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Romans

Chapter 1

¹{I,} Paul, {am writing this letter}. I serve the Messiah Jesus. He called me to be an apostle and specially chose me to proclaim God's good news. ²God previously promised this good news by means of his spokesmen who prophesied about it {and wrote it down} in the sacred writings. ³{This good news is} about God's Son. He was born a natural descendant of King David. ⁴In accordance with the Holy Spirit, God powerfully demonstrated that Jesus is his Son by causing him to live again after he had died. {God's Son is} Jesus the Messiah, {who is} our Lord. ⁵Jesus favored us apostles and authorized us to represent him on his behalf in order that all the nations would obey {God} by trusting {in Jesus the Messiah}. ⁶Jesus the Messiah has also called you who are {living} among the nations. ⁷{I am writing this letter} to all of you {believers} who dwell in the city of Rome. God loves you and has called you to be people who belong to him. {May} God our Father and the Lord Jesus the Messiah {continue to} be kind to you and make you peaceful.

⁸Now, {the} first {thing I want to tell you, is that} I am constantly thanking my God through Jesus the Messiah for all of you {believers in the Messiah}. {I thank him} because {people} throughout the known world are proclaiming how you trust {in Jesus}. ⁹{I can say this truthfully} because God testifies for me that I frequently pray for you. I serve him devotedly by proclaiming the good news about his Son{, Jesus}. ¹⁰{When} I pray, I very often request that I might finally succeed in coming to {visit} you because God wants {me to}. ¹¹{I pray for this} because I deeply desire to see you {in person} in order to share some kind of gracious gift with you from the Holy Spirit in order to help you become spiritually stronger. ¹²In other words, {I want to share some gracious gift with you} in order to mutually encourage one other. Both you and I can help each other by sharing how we mutually trust in God. ¹³My fellow believers, I certainly want you to know that I planned to visit you many times. But {God} has prevented me from visiting you until the present time. {I planned to visit you} in order to lead some people to believe in Christ among you as well, just like {how I have} also {done so} among the other nations. ¹⁴I am obligated {to proclaim the good news} to all non-Jewish people, whether or not they are {culturally} Greek and whether or not they are educated. ¹⁵So then, if it was my choice, I would gladly proclaim the good news to you who dwell in Rome.

¹⁶{I would gladly do this} because I am deeply honored to proclaim the good news because it is the powerful way that God uses to save anyone who believes {it}. {This is true for} both the Jews {who} first {heard the good news} and then everyone else. ¹⁷{This is true} because whenever {people proclaim} the good news, they reveal how God makes people righteous, which is entirely through trusting {in the Messiah}. This is what {the prophet Habakkuk meant when} he wrote {in the Scriptures}, "But the person whom God makes righteous will live forever by trusting {in God}."

¹⁸{This is true} because from where God dwells he is revealing how he is furious toward {and will judge} every person who does ungodly and unrighteous things. These people suppress the things that God says are true by living in an unrighteous manner.

¹⁹{God will judge them} because what anyone can know about God is obvious to these people since God has made it obvious to them. ²⁰{This is true} because people can clearly perceive those things about God that they cannot see {with their eyes}. {These things are} how powerful God is and the fact that he is God. {People could perceive these things} since the time God created the universe. The things that God has made have understood {these things}. For this reason, people cannot excuse themselves {from acknowledging that God exists}. ²¹{People cannot excuse themselves} because they do not honor him as God, even though they know that he exists. They also refuse to thank him. In contrast, they think about worthless things, and they are unable to understand spiritual things. ²²{Although} they assert that they are wise, they are {actually} fools. ²³They stop glorifying the God who is

immortal, and instead they glorify idols that resemble mortal people, birds, four-legged animals, and animals that crawl {on the ground}.

²⁴Consequently, God lets these people do the lustful things that they desire to do, so that they become {spiritually} impure and they disgrace their bodies with one another {by doing sexually immoral acts}. ²⁵These people stop believing what is true about God and instead believe what is false {about idols}. They reverently worship things that God has created, instead of {worshiping} {the God} who created those things. {He is the one} whom people should bless forever! May it be so!

²⁶Because {these people do that}, God lets them do the dishonorable things they strongly desire {to do}. For example, their women stop doing natural {sexual} acts {with men} and instead do unnatural {sexual} acts {with women}. ²⁷Similarly, the men also stop doing natural {sexual} acts with women {and} lust intensely for other men. These men do shameless {sexual} acts with each other. They experience God penalizing them in their own bodies. {God must penalize them} because they pervert {God's natural sexual acts}.

²⁸Like how these people think that acknowledging God is worthless, God lets their minds become worthless. As a result, they do inappropriate things. ²⁹{These people} are completely controlled by all kinds of unrighteous, wicked, covetous, and malicious {thoughts}. They are completely willing to envy, murder, argue, deceive, and commit evil deeds {against others}. They gossip {about others}. ³⁰They slander {other people}. They hate God. They act violently. They are arrogant. They boast {about themselves}. They invent {new kinds of} evil things {to do}. They disobey their parents. ³¹These people are {morally} foolish. They do not do what they promise to do. They do not care {about other people}. They do not show mercy {to others}. ³²These people fully understand that God has righteously decreed that people who keep doing such {inappropriate} things deserve to die {spiritually}. {Nevertheless,} they not only continue to do those {inappropriate} things, but they even happily approve of people who practice such things!

Chapter 2

¹Consequently, any one of you who judges another person cannot excuse yourself {at all} {when God condemns you}. {This is} because you are actually condemning yourself when you judge someone else, since you who judge someone else do the exact same things {that they do!} ²Certainly, we acknowledge that God will correctly judge those people who continue doing such {inappropriate} things. ³You who judge the people who continue to do such {inappropriate} things while you do the exact same things yourself should certainly not think that you can escape when God judges you! ⁴You who despise {how} lavishly kind, tolerant, and patient God is certainly know that God's kind acts {are meant to} cause you to repent. ⁵Instead, because you are stubborn and refuse to repent, you are causing God to punish you even more severely. {This will happen} when God punishes {sinners} and reveals how justly he judges.

