

The LETTER of PAUL to the ROMANS¹

LAST GENERATION VERSION

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Chapter 1

The Good Message of God About His Son

Paul, a slave of Jesus Christ, an invited Emissary, having been appointed unto the Good Message of God² (which He formerly promised through His prophets in the Holy Scriptures)³ about His Son, the One generated from the seed of David regarding the flesh,² ⁴ the One delineated³ “Son of God”⁴ with power⁵ in concord with the Breath of holiness, from [His] resurrection [from among]⁶ the dead⁷ – Jesus Christ our Master. ⁵ Through Him we⁸ received grace and a commission⁹ unto obedience of trust¹⁰ regarding His name¹¹ among all the nations,¹² ⁶ among whom you are also the invited of Jesus Christ.

¹ The Church of Rome was not planted by one of the Apostles. Its origin was most likely due to the conversion of certain Jews and proselytes from Rome who were present at Pentecost (Acts 2:10-11). Aquila and Pricilla were Christian Jews from Rome (Acts 18:2) and very likely ignited this church within the Roman synagogues. Aquila and Pricilla had been banished from Rome by Claudius along with all Jews (AD49) because of a constant uproar of unbelieving Jews against believing Jews. Paul spent considerable time with Aquila and Pricilla in Corinth and Ephesus ministering in the synagogues. When Paul wrote this epistle, they had returned to Rome. They were the first to be mentioned by Paul in his list of greetings, and the Roman church met in their house (Rom. 16:3-5).

² A reference to the Davidic Covenant: 1 Chron. 17:11-14; Psalm 89:3-4, 34-37; Psalm 132:10-18; Acts 2:30; 2 Tim. 2:8

³ The Greek word means to mark a boundary. It does not mean to “determine” (as several commentators imply), but to declare what has already been determined. This meaning is required by the grammar of Acts 17:26. This Greek word was used exclusively by Luke (Luke 22:22; Acts 2:23; Acts 10:42; Acts 11:29; Acts 17:26; Acts 17:31), and Paul (Heb. 4:7) which was transcribed by Luke. This term was a Lucian expression borrowed by Paul.

⁴ Psalm 2:6-12

⁵ Verse 4 is a direct reference to Peter’s Pentecost sermon (Acts 2). Peter decisively declared (with power from the Breath) that Jesus is the “Son of God” (of Psalm 2) because He met the criteria established for the “Son” in Psalm 16 – that His soul was not left in Hades nor did His flesh see corruption. The “power” of this declaration was demonstrated through their speaking in the languages of their hearers, which they had not learned.

⁶ “Dead” here is plural, masculine in the Greek, meaning “the dead ones.” Thus, the resurrection of Jesus Christ was not from a state of being dead, but out from among those who are dead.

⁷ Cf. Psalm 16:5-11 & Acts 2:22-32

⁸ Paul considered himself among the 11 Apostles who had been personally commissioned by Jesus Christ, and who were present at Pentecost.

⁹ The Great Commission (Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16; Luke 24:44-49; Acts 1:4-8)

¹⁰ The good message is to be obeyed, not just accepted mentally (Acts 6:7; 2 Thess. 1:8; 1 Pet. 1:22).

¹¹ The good confession, required of those coming for baptism, was that “*Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.*” This was a confession of all the truths about Jesus Christ contained in verses 1-6 – His physical descent from David and rightful heir to David’s throne, and His being “Son of God,” begotten by the Father, the King to reign on Mt. Zion.

¹² Cf. Luke 24:47 & Rom. 16:25-27

7 To all those in Rome, beloved of God, invited holy ones:¹³ Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Master, Jesus Christ.

