even if every person is not. {This is} exactly what is written in the holy scriptures, "This is so that people will acknowledge that you are right when you speak. This is so that you are victorious when people {try to} judge you."

<sup>5</sup>What does this mean then: those of us Jews who refuse to become right with God, are {actually} confirming that God is right? {It can} not {possibly mean} that God is wrong when he punishes! (When I talk like this, it is meant to express how human beings think). <sup>6</sup>Of course not! If God is somehow wrong when he punishes, then God could not judge the world! <sup>7</sup>But {perhaps you might say,} "When I act untrustworthy, this further demonstrates how trustworthy God is. So, how can God still judge me as if I am sinning?" <sup>8</sup>You might as well spread slanderous reports against us like some people do! You might as well be like some people who accuse us of saying, "Let's do what is evil, so that what is good can happen!" It is right {for God} to condemn people {who speak and act} like this!

<sup>9</sup>So then, we {who are Jews} are certainly not superior! In fact, we previously charged that all Jews and Greek pagans are guilty of sinning. <sup>10</sup>This is confirmed by what the holy scriptures say, "There is not even one type of person who wants to be right with God!

<sup>11</sup>Not one of these people understands who God is. Not one of them is committed to know him.

<sup>12</sup>All types of people have swerved away {from trying to know God}. As a whole, they are {spiritually} damaged. Each type of person damages {others}. Up to the last person—each of these types of people damages {others}!

<sup>13</sup>Like a grave {without a tombstone}, their throat is always wide open {so they can slander}! They constantly {try to} deceive {people} with their tongues! What they say harms others, similar to how harmful the venom of an asp is when it bites! <sup>14</sup>Their mouths constantly curse others and always speak harshly.

<sup>15</sup>They rush eagerly to slaughter people.

<sup>16</sup>Wherever they go, they destroy lives and make people miserable.

<sup>17</sup>These {types of} people do not know how to live peacefully.

<sup>18</sup>They are not terrified that God is watching everything they do!"

<sup>19</sup>Certainly, we are convinced that whatever God's law says applies to the Jews{, to whom God gave his law}. This is so that no type of person can excuse themselves {from being judged by God. This is} also so that God could justly punish every person in the world as guilty {of breaking his law}. <sup>20</sup>In fact, God will not make a single person right with himself, {simply} because they do what God's law says. This is because people clearly realize how sinful they are when they know what God's law requires.

<sup>21</sup>But now God has chosen to reveal how he makes people right with himself. {Becoming right with God} does not depend on whether or not we do what God's law says. Yet, what God's law says and what his prophets spoke {long ago} continue to testify to the way he makes people right with himself. <sup>22</sup>In other words, God reveals how he makes people right with himself: through trusting in Jesus the Messiah. God will make all {types of} people right with himself if they continue to trust {in him}. This is because God does not distinguish {between different types of people}. <sup>23</sup>This is because all {types of} people sin and fail to properly glorify God. <sup>24</sup>These people become right with God as his free gift, because he is so kind. This gift from God is received when people are united to Jesus the Messiah, who rescued humanity {from being enslaved to living sinfully}. <sup>25</sup>God displayed Jesus the Messiah as the one who atones {for humanity's sins}. When people trust in his sacrificial death they are rescued from being enslaved to living sinfully. God exhibited that Jesus the Messiah atones {for humanity's sins} in order to demonstrate how God makes people right with himself. {This happened} because God disregarded the sins that humanity had previously committed. <sup>26</sup>At this definitive time in history, because he is so tolerant, God is demonstrating how he makes people right with himself. This is for the purpose of demonstrating that he is right and to show that God makes people right with himself {if} they are characterized by trust in Jesus {the Messiah}.

<sup>27</sup>So then, {because God makes people right with himself—}there is absolutely no one who can boast. {The truth is, no one can make themselves right with God} by doing {what} his law {commands}. Instead, {people become right with God} by trusting {in Jesus the Messiah}. <sup>28</sup>Indeed, we are convinced that a person is made right with God by trusting {in Jesus the Messiah}. Being made right with God does not depend on doing what God's law {says}.

<sup>29</sup>Certainly, God is not only the God of the Jews. He is most certainly the God of {all} the nations too! <sup>30</sup>It is certain that there is one God {of all the nations}. God will make right with himself {both} the Jews who are circumcised if they continue to trust {in Jesus the Messiah} and {the Pagans} who are uncircumcised, if they continue to trust in {Jesus} the Messiah. <sup>31</sup>So, to be clear, we would never say that God's law is invalid because he makes people right with himself if they continue to trust in Jesus the Messiah. Actually, we are confirming what God said in his law {about trusting in Jesus the Messiah}.

## Chapter 4

<sup>1</sup>So, we can apply this to Abraham, the physical ancestor of us Jews. Abraham himself found out that what God said in his law {about trusting in Jesus the Messiah} is true. <sup>2</sup>Certainly, if Abraham became right with God based on doing {what God's law requires}, then Abraham could boast {to himself about it}. Yet, {Abraham could} not {boast} to God {about it}. <sup>3</sup>Certainly, the holy scriptures tell {us}, "Then Abraham trusted in God, and God considered Abraham to be right with himself." <sup>4</sup>Indeed, when a person works, he does not consider the wage he earns as grace. Instead, the person working considers the wage he earns, as what his employer owes him. <sup>5</sup>Now, {let's say that there is} a person who does not do {what God's law requires}, but continues to trust in the God who {even} makes the impious person right with himself. If such an impious person continues to trust in him, God considers {even} that person right with himself. <sup>6</sup>This is also the same thing King David says {in the holy scriptures. He speaks about how happy people are when God considers them right with himself, even though they do not do {what God's law requires}}.

<sup>7</sup>People are so happy when God forgives their lawless acts! People are so happy when God no longer acknowledges their sins! <sup>8</sup>The man whom the Lord never again considers sinful is so happy!

<sup>9</sup>So then, these happy people come from the circumcised Jews, or even uncircumcised people who are not Jews! As proof, we quote {the holy scriptures, "Since} Abraham trusted in God, God considered Abraham as right with himself." <sup>10</sup>So then, I ask you to recall if Abraham was circumcised or uncircumcised when God considered Abraham as right with himself. It was not while Abraham was circumcised, but while he was still uncircumcised.

<sup>11</sup>When Abraham was circumcised {in his body} as God {commanded him}, it was {like} a sign {that displayed how he faithfully obeyed God}. God considered it a mark of being right with himself, because Abraham trusted in God even while he was uncircumcised. God considered how Abraham trusted in God as a mark {to show} that Abraham is the {spiritual} ancestor of all those people who trust in God even while they are uncircumcised. This was also to show that God can consider even uncircumcised people as being right with himself. <sup>12</sup>So, Abraham is the ancestor {of two kinds} of circumcised people. He is not only the {physical} ancestor of the {physically} circumcised {Jews}. But, Abraham is also the {spiritual} ancestor of those {spiritually circumcised Pagans} who conform the way they live to trust in God, like our ancestor Abraham did even while he was uncircumcised.

<sup>13</sup>This is because what God promised to Abraham or his descendants does not come through God's law. God promised {to bless} Abraham so that he would {spiritually} inherit {people from} the {whole} world. Instead, {God accomplishes what he promised to Abraham} through making people right with himself when they trust in him.

<sup>14</sup>In fact, if people can inherit {what God promises} by doing what his law says—trusting in God becomes useless! What God promises would also become invalid. <sup>15</sup>This is because God's law is intended to punish {those who violate it}. But, where God's law does not exist, no one can violate {it}. <sup>16</sup>This is why what God promised comes through trusting in him, in order to show how kind he is. {God is so kind} that he secured what he promised to all {Abraham's spiritual} descendants. Abraham's {spiritual} descendants are not only those {Jews} associated with Abraham through God's law. But, Abraham's {spiritual} descendants are also those {nations} associated with Abraham through trusting {in what God promised}. This is because Abraham is the {spiritual} father of all {types of people who God makes right with himself when they trust in him}. <sup>17</sup>This is exactly what God says in the holy scriptures, "I have chosen you as a {spiritual} father for numerous nations." {Abraham is our spiritual father} in God's presence (the God whom Abraham trusted). God brings those people who are dead back to life. He also summons what does not exist, then it exists. <sup>18</sup>Abraham trusted {in God} by hoping {in God}, despite what seemed hopeless. {He trusted} that he would become a {spiritual} father for numerous nations. {He trusted} because of what God had promised {him}, "Your descendants will become just as numerous {as the stars in heaven}."