⁶God will {justly} reward or punish everyone for whatever they do. ⁷Living eternally {is how God repays} those people who keep striving for God to glorify, honor, and preserve them {forever}. {They do this} by persisting in doing what is good. ⁸By contrast, God will fiercely punish those people who refuse to do what he says is true and right because they are selfishly ambitious. ⁹{God will cause} every human being who does what is evil to become distressed and troubled. {This will happen} especially to the Jew {who does what is evil} and also to everyone else {who does so}. ¹⁰By contrast, God will glorify, honor, and reconcile every person who does what is good. {This will happen} especially to the Jew {who does what is good} and also to everyone else {who does so}. ¹¹{These things are true} because God is impartial.

¹²{We know this about God} because he will punish forever whoever sins without {knowing} the laws {that God gave the Jews} {even though} they do not know those laws. At the same time, God will judge according to his laws whoever sins while knowing those laws. ¹³{God will judge everyone who sins} because God does not make righteous those people who {only} hear his laws. Rather, God will make righteous those people who obey his laws. ¹⁴{God will judge everyone who sins} because whenever nations who do not know the laws {that God gave the

Jews) naturally obey rules from those laws, {they prove that} they know laws within their minds even though they do not know God's laws. ¹⁵{By naturally following some laws that God gave through Moses,} these people demonstrate that God has made each person aware of how to obey his laws. What they think shows that this is true, in that what each of them thinks will either accuse or even defend their actions. ¹⁶{This will happen} at the time when God {finally} judges the hidden thoughts that people think. {God's} good news that I proclaim teaches that he will judge {mankind} through the Messiah Jesus.

¹⁷Now, {I am addressing} you who identify yourselves as Jews: You depend on the laws {God gave you} {to avoid God's judgment}. You brag that you know God. ¹⁸You know what God wants. Also, since {some people} have taught you {God's law}, you approve of what is superior. ¹⁹You have even convinced yourselves that you {Jews} are the only ones who can teach those {non-Jews} who do not know {about God}. {You are convinced that} only you can enable ignorant people to understand {who God is}. ²⁰{You have convinced yourself that} you should instruct people who are foolish. {You have convinced yourself that} you should teach {people who are as ignorant as} infants. {You think this way} because you know the laws {God gave the Jews}, which fully contain what we can know and what is true. ²¹So {even though you Jews have convinced yourself that these things are true}, you should teach yourselves to do what you teach others to do {because you don't do those things}! You keep telling others that they should not steal, but you steal! ²²You keep telling {people} not to have sexual relations with people whom they did not marry, {but} you do so! You {supposedly} detest idols, {but} you ransack temples {that contain idols}! ²³You brag about {how well you understand} the laws {God gave you}, {but} you disgrace God by disobeying those laws! ²⁴{These things are true} because it is exactly as Isaiah wrote, "The nations say bad things about God because of {how wickedly} you {Jews act}."

²⁵{You Jews who have sinned will be judged} because, being circumcised {only} benefits you if you obey the laws {God gave you}. However, if you disobey those laws, being circumcised does not benefit you at all. ²⁶So then, if uncircumcised people obey what God requires in the laws {he gave the Jews}, God will regard those uncircumcised people as being circumcised. ²⁷And people who are physically uncircumcised yet fully obey the laws {from God} will judge you {Jews}! Although {you know} the written rules {God gave the Jews} and are circumcised, you have disobeyed those laws! ²⁸{This is true} because a {true} Jew is not someone who does Jewish rituals that people can see. {Similarly,} people cannot see {true} circumcision on a person's body. ²⁹Rather, a {true} Jew is one {by means of something} that people cannot see. {True} circumcision {happens} in a person's mind {and} the {Holy} Spirit does it. {Obeying} the written rules {God gave the Jews} cannot do it. God commends a true Jew, but other people do not.

Chapter 3

¹{You Jews might say,} {"If what you have said is true,} then surely being a Jew is not advantageous! Surely being circumcised is not beneficial at all!" ²{Then I would say, "Being a Jew benefits a person} in many ways!" {This is} certainly {true} because, first of all, God trusted the Jews with preserving what he had said {in the Scriptures}. ³{So you might say,} "Some of these {Jews} were certainly unfaithful {to God}! How unfaithful those people are certainly cannot invalidate how faithful God is!" ⁴{Then I would say,} "Of course not!" On the contrary, God {is always} truthful, but everyone else is not. This is what {David meant when} he wrote {in the Scriptures}, "The result {of my sin} is that people will acknowledge that you{, God,} are right when you speak and victorious when people {try to} judge you."

⁵But {you might say,} "Suppose {this is true and} how unrighteous we {Jews} are {actually} confirms how righteous God is. {That} could not {possibly mean} that God is unrighteous because he punishes {us}!" (When I talk like this, I am expressing how human beings think.) ⁶{Then I would say,} "Of course not! If God were unrighteous when he punishes us, then he could not {possibly} judge {anyone in} the world!" ⁷But {then you might say,} "Suppose {this is true and} my lying further glorifies God {and} how truthful he is. {If that is so,} then {surely} God should not still judge me as if I were sinning!" ⁸And {if this is true, then} you should {just} tell us to act wickedly in order that good things can happen!" (This is exactly what some people say falsely about me and claim that I say. It is right {for God} to condemn people {who speak and act} this way!)

⁹{You Jews might then say,} {"If what you have said is true,} then we are surely not superior {to non-Jews}!" {And I would say that} indeed we are not. {I say this} because I have previously charged that all Jews and non-Jews cannot stop being sinful. ¹⁰This is what {the prophets meant when} they wrote {in the Scriptures}, "No one is righteous, no one at all!"