Paul's Desire to Stabilize the Church in the Capitol of the Roman Empire

8 First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ concerning all of you that the Trust¹⁴ of yours is being proclaimed throughout the whole system.¹⁵ 9 For God is my witness, Whom I serve with my breath in the good message of His Son, how I constantly remember you 10 always in my prayers, pleading if somehow, at some time, I will be assisted along in the will of God to come to you. 11 For I long to see you so that I may impart to you some pneumatic gift¹⁶ to stabilize you. 12 Yet this is to be for the common encouragement among you in the mutual Trust,¹⁷ of you and of me. 13 Yet I do not want you to be unaware, brothers, that many times I intended to come to you (and was until now prevented)¹⁸ so that I may have some fruit among you also as [I have] also among the other nations. 14 I am a debtor to both the Greeks and the Barbarians,¹⁹ to the wise and the unwise, 15 thus my eagerness to evangelize you in Rome also.²⁰

¹³ The invitation to salvation is an invitation to holiness.

¹⁴ The Greek noun "πίστις" is usually rendered "faith." Yet, "belief" is not an adequate definition. The LXX uses this term almost exclusively for a kind of trust that implies great confidence being placed in the object of trust, and strongly implies trustworthiness and faithfulness. When "πίστις" has the definite article (as here) it normally refers to the body of Christian doctrine (the Christian Faith) rather than a personal "trust." In other words, Paul was referring to the spread of the body of Christian doctrine held by the Roman church rather than personal trust of individual believers. (See vs. 12).

¹⁵ The Greek word is "κόσμος" meaning an orderly arrangement. Here it refers to the influence of the congregation in Rome being felt to the farthest reaches of the Roman Empire.

¹⁶ Pneumatic gifts were given through the holy Breath to individuals through the laying on of the Apostles' hands according to Acts 8. Paul possessed this ability (2 Tim. 1:6), along with the other 11 Apostles of Christ, which was the "sign of an Apostle" of Jesus Christ (2 Cor. 12:12). The grammar of Acts 8:18 indicates that this was the normal way in which pneumatic gifts were bestowed, and that this ability was unique to the Apostles whom Jesus personally commissioned. (It was this unique Apostolic gift that Simon Magus attempted to buy from Peter and John). By imparting pneumatic gifts to the Romans through his hands, they would possess additional supernatural confirmation of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, making their testimony in the capitol city of the empire far more effective. Since pneumatic gifts were distributed through the Apostles' hands, and since Paul thought it necessary to visit the Romans in person in order to bestow these gifts, we conclude that they did not break out spontaneously without an Apostle present. The purpose of the gifts was to confirm the Apostles' eyewitness accounts of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, (Mark. 16:15-20; Heb. 2:3-4).

¹⁷ In an environment where false teachers and false prophets were seducing many Christians from the true Apostolic teaching (see: Gal. 3:1), Paul was concerned that there be no subtle deviations in the Trust of the Roman church away from the Apostolic teaching. Such deviations would then naturally infect the farthest reaches of the Roman Empire.

¹⁸ Cf. Rom. 15:22-32

¹⁹ "Barbarians" refers to non-Greek nations, which would include the Latin Christians to whom Paul was writing.

²⁰ Rome was the capitol of the empire. "All roads lead to Rome." Paul acknowledged how that the trust of the Roman congregation was being spoken of all throughout the whole empire, as merchants and others travelled to and from

The Good Message Reveals the Deliverance of Believers

16 For I am not ashamed of the good message of Christ, for it is the power of God unto deliverance²¹ to all the trusting ones, to the Jew first, also to the Greek. 17 For in it the justice of God is being revealed from trust,²² into trust,²³ just as has been written, “*Yet the just [one] out of trust shall [become] alive.*”^{24 25}

The Good Message Also Reveals the Just Fate of the Pagans

18 For the wrath of God from heaven is being revealed²⁶ upon all the irreverence and injustice of men, those who hold the truth in injustice. 19 Because what is known of God is apparent among them; for God manifests to them. 20 For His invisible [things] being perceived, from the creation of the system to the workmanship,²⁷ are obvious, besides His invisible power and divinity, causing them to be defenseless.

21 Having known God through these, they dishonored [Him] as God, nor were they thankful. But they became vain in their thinking, and their stupid hearts were darkened.

22 Claiming to be wise, they became fools.²⁸ 23 And they perverted the glory of the immortal God in the likeness of a mortal human image, and of birds, and quadrupeds, and reptiles.