<sup>19</sup>Abraham perceived that {he was so old that it was as if} his body was already dead. He was about one hundred years old! And {since} Sarah {had never been able to become pregnant,} it was as if her womb was dead. {Despite all of these things,} he did not weaken in how he trusted {in God}. <sup>20</sup>Indeed, Abraham did not faithlessly doubt what God promised. Instead, while glorifying God, Abraham empowered himself by trusting in God. <sup>21</sup>So God totally assured Abraham that he is also powerful enough to accomplish what he had promised. <sup>22</sup>That is also why God considered Abraham right with himself.



<sup>23</sup>Yet, when the holy scriptures say, "God considered Abraham {to be right with himself}," {these words} do not only refer to Abraham. <sup>24</sup>But, these words to Abraham also refer to us {now}. God appoints that he will consider right with himself those people who continue to trust in him who resurrected our Lord Jesus from where dead people are. <sup>25</sup>God handed over our Lord Jesus {to die} because all humanity has morally offended God. God also resurrected our Lord Jesus because he wanted to make all humanity right with himself.

## Chapter 5

<sup>1</sup>So then, because God makes us right with himself when we trust in him, we can live peacefully with God through Jesus Christ our Lord. <sup>2</sup>Our Lord Jesus the Messiah also allows us to {continually} experience how kind God is by trusting in him. Because God is so kind, he confirms that we can continue to experience how kind he is. So, we can confidently boast about how glorious God is. <sup>3</sup>This is not the only thing about which we can confidently boast. But, we can also confidently boast when we are distressed. This is because we know that when we are distressed, God is accomplishing what will help us to endure. <sup>4</sup>And if we endure {when distressed}, {God} approves {us}. And {when God} approves {us, we become} confident. <sup>5</sup>And when we become confident, we are assured. This is because God demonstrates {how much} he loves us by abundantly giving us the Holy Spirit deep within ourselves.

<sup>6</sup>In fact, at just the right time—while we were still {spiritually} incapacitated—{our Lord Jesus} the Messiah died for the sake of impious people. <sup>7</sup>Indeed, rarely would someone consider dying for the sake of a person who is {in a} right {relationship} with God. Although possibly someone might even courageously consider dying for the sake of a good person. <sup>8</sup>But God demonstrates his own love towards us {human beings} by this fact: while we were still {a} sinful {human race—our Lord Jesus} the Messiah died for our sake! <sup>9</sup>God already makes us right with himself because {our Lord Jesus} the Messiah died {for our sake}. {If God already makes us right}, it is even more certain then, that God will save us when he {finally} judges {humanity}. It is through the Messiah {that God will save us}. <sup>10</sup>Indeed, while we were God's enemies, God reconciled us with himself because his Son {Jesus} died for our sake. So then, since God reconciled us with himself—it is even more certain that he will save us because his {Son Jesus} resurrected {from death}. <sup>11</sup>Yet, these are not the only things {God does for us}. But, we also boast about God because of {what} our Lord Jesus the Messiah {does for us}. God has already reconciled us with himself because our Lord Jesus the Messiah {died for our sake}.

<sup>12</sup>So then, one man caused sin to enter the world. As the one man sinned, {so people began} to die. This is also how death spread throughout the whole human race. Because of this, all people started sinning. <sup>13</sup>This is why people throughout the world sinned, even before {God gave his} law {to the Jews}. However, God did not legally regard it as sinning, since the law did not yet exist {to identify what it means to sin}. <sup>14</sup>However, death dominated from {the time of the first man} Adam until Moses{, who gave the Jews God's law}. Death even dominated over those people who did not sin by violating the same command God gave to Adam. Adam is a type of {God's perfect} human who would come. <sup>15</sup>But God's gracious gift does not exactly correspond to how Adam rejected {God's command}. This is because the one man {Adam} rejected {God's command}, so all people die. {But,} God even more showed how kind he is. God's kind gift that comes because of the one man Jesus the Messiah extends to all people! <sup>16</sup>Yet, God's gift does not come the same way as the one man {Adam} sinned. Indeed, it is certain that God judged the one man {Adam after he sinned}, causing God to condemn. But, God's gracious gift after many people rejected {his commands}, causes God to make people right with himself. <sup>17</sup>Indeed, one man {Adam} rejected {God's command}. Because of one man {Adam} death {now} dominates. But, those people who accept how abundantly kind God is and those people he makes right with himself {benefit} even more. Because of one man Jesus the Messiah, those people will dominate {death} and live eternally.

<sup>18</sup>In summary, {Adam} wrongly rejected {God's command}, causing God to condemn all humanity. In the same way, {Jesus the Messiah} rightly enacted {God's command}, causing God to make all humanity right with himself, so that they can live {eternally}. <sup>19</sup>In fact, the one man {Adam} disobeyed {God's command}, appointing many people to become sinful. In the same way, the one man {Jesus the Messiah} obeyed {God's command}, so God will appoint many people to become right with himself. <sup>20</sup>When {God} added {his} law, then people rejected {his commands}

even more. But {even though} people began to sin even more, God exceedingly showed how kind he is! <sup>21</sup>Since death has spread throughout the whole human race, sin dominates {people's lives}. So in the same way, God decided to make how kind he is dominate {people's lives}. {God powerfully shows how kind he is} because our Lord Jesus the Messiah makes us right with God. Being right with God leads to eternal life.

## Chapter 6

<sup>1</sup>As a result, we certainly must not continue to sin! We should not think that {if we continue to sin, somehow} God will show how kind he is even more! <sup>2</sup>Of course {we should} not {think like this}! We who are no longer controlled by sinning, must not live like people who are still controlled by sinning! <sup>3</sup>God unites to the Messiah Jesus whoever is baptized. {At the same time}, God unites whoever is baptized to the death of the Messiah Jesus. Certainly, you are not unaware {of these facts}! <sup>4</sup>So, when we are baptized into Jesus the Messiah's death, it is as if God buries us {in the tomb} together with {Jesus} the Messiah. {God} the Father resurrected the Messiah to glorify himself. In the same way, when we are baptized, God resurrects those of us {who are united to the Messiah's death}. This is so that we too can live {spiritually} renewed. <sup>5</sup>God has identified us with Jesus the Messiah's death, as if we {physically} died with him. Because of this, it is certain that God will also identify us with how Jesus the Messiah resurrected from death. <sup>6</sup>We acknowledge that at the same time Jesus the Messiah was crucified, God also cancelled out how we were associated with {death that comes from} Adam. This was so that God could totally remove how we are prone to sinning. Then we would no longer serve as slaves to sinning. <sup>7</sup>Certainly, God vindicates the person from {being enslaved through} living sinfully. This already happens {when the person is baptized. At that time,} the person dies {to being enslaved through living sinfully}. <sup>8</sup>Certainly, we ceased {serving as slaves to sinning} when God united us to the Messiah. This is why we are persuaded that we will also live {eternally} with the Messiah. <sup>9</sup>We are convinced that since God resurrected the Messiah from death, he can never die again. Death can never again {claim} to dominate the Messiah! <sup>10</sup>This is because when Jesus the Messiah died, he died one time, {for the purpose of removing humanity's slavery} to sinning forever. Now, He lives his {resurrected} life with God forever. <sup>11</sup>So then, you too should regard yourselves as free from {the spiritual} death that comes from sinning. Indeed, you should regard yourselves as alive with God, because you are united to the Messiah Jesus. <sup>12</sup>This is why you must not permit your physical bodies to become dominated by living sinfully, so that you submit your bodies to lusting. <sup>13</sup>Do not use your body parts in order to sin. Do not use your body parts for living wickedly. Instead, use yourselves for God's purposes, like people who are resurrected from death. Also, use your body parts in order to live in a right relationship with God. <sup>14</sup>Certainly, sinning must not dominate any of you. This is because God's law does not control you, but you are free {from how the law controls} because of how kind God is.

<sup>15</sup>So then, of course we should not sin, since God's law does not control us! Neither should we sin, since we are free because of how kind God is! <sup>16</sup>Certainly you realize that if you submit yourselves for use as slaves to a thing or person—you become slaves to that thing or person you submitted yourselves! You could enslave yourselves to living sinfully, leading to your death. Or you could submit yourselves to God, leading to a right relationship with him. <sup>17</sup>You used to serve as slaves to living sinfully. But now you are sincerely submissive to the type of {apostolic} teaching God gave us to pass on to you. So, we give thanks to God! <sup>18</sup>Indeed, since God liberated you from living sinfully, you are now serving God in a right relationship. <sup>19</sup>I {Paul} am speaking in human terms, because you are spiritually immature. Certainly, you previously used your body parts by serving as slaves to living impurely. {This led you} to increasingly break God's law. In the same way, you must now use your body parts by serving as slaves in a right relationship with God. {This will lead you} to live like God's people should. <sup>20</sup>This is because when you were slaves to living sinfully, you were not in a right relationship with God. <sup>21</sup>So, formerly you derived no benefit from those {sinful} things that now embarrass you. This is because the final result of those things is death. <sup>22</sup>But at the present time, you are free from the slavery of living sinfully. Now, you serve as slaves to God himself. You derive what is beneficial, that leads you to live devoted to God. Indeed, eternal life is the final result {for those who live devoted to God}. <sup>23</sup>It is certain that living sinfully results in death. But God is so gracious that he gives eternal life to those who are united to our Lord, the Messiah Jesus.