¹¹"No one thinks wisely. No one is even trying to know God!

¹²Everyone has refused to obey {God}. As a whole, they are worthless {for doing what God wants}. No one is kind, no one at all!"

¹³"What people say is morally corrupt {like the smell of rotten corpses in} a grave! They constantly deceive {people} by what they say!" "What they say hurts people, like the venom of venomous snakes!" ¹⁴"They constantly curse {others} and speak harshly {against them}."

¹⁵"They rush eagerly to murder people.

¹⁶Wherever they go, they destroy lives and make people suffer.

¹⁷They do not understand how to live peacefully {with others}."

¹⁸"They do not fear God {at all}!"

¹⁹Certainly, we Jews know that whatever God says in his laws applies to {the Jews} to whom God gave his laws. This is in order that no one can excuse themselves {from being judged by God}. {This is} also in order that God could justly punish everyone in the world as guilty. ²⁰{This is true} because God will not make anyone righteous with himself {simply} because they obey the laws {he gave the Jews}. {This is so} because those laws {only} make people aware of how sinful they are.

²¹But now God has revealed how he makes people righteous. {Becoming righteous} is not related to obeying the laws {God gave the Jews}. {Yet} Moses and the prophets testify {about how God makes people righteous} in what they wrote {in the Scriptures}. ²²In other words, how God makes people righteous is by trusting in Jesus the Messiah. {God will make} all {types of} people {righteous} if they trust in {Jesus}. {This is} because God does not distinguish {between different types of people}. ²³{This is} because all {types of} people sin and fail to acquire the glorious status from God. ²⁴God makes {these sinful people} righteous as a gift because he is so kind. {People receive this gift from God} when God unites them to Jesus the Messiah, who redeemed them {from being punished for being sinful}. ²⁵God offered Jesus as the one who atones {for everyone's sins}. {People are rescued from being punished for being sinful} by trusting in his {sacrificial} death. {God did this} in order to show how God makes people righteous. {This happened} because God disregarded people's sinful acts that they had previously done. ²⁶{God did this} because he is so tolerant. {God also did this} in order to show how he makes people righteous during our time. {This is} for the purpose of showing that God is righteous and that he makes people righteous {if} they trust in Jesus.

²⁷{You Jews might say,} {"If what you have said is true,} then surely no one can boast!" {Then I would say,} "Indeed, no one can!" {Then you might say,} "Surely {we can become righteous} by obeying the laws {God gave the Jews}! Surely doing {those things} {will make us righteous}!" {Then I would say,} "Absolutely not! On the contrary, {people become righteous} by trusting {in Jesus the Messiah}. ²⁸Indeed, we {Jewish Christians} consider people to become righteous by trusting {in Jesus the Messiah}. {Being righteous} is not related to doing those things {that God commanded} in the laws {he gave the Jews}. ²⁹{Or you might say,} "Surely God is not only the God of the Jews. Surely he is the God of {all} the nations too!" {So I would say,} "Absolutely! He is the God of {all} the nations too. ³⁰{This is true} because there is certainly {only} one God {for all people}. He will make righteous {both} the Jews who trust {in Jesus} and the non-Jews who trust in {Jesus}. ³¹{You Jews might say,} "Then surely we make the laws {God gave us} invalid by trusting in {Jesus}!" {So I would say,} "Of course not! On the contrary, we confirm that {what God said in} those laws is valid."

Chapter 4

¹{You Jews might say,} {"If what you have said is true,} then surely our physical ancestor Abraham found out {about it}. ²{This must be true} because if Abraham became righteous based on doing the things {that God commanded in his laws}, then he could brag {about it}." On the contrary, {I would say that} {Abraham could} not possibly {boast about it} to God! ³{I say this} because, {Moses} surely tells {us} in the Scriptures, "Abraham trusted in God, and God considered Abraham to be righteous because he trusted in him. " ⁴Indeed, when a person works, he does not consider the wage {he earns} to be a gracious gift. On the contrary, {that person considers the wage he earns} to be what his employer owes him. ⁵By contrast, when a person does not obey {the laws God gave the Jews}, but trusts in the God who can make unrighteous people righteous, God considers him to be righteous because he trusted in him. ⁶This is also the same thing that King David wrote {in the Scriptures} about how blessed people are when God considers them to be righteous, even though they do not do those things {that God commanded}. {David wrote:}

⁷"People are so happy when God forgives their lawless acts! People are so happy when God no longer acknowledges their sinful acts! ⁸Any person whom the Lord never again considers to be sinful is so happy!"

⁹Therefore, these happy people are not only circumcised {Jews} but even uncircumcised people {who are not Jews}! {This must be true} because we {Jews} quote {the scripture that states,} "God considers Abraham to be righteous because he trusted {in him}." ¹⁰So then, {you surely know} when Abraham trusted in God and God considered {him to be righteous}! {You surely know whether this happened} before he was circumcised or afterward! {Indeed,} it was not while Abraham was circumcised, but while he was still uncircumcised {that God considered him to be righteous}. ¹¹Abraham was circumcised as a mark {in his body} to prove that God had made him righteous because Abraham trusted {in him} before he was circumcised. {This happened} in order for him to become the {spiritual} ancestor for every non-Jew who trusts in God in order that God would consider them to be righteous {because they trust in him}. ¹²{This} also {happened in order for Abraham to become} the {spiritual} ancestor of those people who are circumcised, that is, those circumcised {Jews} {who are not only circumcised in their bodies}, but who also trust in God the same way that our ancestor Abraham did before he was circumcised.