24 Therefore God surrendered them also, in the lusts of their hearts, to the filthiness of dishonoring their bodies among themselves 25 – those who manipulate the truth of God into a lie and are honored, and serve the creation instead of the Creator who is blessed

the hub of the empire and encountered the Roman Christians. His desire was to impart to them supernatural gifts in order to make their testimony to the farthest reaches of the empire much more effective.

²¹ The word “salvation” literally means deliverance. Here it refers to the completed deliverance of the believers – the resurrection of the body at the second coming of Christ. (See: Luke 3:4-6; Rom. 13:11; 1 Thess. 5:9; 2 Tim. 2:10; Heb. 1:14; Heb. 9:28; 1 Pet. 1:5,8-9; Rev. 12:10).

²² God’s justice was revealed through the trust of the Apostles.

²³ The revelation of God’s justice in the proclaimed message resulted in trust in the hearers.

²⁴ “Shall live” is a future tense, middle voice indicative verb. In this form it never refers to a continuous state of “living,” (which is always in the active voice), but rather the act of becoming alive – the resurrection. (See: Matt. 9:18; Mark 5:23; John 5:25; John 11:25; John 14:19; Rom. 8:13; 2 Cor. 13:4). The hope of resurrection for “*the just one*” is based on Christ’s own tangible demonstration of resurrection (vs. 4).

²⁵ Hab. 2:4 (see footnotes for Hebrews 10:37-38).

²⁶ The present revelation of God’s impending wrath against the wicked is by means of the Gospel message preached (see. vs. 17 & Acts 13:30-31, Rom. 2:5,8, Rom. 3:5). Thus the Gospel is an invitation to escape the coming wrath.

²⁷ This is a clear reference to “Intelligent Design” as seen throughout God’s handiwork. Those (evolutionists) who deny God, and deny the creation as His handiwork, will stand defenseless before Him.

²⁸ They **became** totally depraved. They were not born in “total depravity,” as Calvinists claim. “*They became vain in their thinking, and their stupid hearts were darkened. Claiming to be wise, they became fools.*” This slide into total depravity is the result of resisting God’s grace drawing them to repentance. (See Rom. 2:4-6).

unto the ages, truly. 26 Because of this, God surrenders them²⁹ to worthless passions. (For even their females pervert natural intercourse into what is unnatural, 27 just as also the males, abandoning natural intercourse with a female, burn in their passions to one another, males in males performing shameful, and receiving in themselves the inevitable wages of their straying). 28 And just as they would not discern God, to hold [Him] in comprehension, God also surrenders them unto a worthless mind to do the inappropriate, 29 having been filled³⁰ with all injustice, fornication, depravity, greed, evil, full of envy, murder, contention, fraud, mischief, conspirators, 30 slanderers, God-haters, insulters, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, defiant to parents, 31 [willfully] stupid,³¹ covenant-breakers, void of kindred affection, ruthless, unmerciful. 32 Who, knowing the justice of God – that those practicing such things are worthy of death – not only continue, but also encourage others to practice [such things].

Chapter 2

*The Judgment of God on the Day of the Master*³²

Consequently, you are defenseless, O man – anyone who judges! For in whatever you judge another, you are condemning yourself! For you – the one judging – practice the same things!³³ 2 Yet, we have observed that the judgment of God is according to truth on those practicing such things. 3 Yet, do you suppose this, O man – the one judging those practicing such things and doing the same things, that you will escape the judgment of God? 4 Or are you despising the riches of His kindness, of His

²⁹ Verse 24 “Therefore God surrendered them also,” and vs. 26 “Because of this, God surrenders them...”, and vs. 28, “just as they would not discern God, ... God also surrenders them...,” all prove that God surrenders men to depravity and destruction as a result of their overt and continual rejection of Him and His revelation. Thus, man is not condemned because of some incomprehensible will and decree of God for the non-elect, or because the atonement is not available to all, but because of his own stubborn refusal even when illuminated and drawn by God to repentance.

³⁰ The action of the perfect participle, “having been filled,” precedes the action of the aorist indicative verb, “surrenders.” Thus, God abandons such people to total depravity after they have become filled with these things.