## Chapter 7

<sup>1</sup>My fellow believers in the Messiah, you are well-aware that {God's} law has control over people for their whole life. I know that you are well-aware {of this fact}, because I am speaking to people who are familiar with God's law. <sup>2</sup>For instance, a married woman remains obligated to stay married to her husband for as long as he lives. But, if her husband dies, {God's} law cancels her marriage obligation to her husband. <sup>3</sup>So then, if she marries another man while her husband is alive, she will be identified as an adulteress. But if her husband dies, she is free from what God's law requires of those who are married. Then she is not {considered} an adulteress if she marries another man. <sup>4</sup>{A similar thing happened} through {the death} of the body of the Messiah {for your sake}. As a result {of the Messiah's death}, my fellow believers in the Messiah, you too spiritually died to {being controlled by} God's law. Now you belong to another {"husband"}. You belong to the Messiah who God resurrected from death. {This happened} so that God's people would live in such a way as to produce deeds that bring him glory. <sup>5</sup>Indeed, at one time, we were controlled by living sinfully. What God's law requires from us revealed in us just how much we lust after living sinfully. God's law also caused how much we lust after living sinfully to act within our body parts. As a result, this would {eventually} produce {our eternal} death. <sup>6</sup>But now, God cancels what his law requires {for us}. God's law no longer controls us by suppressing people. So then, now we newly serve the {Holy} Spirit. We are no longer {required} to serve as slaves to God's old written law code.

<sup>7</sup>We should not think that God's law is sinful! Of course not! Yet, without {God's} law, I would never have known {what it means to} sin. For instance, if God's law did not say, "You must not covet," I would never have known {what it means to} covet. <sup>8</sup>In fact, {humanity tends toward} living sinfully {and} takes {every} opportunity to break God's command. {As a result,} all {sorts of} lust{ful activity} controls me. This is because if God's law did not exist, living sinfully would cease. <sup>9</sup>Certainly, there was a time when I was living without {God's} law. But, when God instituted the command, how I tend toward living sinfully intensified. <sup>10</sup>But I became controlled by death. God's command was supposed to lead me towards {eternal} life. But, God's command led me to become controlled by death. <sup>11</sup>In fact, {I tended toward} living sinfully {and} took {every} opportunity to break God's command. When I sinned, I was tricked. Then {breaking} God's command {spiritually} killed me. <sup>12</sup>In summary: God's law is special, God's command is special, and just, and good.

<sup>13</sup>So, of course {God's law} which is good did not make me controlled by death! Instead, {how I tended toward} living sinfully activated {spiritual} death in me. This was to clearly exhibit how bad it is to live sinfully in comparison to doing what is good. This is {also} so that {how I tended toward} living sinfully would become excessively sinful through {how I broke} God's command.

<sup>14</sup>Certainly, we {instinctively} realize that God's law is spiritual. But, I am {spiritually} frail. {It is as if} I sell {myself} to serve as a slave to living sinfully. <sup>15</sup>I simply do not understand what controls me! Indeed, what I do not desire, that is what I practice. But, what I hate, that is what I do. <sup>16</sup>But since I do the very thing that I do not desire, I am consenting to the fact that God's law is superior. <sup>17</sup>This means that now I am no longer the one who controls {how I tend toward} living sinfully. Instead, {how I tend toward living sinfully} resides deep within me {and actually controls me}. <sup>18</sup>Certainly I realize that there is nothing that resides within me that is good. In other words, I tend toward doing what is bad. Even though I actually deeply desire to do what is good, yet {how} I {tend toward doing what is bad makes me} unable to do what is superior. <sup>19</sup>Indeed, I do not do the good thing I desire {to do}. Instead, I practice the very evil thing I do not desire {to practice}. <sup>20</sup>So, since I do the thing that I do not desire, I am no longer the one who controls what I do. Instead, {how I tend toward living sinfully} resides within me and is responsible for why I sin. <sup>21</sup>So then, I have discovered a different {kind of} law: what is evil is actually present within me, although I desire to do what is superior. <sup>22</sup>Certainly I am delighted with God's law as it relates to what I spiritually desire. <sup>23</sup>Yet, I notice another kind of law present in my body parts. This law conflicts with the law that controls how I spiritually perceive. This {conflicting} law still remains in my body parts. It controls me, so that I become captivated by the law that makes me tend toward living sinfully. <sup>24</sup>I am truly a wretched human being! {I feel as though there is no one} who could {possibly} rescue me from this body {that tends to do what brings} death! <sup>25</sup>I give thanks to God because of our Lord Jesus the Messiah! So, I actually do serve God's law with how I spiritually perceive. Yet in my body, I serve as a slave to that law that makes me tend toward living sinfully.

## Chapter 8

<sup>1</sup>Yet now, God's law is powerless to condemn those people who are united to Jesus the Messiah. <sup>2</sup>This is because the Holy Spirit's law leads to {eternal} life. This law liberates you who are united to Jesus the Messiah. The Holy Spirit's law also liberates people from sin's law, and liberates a person from death. <sup>3</sup>In fact, because we as weak human beings tend toward living sinfully, God's law became powerless {to help us}. But God personally did what his law could not do. God sent his own Son {to become a human being}. His Son experienced what it is like to live in a human body that tends toward living sinfully. God sent his Son for the sake of {removing humanity's} sin. {By sending his Son} God condemned {how} sinning {controls humanity. This happened} through {the crucifixion of} the body {of his Son}. <sup>4</sup>{God did these things} so that we could rightly accomplish what his law requires. We rightly accomplish what his law requires when we live as those who are not controlled by living sinfully, but are controlled by the {Holy} Spirit. <sup>5</sup>This is because those people who are controlled by living sinfully, focus on those things that are related to living sinfully. But, those people who are controlled by the {Holy} Spirit, focus on those things that are related to the {Holy} Spirit. <sup>6</sup>Indeed, those who focus on living sinfully will {eternally} die. But those who focus on the {Holy} Spirit will live {eternally and} peacefully. <sup>7</sup>It is certain that those who focus on living sinfully are God's enemies. This is because they do not submit themselves to God's law. In fact, they are powerless to submit themselves to God's law. <sup>8</sup>But, those who are controlled by living sinfully are powerless to do what pleases God. <sup>9</sup>Yet, you {at Rome} are not united to living sinfully. Instead, you are united to the {Holy} Spirit, since God's Spirit lives among you. But if some person does not possess Jesus the Messiah's Spirit, this person does not belong to the Jesus the Messiah. <sup>10</sup>Now, the Messiah Jesus is among you. So, your bodies are dead because they are {slaves of} living sinfully. But, the {Holy} Spirit gives {eternal} life because you are right with God. <sup>11</sup>It is certain that God resurrected Jesus from death, and God's Spirit lives among you {who are at Rome}. Because God resurrected Jesus the Messiah from death, he will also make your physical bodies live again through God's Spirit, who dwells among you.

<sup>12</sup>As a result, {my} fellow believers in the Messiah, we are obligated—but not to live united to being controlled by living sinfully. <sup>13</sup>It is certain that if you live controlled by living sinfully—you are destined to die {eternally}. But if the {Holy} Spirit empowers you to eradicate practicing what is sinful with your bodies—you will live {eternally}.

<sup>14</sup>This is because whoever God's Spirit guides, these people are God's {spiritual} children. <sup>15</sup>Certainly you {at Rome} did not allow a {demonic} spirit to terrify you into becoming its slave again. But, you allowed God's Spirit to {spiritually} adopt you. Through God's Spirit, you cry out, "Oh my Father!" <sup>16</sup>God's Spirit personally testifies along with our own spirits that we are God's children. <sup>17</sup>Indeed, since we are {God's} children, we also become heirs. We inherit from God himself and also together with the Messiah Jesus. This is true only if we keep suffering together with the Messiah Jesus. Then God will also glorify us together with the Messiah Jesus.