¹³{This is true} because {when} God promised Abraham and those who descend from him that the {whole} world would belong to him, {God did not promise this} because {Abraham obeyed} the laws {God gave the Jews}. Rather, {God promised this} because God had made {Abraham} righteous because Abraham trusted {in him}. ¹⁴{This is true} because, if people could inherit {what God promised Abraham} by obeying the laws {he gave the Jews}, {then} trusting {in God} would become useless! What God promised would also become invalid. ¹⁵{This is} because the laws {God gave the Jews} are intended to punish {those who disobey them}. However, where God's laws do not exist, no one can disobey {them}. ¹⁶This is why what God promised comes by trusting in him in order to show how kind he is. {God was so kind} in order that he could secure what he promised to everyone who has {spiritually} descended {from Abraham}. {Those who have spiritually descended from Abraham} are not only those {Jews} who obey the laws {God gave them}, but also those who trust {in God} like Abraham did. Abraham is the {spiritual} ancestor of all of us {who trust in God}. ¹⁷{This is exactly what {God} said in the Scriptures {about Abraham}: "I have chosen you to be a {spiritual} ancestor for numerous people groups.") God considers {Abraham to be our spiritual ancestor}. Abraham trusted God. {He is the one} who causes dead people to become alive {again}. He also commands things that do not exist {to exist}, then they exist. ¹⁸Abraham trusted {in God} by hoping {in God}, despite what seemed hopeless. As a result, he became the {spiritual} ancestor for numerous people groups. {This happened} just as God had promised {him} {in the Scriptures}: "The people who descend from you will become as numerous {as the stars in the sky}." ¹⁹Abraham thought that his body was too old to produce children. (He was almost 100 years old!) {He also thought} that {his wife} Sarah was unable become pregnant {because she never could do so before}. {Nevertheless,} Abraham kept on trusting {God}. ²⁰Indeed, Abraham did not faithlessly doubt what God had promised. On the contrary, God empowered Abraham to continue trusting {in him} while glorifying God. ²¹God also totally assured Abraham that he is able to do what he had promised {to do}. ²²And this is why, " God considered Abraham to be righteous because he trusted in him."

²³Yet, when {Moses} wrote {in the Scriptures}, "God considered how Abraham trusted {him}," {these words} not only refer to Abraham. ²⁴On the contrary, {these words} also refer to us {who trust in Jesus}. God is going to consider how we {believers} trust {him}. {We are} the people who trust him. {He is} the one who caused our Lord Jesus to become alive again after he had died. ²⁵God allowed people to kill Jesus because we sinned {against God}. {God} also caused Jesus to become alive again in order to make us righteous.

Chapter 5

¹Consequently, we should live peacefully with God by means of {what} our Lord Jesus the Messiah {did for us} because we have become righteous by trusting {in Jesus}. ²Our Lord Jesus the Messiah also allows us to continually experience how kind God is by trusting in him. We can confidently boast that we will share in God's glorious status. ³This is not the only thing {about which we can confidently boast}. Rather, we can also confidently boast about the painful things {that we have experienced}. {We can do this} because we know that a painful thing {that we experience} causes us to endure {hardships better than before}. ⁴And being able to endure {hardships} results in {God} approving {us}. And {when God} approves {us, we become more} confident. ⁵And when we become confident, we will not be disappointed. {This is} because the Holy Spirit has enabled us to deeply understand {how much} God loves us. God has given us this Holy Spirit.

⁶In fact, while we were still helpless, {Jesus} the Messiah died for the sake of {us} impious people. {God did this} at just the right time. ⁷Indeed, someone would rarely consider dying for the sake of a person who is righteous; although someone might possibly even bravely consider dying for the sake of a good person. ⁸However, God shows his own love towards we {believers} by this fact: while we were still sinful, {Jesus} the Messiah died for our benefit! ⁹Consequently, since the Messiah's {sacrificial} death has already made us righteous, it is even more certain that he will rescue us when God {finally} punishes {sinners}! ¹⁰Indeed, God's Son {Jesus} died to reconcile us to God while we were {still} {his} enemies. Therefore, since Jesus has {already} reconciled us to God, it is even more certain that he will rescue us {when God punishes sinners} because he is alive {again}! ¹¹Now these are not the only things {God does for us}. Rather, we also boast about God by means of {what} our Lord Jesus the Messiah {has done for us}. Jesus has already reconciled us {with God}!

¹²So then, sin started existing in the world because one man sinned, and {living things started} to die because he sinned. In the same way everyone started dying as well because everyone sins. ¹³Indeed, people throughout the world sinned before {God gave his} laws {to the Jews}. However, God did not legally regard what they did as sinning, since those laws did not yet exist {to identify what it means to sin}. ¹⁴However, everyone died from {the time of the first man} Adam until {the time of} Moses. Even those people died who did not sin by violating the same command God gave to Adam. Adam is like the person who would come {later}. ¹⁵But what God has kindly given {us} is not like how Adam rejected {God's command}. In fact, it is true that many people died because the one man {Adam} rejected {God's command}. {But} how kind God is and what God kindly gives from the one man Jesus the Messiah extend to many people {and are} much greater! ¹⁶Yet, what God gives is not like {what happened} because the one man {Adam} sinned. {This is true} because, in fact, God judged {everyone} after the sinful thing {that Adam did}, which resulted in God condemning {everyone}. By contrast, what God kindly gave {people} after they rejected {his commands} many {times} resulted in God making them righteous. ¹⁷Indeed, since everyone died because the one man {Adam} rejected {God's command}, it is even more certain that those {people} who accept how abundantly kind God is and {are those people whom} he makes righteous will live in control {of themselves}. {This will happen} because of {what} Jesus the Messiah {has done}.

¹⁸Therefore, like how God condemned everyone because {Adam} rejected {God's command}, in the same way, God makes everyone righteous, which results in {them} living eternally, because {Jesus} did something righteous. ¹⁹Indeed, just like how many people became sinful because the one man {Adam} disobeyed {God}, in the same way many people became righteous because the one man {Jesus} obeyed {God}. ²⁰Yet {God} added {his} laws in order that people might reject {his commands} even more. Nevertheless, whenever people began to sin even more, God showed even more so how kind he is! ²¹{This happened} in order that, just like how everyone sinned in the place

where they die, in the same way how kind God is might make people righteous. {This} resulted in {people} living eternally because of {what} our Lord Jesus the Messiah {has done}.