³¹ 2 Peter 3:5

³² It seems that Paul, after condemning the whole pagan Roman culture in the previous chapter, now turns his attention to the Roman synagogue which had become the antagonist of the Jewish believers in Rome. Paul’s argument in this chapter is against the members of the synagogue who opposed the “good message” of Christ, showing them to be hypocrites who will fare no better in the Day of the Master than the pagan nations.

³³ The religious Jews typically prided themselves on their adherence to the Law. Yet, as seen in those who constantly rejected Jesus, their hearts were filled with iniquity. The evil in the hearts of the pagans, which Paul had just listed in 1:29-31, was also found among the self-righteous Jews, including: injustice, greed, envy, contention, fraud, conspirators, slanderers, insulters, proud, boasters, ruthless, and unmerciful.

tolerance, and of His patience, ignorant that the benevolence of God is leading you³⁴ to repentance?³⁵ 5 Yet, according to the hardness of your unrepentant heart, you are accumulating for yourself wrath in the Day of Wrath³⁶ and of revealing the just judgment of God, 6 Who will repay to each according to his deeds.

7 Indeed to those, [who] through continuing in good deeds,³⁷ seek glory, honor, and immortality – age enduring life.³⁸

8 Yet, to those [who] from contention and stubbornness are unpersuaded of the truth, yet are persuaded to injustice – wrath and fury. 9 Tribulation and anguish on every human soul that produces evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek.

10 But glory and honor and peace to everyone practicing good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek, 11 (for there is no partiality with God).³⁹

God's Righteous Standard of Judgment

12 For as many as have sinned without the Law shall also be destroyed without the Law, and as many as have sinned in the Law shall be judged by the Law.⁴⁰ 13 For it is not the hearers of the Law who [will be considered] just before God, but the doers of the Law shall be justified.

14 For whenever the nations, having no Law, might do by nature the [essence] of the Law, these without the Law are law to themselves, 15 those who show the work of the Law written in the their hearts, their [collective] conscience witnessing together, and the collective reasoning among themselves, accusing or defending,⁴¹ 16 in the Day when

³⁴ God draws all to repentance (not only the “elect”), even those who end up condemned. Those to whom Paul referred here, who were being drawn to repentance, would instead become the subjects of God’s wrath on the Day of the Master (see vss. 5-6). Thus, God’s grace is not “irresistible.”

³⁵ The word “repentance” literally means to “reconsider” – to commit to a change of course.

³⁶ Zeph. 1:14-18

³⁷ Entering the “narrow gate” puts one on a path of discipleship which ultimately leads to permanent life (Matt. 7:13-14). A disciple of Christ is one who keeps Jesus’ commandments (Jn. 14:15,21; Jn. 15:10; 1 Jn. 2:3-4). Thus, those judged worthy of permanent life are those who not only have embarked on the journey of following Jesus, but who have successfully completed the journey, as demonstrated by “continuing in good deeds.”

³⁸ “Permanent life” is received by the righteous at the resurrection (see: Matt. 25:46; Mark 10:30; Luke 18:30; John 12:25; Rom. 6:22; Gal. 6:8; 1 Tim. 6:12,19; Titus 1:2, 1 John 2:25; Jude 1:21)

³⁹ 2 Chron. 19:7

⁴⁰ God holds people accountable only for the revelation He has given them (Luke 10:12; Luke 12:47-48; Acts 17:30-31).

⁴¹ The criteria by which the nations will be judged (who have no explicit Law from God) is the collective natural sense of morality which is evident across all cultural divides. This instinctive morality is a remaining reflection of God’s image in which man is created. John 1:9 states that the “true light” gives light to “every man coming into the world.”

God shall judge the secrets of men through Jesus Christ⁴² according to my Good Message.⁴³

The Blindness and Hypocrisy of the Unbelieving Jews

17 Look, you are called a “Jew,” and resting upon the Law and boasting in God, 18 and know the will, and discern the consequences, being instructed from the Law. 19 Besides, you have confidence in yourself to be a guide of the blind, a light to those in darkness,⁴⁴ 20 a trainer of the undisciplined, a teacher of children, having the form of knowledge and of the truth in the Law.