<sup>18</sup>In fact, I regard that what we {fellow believers in the Messiah Jesus} suffer at this {definitive} time {in history}—is incomparable to what glorious things God destines to unveil for us {in the future}. <sup>19</sup>Indeed, God's creation is watchfully waiting, eagerly expecting the time when God unveils who his {spiritual} children are. <sup>20</sup>Indeed, God subjugated what he created so that it became useless. This was not what God originally intended for what he created. But, God subjugated what he created to insure: <sup>21</sup>that God would also liberate what he created from being enslaved to corruption. Then God will gloriously liberate what he created together with God's {spiritual} children. <sup>22</sup>Indeed, we acknowledge that even to the present time, {what God created is eagerly expecting the time when God unveils who his spiritual children are}. Because of this, all of what God created keeps moaning and groaning together {like a mother in labor pains anticipates her child's birth}. <sup>23</sup>Certainly, it is not only what God created that groans! But, we too belong to those people who possess the first portion of the {Holy} Spirit. So, we also keep inwardly groaning. This is because we continue to eagerly wait for God to {spiritually} adopt us. When God {spiritually} adopts us, he will release our physical bodies {from decaying as well}. <sup>24</sup>Certainly, God assures us that he will save us. If God had already saved us, then he would not need to assure us. This is because when God saves us, we no longer need God to assure us that he will save us. <sup>25</sup>But, since God assures us {that he will save us}, we do not need him to show us. We keep eagerly waiting {for God to save us} by persevering.

<sup>26</sup>Indeed, the {Holy} Spirit similarly assists us because of how weak we are. This is because we do not understand how to properly pray. But, the {Holy} Spirit personally obtains answers for what we pray, by groaning without words. <sup>27</sup>In fact, God is the one who continues to investigate what is deep within us. God understands what the {Holy} Spirit intends. This is why the {Holy} Spirit obtains answers from God for {what the holy people {of God pray}}.

<sup>28</sup>Indeed, we acknowledge that God makes all things that happen turn out for the good of those who love him. The people who love him are those God summons to participate in what he previously planned. <sup>29</sup>In fact, those who God knew in advance {would become his people}, he also chose in advance. {He chose them} in order to change them, so they would become exactly like his Son {Jesus. God did these things} so that his Son Jesus would become {like a} firstborn {brother} among many siblings. <sup>30</sup>Certainly, the ones who God chose in advance {to become his people}, God also summoned to become his people. The ones who God summoned {to become his people}, he also made these people right with himself. The ones who God made right with himself, he also glorified these people.

<sup>31</sup>This is how we should think about these things: since God {advocates} for us, no one {is powerful enough} to oppose us! <sup>32</sup>{To advocate for us}, God did not even spare his own Son. Instead, God handed him over {to death} for the sake of us all. So it is certain that God will also graciously give us, along with him, all we need! <sup>33</sup>No one can {legally} accuse those whom God chose {to become his people. This is because} God is the one who makes people right with himself. <sup>34</sup>No one can condemn {God's people}. The Messiah Jesus is the one who died. Even more, the Messiah Jesus is the one who resurrected {from death}. He now sits on God's throne ruling and obtaining answers for God's people {when we pray}. <sup>35</sup>No person {or thing} can separate {God's people} from how much the Messiah {Jesus} loves us. {Jesus' love protects God's people} when others afflict us. {Jesus' love protects God's people} when others distress us. {Jesus' love protects God's people} when others persecute us. {Jesus' love protects God's people} during times of famine. {Jesus' love protects God's people} if we have no shelter {from the weather}. {Jesus' love protects God's people} when danger comes. {Jesus' love protects God's people from death} by sword. <sup>36</sup>This is exactly what God says in the holy scriptures, "They put us to death throughout the whole day because of you. They count us in order to slaughter us like sheep." <sup>37</sup>However, we completely conquer when all of these things happen. {Jesus protects us, so} we conquer because he loves us. <sup>38</sup>In fact, {Jesus' love} continues to persuade me that {none of these things}: whether being dead, or what happens while we are alive, or angels, or people who rule, or current events, or future events, or powerful forces, <sup>39</sup>or high places, or low places, or anything else God created—is powerful enough to separate God's people from how much he loves us. {God loves us} because we are united to our Lord Jesus, the Messiah!

## Chapter 9

<sup>1</sup>I speak what is true {because I am authorized to represent the Messiah {Jesus}. I do not speak what is false. The Holy Spirit confirms what my conscience testifies within myself: <sup>2</sup>I am overwhelmed with sorrow! I constantly and deeply grieve! <sup>3</sup>In fact, I could vow to God that he would personally curse me! I could vow that God would {even} separate me from {Jesus} the Messiah for the sake of {the salvation of} my {Israelite} kinsmen, who are my close relatives by natural lineage! <sup>4</sup>These {kinsmen of mine} are the Israelites, who God {spiritually} adopted. God allowed them to experience how glorious he is. God made covenants with them. God gave them a code of law. God gave them the services that showed them how he wanted them to worship him. God made promises to them. <sup>5</sup>The Patriarchs {Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob} come from the Israelites. Even the Messiah is a physical descendant of the Israelites. {Yet}, the Messiah is God over all things. He is to be praised forever. May it be so!

<sup>6</sup>Certainly, it is not as if what God promised {to the Israelites} has become powerless {because as a nation they rejected the Messiah Jesus}. This is because not all people who are {physical descendants} of Israel are {true} Israelites. <sup>7</sup>It is not true either, that all the offspring who physically descended from Abraham are considered {Abraham's spiritual} children. Instead, {as God says to Abraham in the holy scriptures,} "Your {true} offspring will be named in {relation to} Isaac." <sup>8</sup>In other words, God's {spiritual} children are not those children who are physically {descended from Abraham, like Ishmael}. Instead, {Abraham's true spiritual} offspring are those who

God considers to be his {spiritual} children. This is based on what God promised {to Abraham}. <sup>9</sup>Indeed, this is what God promised {would happen}, "At this set time {next year}, I will come and enable Sarah to give birth to a son." <sup>10</sup>Indeed, this is not the only way {that God showed who his true spiritual children are}. But even Rebekah became pregnant by this same man Isaac. {So, it is actually Isaac not Ishmael} who is the {spiritual} father of {all of} us {who are part of God's promise to Abraham}. <sup>11</sup>In fact, Rebekah gave birth to {Jacob and Esau}. Even before they were born or had done anything right or wrong, God chose {Jacob to accomplish what he promised to Abraham}. This was so that what God previously planned would continue to happen. <sup>12</sup>God did not choose {Jacob} because he did {what God's law requires}. Instead, it was because God summons {those he chooses. This is why} God told Rebekah, "Your older son will become a slave to the younger son." <sup>13</sup>This is exactly what God says in the holy scriptures, "I love Jacob {the younger son}, but I do not love Esau {the older son}."

<sup>14</sup>So then, of course we should not think that God is unjust {because he chose Jacob and not Esau!} <sup>15</sup>In fact, God told Moses, "I will pity whoever I want to pity. I will be favorable to whoever I want to favor." <sup>16</sup>So then, {who God chooses to become part of his people does} not {depend} on {how strongly} someone desires, or {how much} effort a person exerts. Instead, {who God chooses to become part of his people is based on} God who pities. <sup>17</sup>Indeed, this is what God says to Pharaoh in the holy scripture, "I allowed you {to become king in Egypt} for this very reason: so that I could exhibit how powerful I am in comparison to you. I also exhibited how powerful I am so that my fame would spread throughout the entire earth." <sup>18</sup>So then, God pities who{ever} he wants to pity. However, he makes obstinate who{ever} he wants to become obstinate.

<sup>19</sup>So then, you must not object to me by saying, "Then God should not be able to keep blaming {people for what they do}! Because no one is able to oppose what{ever} he plans will occur!" <sup>20</sup>{This is how} a mere human being {would talk!} In fact, no {mere human being} should try to act like a judge against God. It would be quite silly for the shaped {pot} to complain to the {potter} who shaped it, "Why did you make me into a pot?" <sup>21</sup>Certainly, the potter can shape the clay however he wants! The potter can make {whatever he decides} from the same lump {of clay}. The potter can either make an object for special use, or an object for ordinary use. <sup>22</sup>It is true that God desires to exhibit how he punishes {his enemies}. God also desires to demonstrate how powerful he is. {Yet,} God very patiently endures those {people who are like those potter's} objects {made for ordinary use}. {He endures them until he finally decides they} are ready for him to punish them. Then God will ultimately destroy them. <sup>23</sup>{God} also {desires} to demonstrate how richly he will glorify those {people who are like a potter's} special objects. He will pity them. God has already prepared these people to become glorified. <sup>24</sup>We are also {among} those people that God summons. God summons people from both the Jews and indeed {all} the nations. <sup>25</sup>God also says a similar thing to {the Prophet} Hosea, "I will give the name, 'My people,' to people who do not belong to me. I will also give the name, 'Loved one,' to people who I do not love.