Chapter 6

¹{Someone might say,} {"If what you have said is true,} then surely we {believers} should keep on sinning in order that God might show how kind he is even more!" ²{Then I would say,} "Of course not!" We who are no longer controlled by sinning surely must not continue living sinfully! ³You surely know that God unites to the Messiah Jesus whomever someone baptizes and it is as if that baptized person also died with the Messiah! ⁴So, by being baptized as if we died with {the Messiah}, it is like God buried us {in the tomb} with {Jesus}. {This is so} in order that, just like how God the Father's glorious power caused the Messiah to become alive again after he had died, in the same way we too can live a new way of living. ⁵Indeed, since we share in what resembles Jesus dying, we will surely also share in God making us alive again. ⁶We know that when people crucified Jesus, God {also} cancelled our former {sinful} way of life. {He did this} in order to totally remove the way sin controls us so that we no longer have to live sinfully. ⁷{This is} because, when people {who live sinfully} share in {Jesus'} death, God frees them from having to live sinfully. ⁸Now since {it is as if} we died with the Messiah, we trust that we will also live with him {eternally}. ⁹We know that the Messiah can never die again because God caused him to become alive again after he had died. Nothing can ever cause the Messiah to die again! ¹⁰{This is} because when Jesus died, he died one time only in order to remove {the way} sin {controls people}. Now that he is alive {again}, he lives in order to glorify God. ¹¹Similarly, you too regard yourselves as no longer controlled by sinning. Indeed, {regard yourselves} as alive in order to glorify God because God has united you to the Messiah Jesus. ¹²Since this is true, do not allow your sinful desires to control you. {This would} result in you doing {the sinful things} that you want to do. ¹³Do not use your body parts in order to do unrighteous things {or} to sin. Instead, live in order to do what God wants you to do, like people whom God caused to live again after they had died. Also, use your body parts in order to do righteous things to glorify God. ¹⁴Indeed, do not allow your desire to sin to control you because the laws {God gave the Jews} do not control you. Instead, how kind God is controls you.

¹⁵{Someone might say,} {"If what you have said is true,} then surely we {believers} should keep on sinning because the laws {God gave the Jews} do not control us. Instead, how kind God is controls us!" {Then I would say,} "Of course not!" ¹⁶You surely know that if you submit yourselves to be controlled by a thing or person, you become like slaves to that thing or person you submit to! {This is true} whether you submit yourselves to living sinfully, which will kill you {eternally}, or you submit yourselves to God, which will make you righteous. ¹⁷Although you used to submit yourselves to living sinfully, {now} you are sincerely submissive to the type of teaching that God has submitted you to. Thank God! ¹⁸Indeed, since God liberated you from living sinfully, you are {now} serving {God} righteously. ¹⁹{I {Paul} am speaking in human terms, because you are spiritually immature.} Indeed, just like how you {previously} used your body parts to live impurely and to increasingly break God's laws, in the same way, now use your body parts to live righteously. {This will cause you} to live like God's people should live. ²⁰{This is} because when you used to submit yourselves to living sinfully, you were not living righteously. ²¹So, formerly you did not benefit from those {sinful} things {you did} that now embarrass you. {This is because} those things will eventually kill {you} {eternally}. ²²But now {that you trust in Jesus}, God has freed you from living sinfully and has caused you to serve him like slaves. Therefore, you receive what is beneficial, that results in you living like God's people should live. Indeed, {living in that way} will eventually result in you living eternally. ²³{I say this} because living sinfully causes those who do so to die {eternally}, but God graciously causes those who are united to our Lord, the Messiah Jesus, to live eternally.

Chapter 7

¹My fellow {Jewish} believers {in the Messiah}, you are well-aware that the laws {God gave the Jews} must be obeyed by {Jewish} people for their whole lives. ({I know that you are well-aware of this fact}, because I am speaking to people who are familiar with the laws {God gave the Jews}.) ²For instance, according to the laws {God

gave the Jews}, a married woman must remain married to her husband for as long as he lives. However, if her husband dies, {God's} law no longer requires her to remain married to him. ³Therefore, if she marries another man while her husband is alive, {according to God's law} she will be an adulterous woman. However, if her husband dies, she no longer has to obey {what} God's law {requires of those who are married}. As a result, she would not be an adulterous woman if she married another man. ⁴So, my fellow {Jewish} believers {in the Messiah}, by means of the Messiah dying {on the cross} the laws {God gave the Jews} no longer control you. {God did this} in order to unite you to the Messiah, {as if you were marrying a new husband}. He is the person whom God made alive again after he had died. {God did this} in order for us to do things that please him. ⁵Indeed, when living sinfully used to control us, the laws {God gave us} caused us to want to sin even more. {Our living sinfully} controlled what we did with our body parts. As a result, we would {eventually} die {eternally}. ⁶But now {that we trust in Jesus}, God cancels what his laws require {us to do}. The laws {God gave the Jews} no longer control us as if we were prisoners. As a result, we now serve God in the new way that comes from the {Holy} Spirit. {We} no longer {serve God} in the old way that the written rules {God gave the Jews} require.

⁷{Someone might say,} {"If what you have said is true,} then surely the laws {God gave the Jews} are sinful!" {Then I would say,} "Of course not!" On the contrary, without the laws {God gave the Jews}, I would never have become aware of {what it means to} sin. For instance, if God did not say in his laws, "You must not covet," I would never have become aware of {what it means to} covet. ⁸However, since I am sinful, I wanted to covet in many ways because I knew that {God} commanded {us not to covet}. {This is} because if the laws {God gave the Jews} did not exist, living sinfully would cease. ⁹There was a time when I was living without being aware of the laws {God gave the Jews}. But, when I became aware of those commandments, I wanted to sin even more. ¹⁰I became {spiritually} dead. God's command was supposed to result in me living {eternally}. But God's command actually will result in me dying {eternally}. ¹¹{This is so} because {I} wanted to sin even more because I knew what God had commanded. When I sinned, I tricked myself. Then {disobeying} what God had commanded killed me {spiritually}. ¹²So the laws {God gave the Jews} are worthy of God and what God has commanded is worthy of God, just, and good.