21 You, then – the one teaching another – are not teaching yourself! The one proclaiming, “*Do not steal,*” you steal! 22 The one saying, “*Do not commit adultery,*” you commit adultery! The one who abhors idols, you defile what is sacred! 23 [You] who boast in the Law, are devaluing [it] by side-stepping the Law! 24 For the name of God is being blasphemed among the nations because of you, just as it was written.⁴⁵

25 For circumcision is indeed advantageous if you should keep the Law. Yet, whenever you may be a side-stepper of the Law, your circumcision has become uncircumcision.

A Genuine “Jew”

26 Whenever, then, the uncircumcised should keep the justice of the Law, should not his uncircumcision be reckoned as circumcision? 27 And, the uncircumcised who is by nature completing [the obligations of] the Law shall judge you – the one having Scripture and circumcision [yet] are a side-stepper of the Law! 28 For what is apparent is not a “Jew,”⁴⁶ nor is circumcision [merely] what is seen in the flesh. 29 But the one in the hidden things is a “Jew,” and circumcision is of the heart,⁴⁷ in the breath, not in inscription,⁴⁸ whose praise is not from men but from God.

⁴² Luke 10:1-16; Luke 11:31-32; Luke 12:35-49

⁴³ The early Christian historian, Eusebius, stated: “*They say that Paul meant to refer to Luke’s Gospel wherever, as if speaking of some gospel of his own, he used the words, ‘according to my Gospel’.*” (Eusebius, History, Book III, ch. iv)

⁴⁴ God called Israel (Jacob) to be all these things (Isaiah 49:6). Yet, Israel failed, so the ultimate fulfillment is through Christians (Acts 13:47). Cf. also Isa. 49:10 & Rev. 7:16-17.

⁴⁵ Isaiah 52:5; Ezekiel 36:22-23

⁴⁶ The term, “Jew,” is an abbreviated form of “Judah” (which means “praise”).

⁴⁷ Circumcision was the physical sign of God’s election (Gen. 17:9-14; Deut. 7:6-8). It was a sign of Abraham’s trust in God’s promise (Rom. 4:11), thus a symbol of a heart purified by trust. God declared that one day He would circumcise the hearts of His people, Israel (Deut. 30:6). Circumcision of the heart is equated with repentance (Jer. 4:4). Circumcision of the heart is experienced by a repentant believer during his baptism, as a work of the holy Breath

Chapter 3

What then is the advantage of the Jew, or what is the benefit of circumcision?
 2 Much in every way, [but] indeed primarily because they were entrusted
 [with] the declarations of God.

A Paradox Arising from Israel's Unfaithfulness

3 But what if some were unfaithful? Will not their unfaithfulness undermine the
 faithfulness⁴⁹ of God?⁵⁰

4 Do not let it come to this!⁵¹ But, *"God is true,"*⁵² and *"every man is a liar,"*⁵³ just as it has
 been written: *"So that You should be justified in Your declarations and should prevail in Your
 judgments ..."*⁵⁴

5 Yet if our injustice exhibits the justice of God, what shall we conclude?

Not that God is unjust – the One bringing wrath (I speak as a man). 6 It cannot be thus!
 Or else, how will God judge the system?

7 For if the truth of God is magnified in my falsehood resulting in His glory, why am I
 still being condemned as a sinner?⁵⁵ 8 Also, [why] not [do] as we are slandered and as
 some claim that we say, that "we should do evil so that good may come," (whose
 condemnation is just).

9 What then? Do we [Jews] hold priority?⁵⁶ Absolutely not! For we previously proved
 Jews and also Greeks to be under sin.⁵⁷ 10 Accordingly it has been written, that *"... no
 one is just, not even one ... 11 no one is understanding; no one is seeking out God; 12 all avoid*

(Col. 2:11-13). Paul calls himself and his fellow Christians the true "circumcision" (Phil. 3:2). Circumcision was a token of the Abrahamic Covenant (Gen. 17:9-14), which is the hope of Christians (Gal. 3:16-18, 26-29; Heb. 6:13-20).