<sup>26</sup>Then it will happen, in the same location where it was previously said about them, 'You are not my people,' at that exact spot God will give them the name, 'Children of the living God.'

<sup>27</sup>Indeed, the Prophet Isaiah shouts out about {the people} of Israel, "Even if there were as many people in Israel as grains of sand along the seashore—God will save {only} those who survive." <sup>28</sup>"This is because the Lord will fully and decisively accomplish what he promised on the earth."

<sup>29</sup>The Prophet Isaiah previously said this too in the holy scriptures, "The Lord, who commands the angelic armies, preserved a few descendants for us. If the Lord had not done this, the people of Israel would become a ruin like the city of Sodom or even like the city of Gomorrah."

<sup>30</sup>So, we are saying that the nations are not seeking to be made right with God. {Yet,} God seeks out the nations in order to make them right with himself. Indeed, God makes people right with himself, because of how faithful he is.

<sup>31</sup>However, the people of Israel keep seeking to become right with God by {obeying his} law. {But,} the people of Israel do not obtain a right relationship with God by {obeying his} law. <sup>32</sup>The reason for this is because they do not faithfully trust {in God}. Instead, the people of Israel think they can become right with God by relying on what they do. This {lack of trusting in God} makes them offended {at who God chose to be Messiah. It is as if the Messiah is} a stone that causes them to stumble {and fall}. <sup>33</sup>This is exactly what the holy scriptures say, "Look! I am putting a

person} on Mount Zion. {He will be like} a stone that causes people to stumble {and fall}. {He will be like} a rock that trips {people}. But, God will not humiliate {anyone} who continues to trust in him."

## Chapter 10

<sup>1</sup>But, my fellow believers in the Messiah, I deeply desire that God will save {the Israelites}. I even beg him {to save} them! <sup>2</sup>Certainly, I can personally confirm that they are enthusiastic about God. However, they do not {understand what it means to} {truly} know {him}. <sup>3</sup>This is because they are ignorant of how God makes people right with himself. So, they continue striving to make themselves right with God. {This is why} they refuse to subject themselves to how God makes people right with himself. <sup>4</sup>Indeed, {they do not understand} that {Jesus} the Messiah completes {the purpose that God has always intended for his} law. God makes anyone right with himself who continues to trust {in God}.

<sup>5</sup>This is what Moses {himself} wrote {in the holy scriptures} about {those who think they can be} right with God by {obeying his} law: "The person who practices {all} the things in God's law will stay alive this way." <sup>6</sup>However, God makes people right with himself by trusting in God. This is what the holy scripture means when it says, "Do not say to yourself, 'No one can go up to heaven!' (In other words, to try and bring down the Messiah). <sup>7</sup>"Or say, 'No one can bring down {the Messiah} into the bottomless pit!' (In other words, to try to lead the Messiah up from death). <sup>8</sup>However Moses says this {in another passage of the holy scriptures}, "God's message is as close to you as your mouth and your heart!" In other words, we refer to God's message about trusting in him, that we {apostles} keep announcing. <sup>9</sup>{This is God's message}: God will save {any type of person} who verbally acknowledges that Jesus is the Lord {over all things}. God will also save {any type of person} who deeply trusts that God resurrected Jesus from death. <sup>10</sup>This is because God makes {any type of} person right with himself, who continues to deeply entrust himself {to God}. God also saves {any type of person} who continues to verbally acknowledge {him}. <sup>11</sup>In fact, this is what the holy scripture says, "God will not humiliate {anyone} who continues to trust in him." <sup>12</sup>Indeed, the Lord Jesus does not discriminate between Jew or Pagan. This is because Jesus is the same Lord over all people types. The Lord Jesus richly blesses all types of people who continue to invoke him {to save them}. <sup>13</sup>Indeed, "God will save anyone who invokes the name of the Lord {Jesus}."

<sup>14</sup>Certainly, they could not invoke Jesus as Lord {unless} they {first} trust in him. And certainly they could not trust in Jesus {unless} they {first} hear {the message about him}. And certainly, they could not hear {the message about Jesus} unless someone {first} announces {who he is}. <sup>15</sup>And certainly they could not announce the message about Jesus unless someone sends them out! This is exactly what the holy scriptures say, "It is a beautiful thing when people declare happy news about good things!" <sup>16</sup>However, they have not all paid attention to the happy news {about Jesus}. Indeed, this is what the Prophet Isaiah says in the holy scriptures, "Lord, no one trusts what we say!" <sup>17</sup>So then, a person can {only} trust in Jesus by hearing {about him}. And a person can {only} hear about Jesus through {those who announce} the message {that Jesus is} the Messiah.

<sup>18</sup>However, this is what I say, "It is absolutely certain they heard!" It is a fact. {As the holy scriptures say,} "What they said spread throughout the entire earth. What they announced spread to the farthest parts of the {inhabited} world."

<sup>19</sup>However this is what I say, "It is absolutely certain that Israel understood!" God first says through Moses in the holy scriptures, "I will personally make you envious because of a nation that does not {belong to me}. I will make you furious because of a nation that does not know {me}." <sup>20</sup>Indeed, God also quite boldly declares through the Prophet Isaiah in the holy scriptures, "Those who were not searching for me found me. I manifested myself to those who did not ask about me."

<sup>21</sup>However, God tells Israel in the holy scriptures, "I stretch out my arms all the time {to embrace you}. {But, you} are a people who {constantly} disobeys and argues {with me}!"

## Chapter 11

<sup>1</sup>The point of what I am saying is this—of course God did not discard his own people! In fact, I too am an Israelite. I am a {direct} descendant of {the patriarch} Abraham. I come from the {family} tribe of Benjamin {who was the son of the Patriarch Jacob}. <sup>2</sup>God did not discard his people who he knew in advance {would belong to him}. You certainly know what the holy scripture says about the Prophet Elijah. Elijah appealed to God against Israel. <sup>3</sup>{This is what the Prophet Elijah said,} “Lord, they murdered {all of} your prophets {except for me}! They demolished all your altars! I am the very last surviving {prophet}! Now, they are trying to kill me {too}!” <sup>4</sup>But, this is how God replied to Elijah, “I have kept 7,000 people alive for my purposes. These men have not bowed down to {worship the idol} Baal.” <sup>5</sup>The same thing is also true at this time in history. God has graciously chosen that some (Israelites) would survive. <sup>6</sup>Certainly, {God chooses his people} based on how gracious he is. So, {God} does not {choose his people} because they do {what God’s law says}. {If God chose people because they do what the law says,} then how gracious he is would not be {revealed}.

<sup>7</sup>So then, although Israel continues striving to make themselves right with God, they cannot attain this goal. Instead, those who God {graciously} chose {from Israel} become right with God. But, those God did not {graciously} choose {from Israel} stubbornly refused to become right with God. <sup>8</sup>This is exactly what the holy scriptures say {about Israel}, “God allowed them to remain bewildered. Until this present day, God has made them completely unable to understand {how gracious he is}.” <sup>9</sup>{King} David also prophesies in the holy scriptures, “{O God}, while they live luxuriously, catch them like a bird in a net or wild animal in a trap! Make them stumble and fall! Pay them back {for how luxuriously they live}!”

<sup>10</sup>Cause them to become blind so they cannot see! Make them unable to raise their heads {to see how gracious you are}—forever!”

<sup>11</sup>Yet, this is what I say, “Of course the Israelites are not completely rejected by God! But, God saves the nations because Israel failed {to make themselves right with God}. This is because God wants to make the people of Israel {so} jealous of the nations, {that they ask God to make them right with himself}. <sup>12</sup>Indeed, the Israelites failed {to make themselves right with God}. God made how they failed turn into gain for the world. What they lost became gain for the nations. So, when the full number of Israelites become right with God, this will be even more gain {for all of God’s people}!”

<sup>13</sup>But now I am speaking to you who are from the nations. God made me his authorized representative to the nations. So, I glorify {God} by doing what he assigned to me. <sup>14</sup>If possible, I want to make my fellow-Israelites jealous about what the nations have {by announcing God’s good news}, so that God will save some of them. <sup>15</sup>In fact, God reconciles the world because they reject {his good news}. So, when they accept {his good news} it will be as if God is making them alive after dying. <sup>16</sup>Indeed, {the first Israelites were special to God, just like} the first portion of a lump of dough is special. In the same way, {the current Israelites are still special to God, just like} the rest of a lump of dough is special because it comes from the first portion. Also, {the first Israelites were special to God, just like} the root of a tree is special. In the same way, {the current Israelites are still special to God, just like} the branches of a tree are special because they come from the root.