¹³So, {God's laws}, which are good, surely did not cause me to die {spiritually}! Of course not! Rather, living sinfully did so. {This happened} in order for {God's} good {laws} to reveal how sinful it is to live sinfully. {This also happened} in order for what God commands to reveal that living sinfully is extremely sinful.

¹⁴{This is true} because we are {all} aware that the laws {God gave the Jews} are from God's Spirit. But as for me, I am {spiritually} weak. {It is as if} I must serve as a slave to living sinfully. ¹⁵{This is true} because I do not understand what I do! Indeed, I keep on doing what I do not want to do. But I do what I hate {to do}. ¹⁶Now because I do what I do not want {to do}, {this proves that} I agree with the laws {God gave the Jews}. {I also testify} that they are good {laws}. ¹⁷This means that now I am no longer the one who causes me to do {these sinful things}. Rather, my wanting to live sinfully causes me {to do them}. ¹⁸Indeed, I am aware that I am not good {at all}. In other words, my sinful self {is not good at all}. {This is true} because, even though I really want to do {what is good}, I am unable to do so. ¹⁹Indeed, I do not do the good things I want {to do}. Rather, I keep on doing evil things that I do not want {to do}. ²⁰Now because I do what I do not want {to do}, I am no longer the one who causes me to do {these sinful things}. Rather, my wanting to live sinfully causes me {to do them}. ²¹Consequently, I realized that a principle exists: I keep on doing evil things, {even though} I really want to do good things. ²²{This is true} because the laws God gave {the Jews} make my mind rejoice. ²³Yet, I notice another principle that controls what I do with my body parts. {This principle} conflicts with the {other} principle that my mind {accepts}. It also controls me as if I were its prisoner by means of the principle that I tend to live sinfully. {Living sinfully} controls what I do with my body parts. ²⁴I am truly a wretched person! {I feel as though there is no one} who could {possibly} rescue me from this body that kills me! ²⁵I thank God {who rescued me} by means of our Lord Jesus the Messiah! Therefore, I actually do obey with my mind the laws God gave {the Jews}. Yet {at the same time} with my sinful self {I obey} the principle that I tend to live sinfully.

Chapter 8

¹So now, God does not condemn at all anyone whom he has united with the Messiah Jesus. ²{This is true} because the principle that pertains to the life-giving Holy Spirit has caused you {believers} to no longer be controlled by the principle that causes people to sin and die {eternally}. {It did this} by uniting you with the Messiah Jesus. ³Indeed, God {accomplished} what the laws {he gave the Jews} could not accomplish because they could not prevent people from living sinfully. God removed {how} sinning {controls people} through {the crucifying of} {his Son's} body. {He did this} by sending his own Son {Jesus} {to the world} in a human body {that was} like the bodies of sinful people. {God sent his Son} in order to {remove} what is sinful. ⁴{God did these things} so that we {believers} could do the righteous acts that the laws {he gave the Jews} required. We live as people whom living sinfully does not control. Rather, {we live as people} whom the {Holy} Spirit controls. ⁵{This is true} because those {people} whom living sinfully controls think about those things that are related to living sinfully. However, those people whom the {Holy} Spirit controls think about those things that are related to the {Holy} Spirit. ⁶Indeed, focusing on living sinfully will cause {a person} to die {eternally}. However, focusing on the {Holy} Spirit will cause {a person} to live {eternally and} peacefully. ⁷{This is true} because {people} who focus on living sinfully are God's enemies. {This is} because they do not voluntarily obey the laws God gave {the Jews} because they are incapable {of doing so}. ⁸But those whom living sinfully controls are incapable of pleasing God. ⁹By contrast, you {believers} are not those whom living sinfully controls. Rather, you are those whom the {Holy} Spirit controls because God's Spirit really does reside within you. But if some person does not possess Jesus the Messiah's Spirit, this person does not belong to the Messiah. ¹⁰Now, since the Messiah resides within you {believers}, the {Holy} Spirit gives {you} {eternal} life because he has made you righteous. {This is true} even though your bodies will die because you sin. ¹¹The {Holy} Spirit does indeed reside within you. {He came} from God, who caused Jesus to become alive again after he had died. {Since this is true,} God, who caused the Messiah Jesus to become alive again after he had died, will also cause your physical bodies to become alive {again} by his Spirit. This {Spirit} resides within you.

¹²Therefore, {my} fellow believers {in the Messiah}, we are obligated. {But we are not obligated} to live sinfully, {which means} to live like those whom living sinfully controls. ¹³Indeed, if you live like those whom living sinfully controls, you will die {eternally}. However, if the {Holy} Spirit enables you to stop doing what is sinful with your bodies, you will live {eternally}.

¹⁴{This is} because those people whom God's Spirit guides are God's {spiritual} children. ¹⁵Indeed, God has not given you {believers} an enslaved mind to terrify you like you had before. Rather, God has given you the Holy Spirit to {spiritually} adopt you {as his children}. {It is} the Holy Spirit who enables us to cry out, "Abba, my Father!" ¹⁶The {Holy} Spirit personally testifies along with our own minds that we are God's {spiritual} children. ¹⁷Since we are {God's spiritual} children, we are also those who will inherit {blessings from God}. We inherit {blessings from God himself} and also together with the Messiah {Jesus}. {This is true} only if we keep suffering together with the Messiah in order for God to also glorify us together with the Messiah.