⁴⁸ This is likely a reference to the genealogical records kept by the Jews.

⁴⁹ Here again we have the Greek word, "πιστις" which is usually translated, "faith." It is better rendered "trust" (active sense) or "trustworthiness" or "faithfulness" (passive sense).

⁵⁰ Paul here addresses the Jews' primary objection to Christianity: If God had indeed forsaken Israel and was now gathering in the nations as His "elect" instead (see: 2:26-29), would He not be a covenant breaker?

⁵¹ Do not draw such a conclusion!

⁵² A direct quote of Deut. 32:4 LXX

⁵³ A direct quote of Psalm 116:11 LXX

⁵⁴ Psalm 51:4 LXX. The Hebrew of this Psalm reads, *"so that You shall be justified in Your declarations, and shall be innocent in Your judgments."* Paul followed the LXX reading, "prevail," instead of the Hebrew, "innocent."

⁵⁵ The Greek word means one who misses the mark, or falls short of the set standard.

⁵⁶ Do we Jews hold priority in exhibiting God's justice by our massive failures?

⁵⁷ In 1:18-32 Paul proved the pagan Greeks under the just condemnation of God; and in 2:1-24 Paul proved that the Jews were hypocrites and also under the just condemnation of God.

[Him]; they were altogether useless; no one is doing kindness, not even one! 13 Their throat is an open tomb; with their tongues they defraud; venom of snakes is under their lips; 14 whose mouth is crammed with cursing and bitterness. 15 Their feet are swift to shed blood; 16 crushing and wretchedness are in their ways; 17 and they do not know the way of peace; there is no fear of God before their eyes."⁵⁸

The Solution – The Law was Meant to Vindicate God's Justice, not Mans'

18 Yet, we have perceived that whatever the Law says, it speaks to those within the Law, so that every mouth may be blocked, and the whole system⁵⁹ may become condemned to God. 20 Because of this, no flesh at all shall be justified [resulting] from deeds of the Law. For through the Law is the full knowledge of sin.

God Intended to Deliver by Grace, through the Faithfulness of His Son

21 Yet now, apart from the Law, God's justice has been made apparent, (having been reported under the Law and the Prophets), – 22 the justice of God, through the faithfulness of Jesus Christ, unto all and upon all the trusting ones.⁶⁰ For there is no distinction, 23 for all sinned and lack the glory of God.

24 Being justified gratuitously by His grace, through the release that is in Christ Jesus, 25 (Whom God previously placed as the "atonement-seat,"⁶¹ through the trust in His blood as a token of His justice, through the excusing of sins previously committed by the tolerance of God),⁶² 26 [with a view] toward displaying His justice in the present era, in order for Him to be [both] just, and the one justifying the [trusting one] on the basis of⁶³ Jesus' faithfulness.

⁵⁸ This entire quote comes from Psalm 14:1-3 LXX. Most of this is missing in the Hebrew text, although fragments of it also appear in Psalm 5:9; Psalm 10:7; Psalm 36:1; Psalm 140:3; & Isaiah 59:7-8. As with Hebrews, where all of Paul's quotations came from the Septuagint, in Romans he also seems to have favored the Septuagint version (or else the ancient Hebrew of the time read like the LXX instead of the modern Masoretic text which may have been truncated.

⁵⁹ The context shows that Paul was using the term "κοσμος" (system) to refer to the Mosaic system – all those under the Law.

⁶⁰ The Greek verb "πιστευω" means more than merely "believe" (as it is usually translated). It means to trust, to consider someone to be faithful and trustworthy, to place complete confidence in that person.

⁶¹ The Greek word appears many times in the LXX, always in reference to the lid of the Ark of the Covenant upon which the high priest sprinkled the blood of the sacrificial goat on the Day of Atonement. It is also refers to this in the only other NT occurrence, Heb. 9:5.

⁶² Here Paul indicates that the "atonement-seat" on which the high priest sprinkled the blood on the Day of Atonement was itself a type of Christ, and that the former remission of sins was granted only through the reality – Christ's own blood.