<sup>17</sup>Indeed, {God has removed some of the Israelites from his people, like} they were branches broken off a tree. But, {those of you who were not part of God’s people were joined to his people, like} wild olive branches are grafted in {to the native tree}. Now {you share together in benefitting from being part of God’s people, like} grafted branches richly share in the olive tree root. <sup>18</sup>You nations must not boast against the removed Israelites, even though they are like broken off branches! Instead, if you do boast, you must realize that you do not sustain the Israelites. Indeed, they sustain you—just like the root sustains the branches! <sup>19</sup>So then, you might say, “{God removed some of the Israelites from his people, like} breaking off branches from a tree. {God did this} so that {he could join} me to his people, like a branch} is grafted into a tree.” <sup>20</sup>I say, “Well said! {Like broken off branches}, God removed some of the Israelites from being his people because they were unfaithful. However, you who are from the {other} nations {only} remain {part of God’s people if} you remain faithful to him. Do not become arrogant about how smart you are, but fear {how powerful God is}!” <sup>21</sup>Certainly, God did not show pity to the {faithless Israelites, even



though they were like} natural branches. So, he will not show pity to you {who are from the nations} if you become faithless!

<sup>22</sup>Take note then, how kind and harsh God can be! God is harsh toward those who fail to remain faithful to him. However, God will show how kind he is toward you who are from the nations if you continue to accept how kind he is by remaining faithful. But, if you do not {remain faithful}, God will totally reject you{-like a severed branch}!

<sup>23</sup>However, if the Israelites do not remain faithless, God will allow them to {rejoin his people, like branches} grafted in. This is because God is powerful enough to graft in the Israelites again to rejoin his people. <sup>24</sup>Certainly, you were {removed from the nations, like} a branch cut off from a naturally wild olive tree. Then {God joined you to his people, like} a wild olive branch that is grafted into a cultivated olive tree. Since this true, {God} will certainly {join} any faithful Israelites {back into his people, like} a naturally cultivated olive branch that is grafted into its own olive tree.

<sup>25</sup>Indeed, my fellow believers in the Messiah, I do not want you to remain unaware of God's mysterious plan, so that you do not become conceited. Because God has allowed a portion of the Israelites to stubbornly refuse to be made right with himself. {This will happen} until all the people God has chosen from the nations join his people.

<sup>26</sup>Then this is the way God will save all {of} Israel. This is exactly what is written in the holy scriptures, "God will send his rescuer from {Mount} Zion. {God's rescuer} will cause {Israel's descendants from} Jacob to stop rejecting God.

<sup>27</sup>{God says,} "This is the agreement I make with Israel, whenever I forgive their sins."

<sup>28</sup>As it relates to the good news, {the people of Israel are} the enemies of the {other} nations. However, as it relates to how God chose them to be his people, God loves {Israel} because of {how God loves Israel's} Patriarchs. <sup>29</sup>This is because God does not revoke the things he graciously gives and who he summons {to be his people}. <sup>30</sup>In fact, there was a time when you who are from the nations did not obey God. However, now God has shown how merciful he is toward you, because Israel disobeyed God. <sup>31</sup>In the same way, the Israelites have also now disobeyed {God}. They reacted to how merciful God is toward you {from the nations} by disobeying him. God did this} so that he could now also show how merciful he is toward them. <sup>32</sup>Indeed, God allowed all {types of} people to become disobedient. He did this so that he could show how merciful he is to all {types of} people.

<sup>33</sup>God's {plans} are so wise and intelligent! They are like a deep {mine full} of wealth! No one can search out what he determines! No one can track where he goes! <sup>34</sup>{As the holy scriptures say,} "Indeed, {there is no one} who could {possibly} comprehend what the Lord intends! {There is no one} who could {possibly} advise him! <sup>35</sup>No one could possibly give God anything that would cause him to owe them something!"

<sup>36</sup>Certainly, all {these} things originated from God and are enacted by God, and lead to God's glory. This is why all types of people must} glorify him forever. May it be so!

## Chapter 12

<sup>1</sup>So then, my fellow believers in the Messiah, I appeal to you because of how compassionate God is: offer your own bodies to God as if they were a live sacrifice. Set yourselves apart {this way} for God's purposes in order to please him. {God will consider this} your rational {religious} service {to him}. <sup>2</sup>Do not align yourselves with {how sinful people live at} the current time. Instead, transfigure yourselves by renewing how you spiritually perceive {things}. Then you will be able to test and approve what God desires {you to do}. God desires that you do what is good, and pleasing, and flawless.

<sup>3</sup>Indeed, God graciously gave me {these words as one who God authorized to represent him. So,} I say that not even one of you must focus on being better than another person. Instead, you must focus on thinking moderately. {Keep focusing on} how God has portioned out to each person {what they need} to remain faithful {to him}.

<sup>4</sup>Indeed, although each of our bodies have many parts, yet not all the parts function in the same manner.

<sup>5</sup>Similarly, there are many people united to the Messiah's one body. Indeed, like parts of a body, each one of his

people are united to the Messiah's body. <sup>6</sup>And yet, since God is so kind, he has given {each of} us gracious gifts that differ. If {God has gifted you to be able} to prophesy. Then you should prophesy corresponding to how much you trust in God. <sup>7</sup>If {God has gifted you} to serve, you should serve {others}. {If God has gifted you} to teach, you should teach {others}. <sup>8</sup>If {God has gifted you} to encourage {others}, you should encourage {others. If God has gifted you} to share {with others}, you should share generously {with others}. {If God has gifted you} to lead {others}, you should lead diligently. {If God has gifted you} to be merciful, you should be cheerfully merciful.

<sup>9</sup>{You must} love each other genuinely. {You must} detest what is wicked. {You must} retain what is good. <sup>10</sup>{You must} act tenderly affectionate toward each other, like fellow believers in the Messiah should love. {You must} try to be the first to honor other {fellow believers in the Messiah}. <sup>11</sup>{You must} not remain idle, {but} be diligent. {You must} continue to be enthusiastic. {You must} continue to serve {as if it were} for the Lord {himself}. <sup>12</sup>{You must} be joyful while hoping {in the Lord}. {You must} endure when distressed. {You must} stay engaged in prayer. <sup>13</sup>{You must} contribute to what God's people need. {You must} find opportunities to help strangers who are needy. <sup>14</sup>You must {ask God to} bless those who trouble you. {Ask God to} bless them. Do not slander them. <sup>15</sup>You should rejoice with those people who are rejoicing! You should be sad along with those who are sad! <sup>16</sup>Consider that others are as smart as you. Do not be arrogant about how smart you are, but associate with humble people. Do not consider that you can rely on how smart you are. <sup>17</sup>If someone does something evil to you, do not react by doing evil to them. Think deeply about how you can do what is considered excellent by all people. <sup>18</sup>If you are able, as much as it depends on you, live peacefully with all people.

<sup>19</sup>O beloved people of God, do not retaliate {when someone does something wrong to you}. Instead, wait for God to punish them. Because as the holy scriptures say, ""I will retaliate {when someone does something wrong to you}. It is I who will pay them back, says the Lord."" <sup>20</sup>"Instead {of retaliating}, you should feed your enemy if he is hungry. You should give your enemy something to drink if he is thirsty. Because when you do things like these, {you will hopefully shock him, as if} you were piling up fiery coals on top of his head. {This is so that he would realize that God will punish him if he does not repent.}" <sup>21</sup>{In other words,} do not let what is evil conquer you. Instead, conquer what is evil by doing what is good.

## Chapter 13

<sup>1</sup>Every one of you must submit yourselves to those who are authorized to govern you. This is because no one {can govern} unless God authorizes it. In addition, God has instituted the existing governments. <sup>2</sup>This is why people who continue to oppose authorized governments, are opposed what God institutes. And God will condemn those who remain opposed {to what he authorizes}. <sup>3</sup>In fact, if people do what is good they have no need to be afraid of those who rule. It is only those who do what is evil that should fear {being punished by} those who rule. If you do not want to fear those who God authorizes to rule, do what is good. Then those who rule will {not punish you,} but commend you. <sup>4</sup>This is because those God authorizes to rule {are intended to serve} for the good of the citizens. But if someone does what is evil, they should fear! Indeed, those who rule are not authorized to use force for no good reason. In fact, those who rule are serving God, by avenging and judging anyone who practices what is evil. <sup>5</sup>As a result, you are required to submit yourselves to those God authorizes to rule. This is not only true because they can punish you, but also because you are well aware {that to disobey them is to disobey God!} <sup>6</sup>In fact, this is also the reason why you pay taxes. Because those who God authorizes to rule {are also chosen} to serve the citizens. They constantly devote themselves to this task of serving {what benefits} the citizens. <sup>7</sup>Give what you owe to all those who God authorizes to rule. Pay taxes to those who you owe taxes. Pay revenues to those who you owe revenues. Give respect to those who have respected authoritative offices. Give honor to those who have honored authoritative offices.