¹⁸Indeed, I regard what we {believers in the Messiah} suffer at this time is incomparable to what glorious things God will reveal to us {in the future}. ¹⁹Indeed, what God created is very eagerly waiting for {the time} when God reveals who his {spiritual} children are. ²⁰{This is} because God subjugated what he created so that it became useless. {What God created} did not want this to happen. Rather, {God subjugated what he created} because he wanted to {do so}. {He did this} to keep {the creation} confidently expecting ²¹that God would also enable what he created to stop decaying and let it freely experience the same glorious status that belongs to his {spiritual} children. ²²Indeed, we are aware that, {even} at the present time, everything God has created keeps groaning and suffering together {like a mother experiencing pain before bearing a child}. ²³{It is} not only {what God created that groans}! On the contrary, even we ourselves who possess the {Holy} Spirit as the first portion {from God} feel suffering. {We feel this way} while we eagerly wait for God to {spiritually} adopt us, which is when God redeems our bodies. ²⁴{This is so} because God rescued us while we confidently expect this. If we {already} had what we have been confidently expecting, then we would have nothing to confidently expect. {This is} because surely nobody confidently expects something that he {already} has. ²⁵Yet, if we keep on confidently expecting what we do not yet have, then we will keep on eagerly waiting for it while persevering.

²⁶The {Holy} Spirit similarly also assists us because we are weak. {This is} because we are not aware of what we should pray for. However, the {Holy} Spirit personally pleads on our behalf by groaning without speaking words.

²⁷Now God is the one who investigates what we think and feel. He is aware of what the {Holy} Spirit intends because the Spirit pleads for the sake of God's people according to {what} God {wants}.

²⁸We are certain that God makes all things that happen benefit those who love him. {The people who love him are} those whom God has called in accordance with what he previously planned {to do}. ²⁹{This is} because those whom God chose in advance, he also decided in advance to make resemble his Son {Jesus}. {God did these things} in order for his Son {Jesus} to have first place among many {spiritual} siblings. ³⁰Certainly, the people whom God chose in advance {to become his people}, he also summoned to become his people. And those people whom God summoned {to become his people}, he also made righteous. And those people whom God made righteous, he will also glorify.

³¹{Since these things are true,} then we should say this about them: since God supports us, surely no one {is powerful enough} to oppose us! ³²God did not even spare his own Son, {Jesus}. On the contrary, God handed him over {to die} for the sake of us all. So God surely will also graciously give us, along with Jesus, every {blessing}!

³³Surely no one can {rightly} accuse those whom God chose {to become his people}! {This is because} God is the one who makes people righteous. ³⁴Surely no one can condemn {God's people}! {This is because} the Messiah Jesus is the one who died. Furthermore, he is the one whom God made alive again. He is also at the place of highest honor next to God and even pleads for our sake. ³⁵Surely no one can make Jesus stop loving us! If people trouble us, or distress us, or persecute us, or if we are hungry, or naked, or in danger, or if people kill us with swords, surely none of those things can make Jesus stop loving us! ³⁶This is exactly what {God} said in the Scriptures, "They constantly kill us because of you{, God}. They consider us to be like sheep for them to slaughter."

³⁷However, he who loved us enables us to completely overcome all of these things {that might happen to us}. ³⁸In fact, God has persuaded me that {none of these things}—whether being dead, or what happens while we are alive, or angels, or demons who rule, or things that are happening to us, or things that will happen to us, or powerful demons, ³⁹or what is above {us}, or what is below {us}, or anything else that God created—can stop God from loving us! {God loves us} because we are united to the Messiah Jesus, our Lord!

Chapter 9

¹I 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: ²I am overwhelmed with sorrow! I constantly and deeply grieve! ³In 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! ⁴These {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. ⁵The 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!

⁶Certainly, 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. ⁷It 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." ⁸In 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}. ⁹Indeed, 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." ¹⁰Indeed, 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}. ¹¹In 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. ¹²God 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." ¹³This is exactly what God says in the holy scriptures, "I love Jacob {the younger son}, but I do not love Esau {the older son}."

¹⁴So then, of course we should not think that God is unjust {because he chose Jacob and not Esau}! ¹⁵In fact, God told Moses, "I will pity whoever I want to pity. I will be favorable to whoever I want to favor." ¹⁶So 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. ¹⁷Indeed, 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." ¹⁸So then, God pities who{ever} he wants to pity. However, he makes obstinate who{ever} he wants to become obstinate.

¹⁹So 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!" ²⁰{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?" ²¹Certainly, 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. ²²It 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. ²³{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. ²⁴We are also {among} those people that God summons. God summons people from both the Jews and indeed {all} the nations. ²⁵God 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.

²⁶Then 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.'

²⁷Indeed, 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." ²⁸"This is because the Lord will fully and decisively accomplish what he promised on the earth."

²⁹The 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."

³⁰So, 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.

³¹However, 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. ³²The 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}. ³³This 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

¹But, my fellow believers in the Messiah, I deeply desire that God will save {the Israelites}. I even beg him {to save} them! ²Certainly, I can personally confirm that they are enthusiastic about God. However, they do not {understand what it means to} {truly} know {him}. ³This 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. ⁴Indeed, {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}.

⁵This 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." ⁶However, 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). ⁷"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).

⁸However 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. ⁹{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. ¹⁰This 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}. ¹¹In fact, this is what the holy scripture says, "God will not humiliate {anyone} who continues to trust in him." ¹²Indeed, 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}. ¹³Indeed, "God will save anyone who invokes the name of the Lord {Jesus}."

¹⁴Certainly, 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}. ¹⁵And 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!" ¹⁶However, 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!" ¹⁷So 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.

¹⁸However, 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."

¹⁹However 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}." ²⁰Indeed, 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."

²¹However, 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

¹The 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). ²God 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. ³{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}!" ⁴But, 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." ⁵The same thing is also true at this time in history. God has graciously chosen that some (Israelites) would survive. ⁶Certainly, {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}.

⁷So 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. ⁸This 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}." ⁹{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}!"

¹⁰Cause them to become blind so they cannot see! Make them unable to raise their heads {to see how gracious you are}-forever!"

¹¹Yet, 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}. ¹²Indeed, 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}!"

¹³But 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. ¹⁴If 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. ¹⁵In 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. ¹⁶Indeed, {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.

¹⁷Indeed, {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. ¹⁸You 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! ¹⁹So 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." ²⁰I 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!} ²¹Certainly, 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!"

²²Take 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}!

²³However, 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. ²⁴Certainly, 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.

²⁵Indeed, 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.

²⁶Then 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.

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

²⁸As 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. ²⁹This is because God does not revoke the things he graciously gives and who he summons {to be his people}. ³⁰In 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. ³¹In 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. ³²Indeed, 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.

³³God'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! ³⁴{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! ³⁵No one could possibly give God anything that would cause him to owe them something!"

³⁶Certainly, 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

¹So 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}. ²Do 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.

³Indeed, 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}.

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

⁵Similarly, 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. ⁶And 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. ⁷If {God has gifted you} to serve, you should serve {others}. {If God has gifted you} to teach, you should teach {others}. ⁸If {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.

⁹{You must} love each other genuinely. {You must} detest what is wicked. {You must} retain what is good. ¹⁰{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}. ¹¹{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}. ¹²{You must} be joyful while hoping {in the Lord}. {You must} endure when distressed. {You must} stay engaged in prayer. ¹³{You must} contribute to what God's people need. {You must} find opportunities to help strangers who are needy. ¹⁴You must {ask God to} bless those who trouble you. {Ask God to} bless them. Do not slander them. ¹⁵You should rejoice with those people who are rejoicing! You should be sad along with those who are sad! ¹⁶Consider 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. ¹⁷If 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. ¹⁸If you are able, as much as it depends on you, live peacefully with all people.

¹⁹O 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."" ²⁰"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.}" ²¹{In other words,} do not let what is evil conquer you. Instead, conquer what is evil by doing what is good.

Chapter 13

¹Every 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. ²This 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}. ³In 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. ⁴This 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. ⁵As 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}! ⁶In 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. ⁷Give 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.

⁸Pay 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. ⁹Because 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." ¹⁰{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.

¹¹Besides 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. ¹²{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. ¹³We 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. ¹⁴Instead, 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

¹You must accept any fellow believer in the Messiah who is immature. Do not argue with them about matters of opinion. ²{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. ³{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. ⁴Just 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}.

⁵Some 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. ⁶The 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. ⁷This 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. ⁸Certainly, 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}. ⁹In 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.

¹⁰But, 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. ¹¹Indeed, 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.'"

¹²So, 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}.

¹³As 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. ¹⁴I 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. ¹⁵Yet, 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! ¹⁶So then, you must not contribute to having anyone slander the good that all of you believers in the Messiah possess. ¹⁷This 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}. ¹⁸Because {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.

¹⁹This is why we must strive to live peacefully and {spiritually} support each one our fellow believers. ²⁰You 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. ²¹{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. ²²What 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. ²³On 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

¹Indeed, 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. ²Each 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}. ³Indeed, 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!" ⁴Indeed, 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.

⁵I 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. ⁶{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.

⁷This 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! ⁸Indeed, 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}. ⁹{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." ¹⁰The holy scriptures also say in another passage, "Celebrate along with God's people, O nations!" ¹¹In yet another passage of the holy scriptures it says, "All the nations, praise the Lord! All the peoples commend him!" ¹²{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."

¹³I 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.

¹⁴In 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.

¹⁵It 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}. ¹⁶so 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.

¹⁷So then, as an authorized representative of the Messiah Jesus, I have good reasons to boast about the things God is doing through me! ¹⁸Indeed, 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}! ¹⁹{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. ²⁰And 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. ²¹Indeed, 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."

²²Because {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. ²³Yet 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. ²⁴Because, 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}. ²⁵Yet, at the present time, I am traveling to Jerusalem in order to serve God's people {there}. ²⁶This 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. ²⁷Certainly, 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. ²⁸So 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. ²⁹I know that when I visit you, the Messiah {Jesus} will fully bless our time together!

³⁰Now, 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. ³¹{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. ³²{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. ³³Finally, {I pray that} God will cause you to live peacefully {and} sustain all of you. May it be so!

Chapter 16

¹I, {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}. ²{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.

³Send my greetings to Priscilla and her husband Aquila. They worked alongside me as those who represent the Messiah Jesus. ⁴They 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. ⁵Also, 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}. ⁶Send my greetings to Mary, who has labored on behalf of you

in many ways. ⁷Send 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.

⁸Send my greetings to Ampliatus, whom I love, {and} who is united to the Lord. ⁹Send 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.

¹⁰Send 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.

¹¹Send my greetings to my close relative Herodion. Send my greetings to those united to the Lord {Jesus} who live in the household of Narcissus. ¹²Send 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}. ¹³Send 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.

¹⁴Send my greetings to Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas, and our fellow believers in the Messiah who {meet} together with them. ¹⁵Send my greetings to Philologus and Julia, Nereus and his sister, Olympas, and to all God's people who meet together with them.

¹⁶When 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!

¹⁷My 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! ¹⁸Indeed, 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}.

¹⁹Indeed, {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.

²⁰It 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!

²¹Timothy, who works alongside me, sends you his greetings. My close relatives: Lucius, Jason, and Sosipater, send their greetings as well. ²²I, Tertius, who am writing this letter as a spokesperson for Lord {Jesus}, send you my greetings.

²³Gaius, 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. ²⁴^[1] [May our Lord Jesus the Messiah show all of you how kind he is. Amen!]

²⁵{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.

²⁶Indeed, 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}.

²⁷May {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!

16:24 ^[1]

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