<sup>8</sup>Pay whatever you owe to whoever you owe it. The only debt you should continue to owe is to love one another. This is because whenever you love another person, you accomplish what God's law requires. <sup>9</sup>Because God's law says these things, "You must not practice adultery, you must not murder, you must not rob, you must not lust for what belongs to others." Anything else God commands in his law you could summarize in this way, "You must

lovingly care for those you come in contact with, in the same way you would lovingly care for yourself." <sup>10</sup>{This is because} when you lovingly care for those you come in contact with, you can do them no harm. This is why when you lovingly care for those you come in contact with, you accomplish what God's law requires.

<sup>11</sup>Besides these things, you know this is the appointed time, that this is already a significantly historic time. So, you must be spiritually alert. Because at this present time, Jesus' return to finally save us is closer than when we first trusted in him. <sup>12</sup>{The end of the world} is fast approaching, {as if it was} late at night {just before the dawn}. The day {when Jesus returns} is close. So, we must reject doing what is evil, like what people do when it is dark. Instead, we must prepare ourselves by doing what is good, like when a soldier puts on his armor during the daylight hours. <sup>13</sup>We must behave appropriately, as if it was daytime {and people were watching what we do}. We must not engage in drunken reveling. We must not let lustful desires cause us to commit sexually immoral acts. We must not jealously quarrel. <sup>14</sup>Instead, you must prepare yourselves to meet the Lord Jesus Christ when he returns, {like a soldier putting on his best armor to greet a general}. You must not concern yourselves with {anything that is related to} what the body lusts after.

## Chapter 14

<sup>1</sup>You must accept any fellow believer in the Messiah who is immature. Do not argue with them about matters of opinion. <sup>2</sup>{There are some people} who are convinced that they can eat all {kinds of food}. But the immature believer in the Messiah {thinks they can} eat {only} vegetables. <sup>3</sup>{The believer in the Messiah} who eats {every kind of food}, must not scorn {his fellow believer} who does not eat {every kind of food. The believer in the Messiah} who does not eat {every kind of food}, must not judge {his fellow believer} who eats {every kind of food}. This is because God accepts him. <sup>4</sup>Just as the master of a servant is the only one who has the right to judge him, in the same way, only the Lord Jesus has the right to judge his servants. The master places each servant in front of him to judge whether he should vindicate or condemn them. But, since the Lord Jesus is the judge, he is powerful enough to vindicate whoever he chooses{-whether or not they eat only vegetables}.

<sup>5</sup>Some people decide that certain days are special, while other people decide that each day is the same. Each person should decide based on however his conscience fully convinces him. <sup>6</sup>The person who is concerned about certain {feast} days, is concerned about them in order to {honor} the Lord {Jesus}. The person who eats {certain foods}, eats in order to {honor} the Lord {Jesus}. This is because he gives thanks to God. The person who refuses to eat {certain foods}, refuses to eat in order to {honor} the Lord {Jesus}. He too is thankful to God. <sup>7</sup>This is because none of us believers in the Messiah lives to {honor} himself, and none of us believers in the Messiah dies to {honor} himself. <sup>8</sup>Certainly, while we are alive, we must live to {honor} the Lord {Jesus}. When we die, we are going to die to {honor} the Lord {Jesus}. So then, whether we are alive or dead, we belong to the Lord {Jesus}. <sup>9</sup>In fact, this is why the Messiah {Jesus} died and {was made} alive: so that he would become Lord over those who are dead and those who are alive.

<sup>10</sup>But, those of you who judge your fellow believers in the Messiah have no right to do this! You also must not scorn your fellow believer in the Messiah! This is because {one day God himself will judge all believers in the Messiah}. We will all have to present ourselves in front of God's place of judgment. <sup>11</sup>Indeed, this is what God says in the holy scriptures, "The Lord says, 'As certainly as I am alive, it is just as certain that every person will bow down and worship me. And every person will acknowledge that I am God.'"

<sup>12</sup>So, it is certain that each one of us believers in the Messiah will have to give an answer to God for whatever we do {in this life}.

<sup>13</sup>As a result, we must stop judging other people. Instead, we must rather resolve not to do anything that could tempt our fellow believers in the Messiah to sin, or cause them to be offended. <sup>14</sup>I am absolutely convinced as a spokesperson for the Lord Jesus, that believers in the Messiah are permitted to eat any food. If {an immature} believer in the Messiah regards some food as unacceptable to eat, then it is {only} unacceptable for that person to eat it. <sup>15</sup>Yet, if you grieve an {immature} believer in the Messiah by eating what that person considers

unacceptable, you have stopped treating that person lovingly. You must not cause a fellow believer in the Messiah to {stop trusting in God and} come to {potential spiritual} ruin—{all} because {you want to eat certain kinds} of food! {Remember, this is a person} who the Messiah Jesus died to save! <sup>16</sup>So then, you must not contribute to having anyone slander the good that all of you believers in the Messiah possess. <sup>17</sup>This is because God's kingdom is not characterized by eating and drinking. Instead, God's kingdom is characterized by living rightly {with God}, living peacefully {with each other}, and living joyfully {with the Holy Spirit}. <sup>18</sup>Because {any} believer who serves the Messiah {Jesus} by doing these things greatly pleases God, and {other} people will {also} approve how that believer serves the Messiah Jesus.

<sup>19</sup>This is why we must strive to live peacefully and {spiritually} support each one our fellow believers. <sup>20</sup>You must not jeopardize the work God has done in the lives of your fellow believers in the Messiah {by causing them} to stop trusting in God and} come to {potential spiritual} ruin—{all} because {you want to eat certain kinds} of food! Even though all {kinds of food} are acceptable {to eat}, yet if when you eat those foods it tempts your fellow believer to sin, your eating causes them harm. <sup>21</sup>{In fact,} it is better not to eat meat {at all}, or drink wine—or {do} anything that could tempt your fellow believer in the Messiah to sin, or could offend that person, or could contribute to that person remaining spiritually immature. <sup>22</sup>What you believe {is right to eat and drink}, is between you and God. How happy is the person who does what he is convinced is right without feeling guilty. <sup>23</sup>On the other hand, if someone eats but doubts that it is right to do so, that person has actually condemned himself! This is because a person must {only} eat because he believes it is right to do so. In fact, a person must do everything only if he believes it is right to do so, or else that person is {actually} sinning.

## Chapter 15

<sup>1</sup>Indeed, we believers in the Messiah who are strong are obligated to help support our fellow believers in the Messiah who are weak and immature. We must not {only} try to please ourselves. <sup>2</sup>Each one of us believers in the Messiah {is obligated to try} to please his fellow believers by doing what is good {for them, and} in order to {spiritually} support {them}. <sup>3</sup>Indeed, not even the Messiah {Jesus} tried to please himself! Instead, {he lived to please others}. This is exactly what the holy scriptures mean when they say, "The people keep trying to disgrace you {O God} by saying disgraceful things against me!" <sup>4</sup>Indeed, all the words written beforehand in the holy scriptures were written in order to teach us. This was so that we believers in the Messiah could be confident, because what God promises in the holy scriptures helps us endure and encourages us.

<sup>5</sup>I pray that God will allow you to patiently {endure} and will encourage you to focus together on {what God promises for his people}. This is what the Messiah Jesus desires. <sup>6</sup>{I pray this} so that, by being united what you intend to do and in what you say, all of you would glorify God, {who according to Jesus' divine nature is} the Father of our Lord Jesus the Messiah.

<sup>7</sup>This is why all of you must accept your fellow believers in the Messiah, in the same way as the Messiah {Jesus} also accepted you. If you do this, it will cause others to glorify God! <sup>8</sup>Indeed, I{ Paul,} say that God has sent the Messiah {Jesus} to serve the circumcised Jews, in order to show how trustworthy God is to secure what he promised to the Patriarchs {Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob}. <sup>9</sup>{God also sent Jesus} so that the nations would glorify God because he is so merciful. This is exactly what the holy scriptures mean when they say, "Because {you are so merciful God,} I will confess you among the nations and I will sing psalms to {glorify} your name." <sup>10</sup>The holy scriptures also say in another passage, "Celebrate along with God's people, O nations!" <sup>11</sup>In yet another passage of the holy scriptures it says, "All the nations, praise the Lord! All the peoples commend him!" <sup>12</sup>{The Prophet} Isaiah says in another passage of the holy scriptures, "The {promised} descendant of {King David's father} Jesse will be born, the king who will emerge to rule over the nations. God will assure the nations {who trust} in this descendant of Jesse."

<sup>13</sup>I pray that the God who assures {his people of what he promises} will cause you to be completely overjoyed and live peacefully as you trust in him! I pray that God will cause you to be excessively assured {of what he promises} as the Holy Spirit enables you to trust in God.

<sup>14</sup>In fact, my fellow believers in the Messiah, I am also personally persuaded that each and every one of you are completely kind {to others}. Since God has also caused you to fully understand how to be able to instruct others.

<sup>15</sup>It is true that I wrote more bluntly to you {who are at Rome} about certain things in order to remind you. This is because God has given me {this task} through his gracious {Holy Spirit}. <sup>16</sup>so that I can liturgically serve on behalf of the Messiah Jesus for the sake of the nations' {salvation. In the same way} as a priest would {dedicate a sacrifice}, I am serving as a priest for God's good news, so that I can offer the Gentiles to God as if they are a well-pleasing sacrifice. Like when a sacrifice is set apart for what God desires, similarly the the Holy Spirit sets apart the nations for what God desires for them.

<sup>17</sup>So then, as an authorized representative of the Messiah Jesus, I have good reasons to boast about the things God is doing through me! <sup>18</sup>Indeed, I would not be so audacious to say anything—{not about any} word or deed—as it relates to those things that the Messiah has not produced through what I have done, {that has led} to the nations obediently {trusting in God's good news}! <sup>19</sup>{The Messiah Jesus produced} powerful miracles and worked wonderful signs as God's {Holy} Spirit enabled me! As a result, I have thoroughly proclaimed the good news about the Messiah {Jesus all the way} from Jerusalem and in a circle, as far {north of Rome} as the {region of} Illyricum. <sup>20</sup>And so, I aspire to proclaim the good news where people have never heard of the Messiah {Jesus}. This is in order that I would not interfere with another apostle's work, as if I was building a house where another person had already laid the foundation. <sup>21</sup>Indeed, this is exactly what the holy scriptures mean when they say, "What the people never heard announced about him, they will see. The people who have not heard {what was reported} will {still} understand."

<sup>22</sup>Because {I aspire to proclaim the good news where people have never heard of the Messiah {Jesus}}, this also thwarted me from visiting all of you at Rome, again and again. <sup>23</sup>Yet at this present time, I have nowhere left to go in these regions {to proclaim the good news}, and I have deeply desired to visit you for a considerable number of years. <sup>24</sup>Because, whenever I travel to Spain, I expect to visit you while passing through. {Hopefully,} after we first spend some quality time together, then from there you can send me on ahead {with provisions}. <sup>25</sup>Yet, at the present time, I am traveling to Jerusalem in order to serve God's people {there}. <sup>26</sup>This is because churches in the provinces of Macedonia and Achaia thought it was appropriate to collect shared funds to help the poor people of God who live in Jerusalem. <sup>27</sup>Certainly, they thought it was appropriate, and they are also obligated {to help}. This is because the nations spiritually benefit by sharing in what God promised to the Jews. So, they are obligated also to contribute to serving God's people when they are physically needy. <sup>28</sup>So then, after I finish collecting these funds, and securely deliver these {spiritual} offerings to the church in Jerusalem, I will pass through {your city} on my way to Spain. <sup>29</sup>I know that when I visit you, the Messiah {Jesus} will fully bless our time together!

<sup>30</sup>Now, my fellow believers in the Messiah, I appeal to you as an authorized representative of the Lord Jesus the Messiah, and because of how much I love you since we are united in the {Holy} Spirit. Please join me to fight in prayer and pray to God for me when you come together as a church. <sup>31</sup>{I ask for your prayers} so that God will rescue me from the unbelieving Jews living in Judea. {I also need your prayers} so that God's people in Jerusalem will readily accept {the funds} I {am delivering in order to} serve them. <sup>32</sup>{I also ask for your prayers} so that I can joyfully visit you as God desires, and so that we can mutually revive each other's trust in God. <sup>33</sup>Finally, {I pray that} God will cause you to live peacefully {and} sustain all of you. May it be so!

## Chapter 16

<sup>1</sup>I, {Paul,} am introducing to you our fellow believer in the Messiah whose name is Phoebe. She also serves at the church in the town of Cenchrea {that is near the city of Corinth}. <sup>2</sup>{I am introducing Phoebe} so that you would welcome her as a representative of the Lord {Jesus}. I want you to honor her as is appropriate for those who are set apart {to serve God}. {Please} assist her in whatever way and with anything she might need from you. This is because she has benefited many people, including me personally.

<sup>3</sup>Send my greetings to Priscilla and her husband Aquila. They worked alongside me as those who represent the Messiah Jesus. <sup>4</sup>They risked having their own heads chopped off {by the Roman authorities} in order to save my

life. Both I and all the churches among the nations are thankful for them. <sup>5</sup>Also, send my greetings to the church that meets in their home. Send my greetings to Epaenetus whom I love. He is the first person to believe in the Messiah {Jesus} from the province of Asia {Minor}. <sup>6</sup>Send my greetings to Mary, who has labored on behalf of you in many ways. <sup>7</sup>Send my greetings to Andronicus and Junia, who are my close relatives. I was imprisoned with them as well. They are distinguished apostles {of the Messiah Jesus}. They were also united to the Messiah prior to me. <sup>8</sup>Send my greetings to Ampliatus, whom I love, {and} who is united to the Lord. <sup>9</sup>Send my greetings to Urbanus. He works together with those of us who are authorized to represent the Messiah. Also, send my greetings to Stachys, whom I love. <sup>10</sup>Send my greetings to Apelles, who God approved to represent the Messiah {Jesus}. Send my greetings to the {believers in the Messiah} who live in the household of Aristobulus. <sup>11</sup>Send my greetings to my close relative Herodion. Send my greetings to those united to the Lord {Jesus} who live in the household of Narcissus. <sup>12</sup>Send my greetings to Tryphaena and Tryphosa, these ladies labor as they represent the Lord {Jesus}. Send my greetings to Persis, whom I love. She has labored in many ways as she represents the Lord {Jesus}. <sup>13</sup>Send my greetings to Rufus, who the Lord {Jesus} chose to represent him. Also {send greetings} to his mother. I also consider her to be like a mother to me. <sup>14</sup>Send my greetings to Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas, and our fellow believers in the Messiah who {meet} together with them. <sup>15</sup>Send my greetings to Philologus and Julia, Nereus and his sister, Olympas, and to all God's people who meet together with them. <sup>16</sup>When you meet together {for worship}, affectionately greet each {of your fellow believers in the Jesus the Messiah} in a way that is appropriate for those who belong to God. All of the churches that are united to {Jesus} the Messiah send you greetings!

<sup>17</sup>My fellow believers in the Messiah, I now exhort you to watch out for those who try to divide and confuse you {with their false teachings}, so that you will reject what I taught you {to do}. Stay away from them! <sup>18</sup>Indeed, people like this are not serving our Lord {Jesus} the Messiah! Instead, they are enslaved to what they crave to eat. These deceivers speak so kindly and talk so convincingly that they trick those who innocently desire God {to believe what is false}. <sup>19</sup>Indeed, {believers in the Messiah} everywhere have heard about how you obey {God}. Since this is true, I am overjoyed because of you! Certainly, I desire that you are able to wisely discern what is good, and remain untainted by what is bad. <sup>20</sup>It is certain that God, who gives {his people} peace, will quickly {make you victorious as you struggle to do what is good, as if} you were trampling Satan {himself} under your feet! May our Lord Jesus the Messiah {continue to} show you how kind he is!

<sup>21</sup>Timothy, who works alongside me, sends you his greetings. My close relatives: Lucius, Jason, and Sosipater, send their greetings as well. <sup>22</sup>I, Tertius, who am writing this letter as a spokesperson for Lord {Jesus}, send you my greetings. <sup>23</sup>Gaius, who hosts me as well as the whole church {at Corinth}, sends you his greetings. Erastus, who administrates the finances for the city {of Corinth}, and Quartus, {our} fellow believer in the Messiah, send you their greetings. <sup>24</sup><sup>[1]</sup> [May our Lord Jesus the Messiah show all of you how kind he is. Amen!]

<sup>25</sup>{I pray that} God powerfully strengthens you {as you trust} in the good news I proclaim and what I preach about Jesus the Messiah. God has now revealed this mysterious {plan} about Jesus the Messiah, although he had remained silent about this {plan} in ancient times. <sup>26</sup>Indeed, now God shows that his prophets wrote about this mysterious plan {in the holy scriptures}. The eternal God discloses what he decreed to all the nations that they would become obedient to God by trusting {in Jesus the Messiah}. <sup>27</sup>May {all the nations} glorify God forever, he who alone is wise, because of what Jesus the Messiah has done for us. May it be so!

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16:24 <sup>[1]</sup>

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