⁶³ Lit. "out of"

27 What place then has boasting? It is excluded! By what sort of principle? Of deeds? No! But through the principle of trust! 28 We are reckoning accordingly a man to be justified in trust, apart from deeds of law.

29 Or is [He] the God of the Jews only, and not also of the nations? 30 Yes! Of the nations also, since "God is one"⁶⁴ who shall justify the circumcised out of trust and the uncircumcised through trust.⁶⁵ 31 Are we then undermining law through the Trust?⁶⁶ May it not be! But we are affirming law.⁶⁷

Chapter 4

Proofs from Old Testament Examples

What, then, shall we declare Abraham to have discovered, our father according to the flesh?⁶⁸ 2 For if Abraham was justified from deeds, he has [reason to] brag, but not to God. 3 For what does the Scripture say? Yet Abraham "*trusted in God, and it was credited to him unto justice.*"⁶⁹ 4 Yet to the laborer, the wage is not credited according to grace, but according to debt. 5 But to the one not earning, yet relying upon the One who justifies the ungodly, his trust is credited unto justice. 6 Even as David also speaks of the blessedness of the man to whom God credits justice without deeds: 7 "*Blessed are those whose transgressions have been pardoned, and whose sins have been covered!* 8 *Blessed is the man to whom the Master may not credit sin!*"⁷⁰

Justification through Trust is a Universal Principle

9 Is this blessedness, then, upon the circumcised [only]? Or [is it] also on the uncircumcised? (For we say that trust was credited to Abraham unto justice). 10 How then was it credited, [while] in circumcision or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision! 11 And he received the token of circumcision, a seal of the justice of [his] trust [while] in uncircumcision, for him to be the father of all the trusting ones,

⁶⁴ Deut. 6:4 LXX

⁶⁵ In verse 25 Paul spoke of a former "trust" in the blood of Christ through the Day of Atonement ritual. Thus, when Christ finally came, those of Israel who had previously hoped in the Christ are now justified "out of" [εκ] → a former trust. On the other hand, the nations, who had no such former trust in the redemptive act of God through the symbolism of the sacrifices, are now justified "through" [δια] → trust.

⁶⁶ Commonly called, "the Faith" as a reference to the whole body of Christian doctrine (with the definite article).

⁶⁷ Justification through trust in Christ does not make one "lawless" (as the unbelieving Jews charged the Christians), since Christ's commands are themselves "law" – the "Law of Christ" (Gal. 6:2).

⁶⁸ It is evident from this statement that Paul is appealing to fellow Jews, the physical sons of Abraham.

⁶⁹ Gen. 15:6 LXX

⁷⁰ Psalm 32:1-2 LXX

to credit them also unto justice through uncircumcision, 12 and the father of circumcision⁷¹ (not to the circumcised only, but also to those walking in the footsteps of our father Abraham in uncircumcised trust).

Inheriting the Land God Promised Abraham is through Trust not Law

13 For the promise to Abraham, or to his Seed,⁷² to be the inheritor of the system,⁷³ was not through the Law,⁷⁴ but through the justice of trust. 14 For if they are inheritors⁷⁵ by means of the Law, then trust has been voided,⁷⁶ and the promise nullified.⁷⁷ 15 (For the Law produces wrath; yet where there is no Law, neither is there an infraction).⁷⁸ 16 Therefore, [the fulfillment of the promise is] from trust, according to grace, to confirm the promise to all the “seed,” not only to those from the Law,⁷⁹ but also to those from the trust of Abraham, who is the father of all of us. 17 Accordingly it has been written that, “I have made you the father of many nations.”⁸⁰

⁷¹ Here Paul refers to the true “circumcision” of the heart which takes place in baptism. See Rom. 2:29 & Col. 2:11-13.

⁷² Paul makes it a point to speak of the promise to both Abraham and to his ‘Seed’ (who is Christ – Gal. 3:16). The only promise that God made to Abraham that was both to him personally and to his ‘Seed’, was the permanent land inheritance. (See Gen. 17:8; Acts 7:5).

⁷³ The Greek word is “κόσμος” – “an orderly arrangement.” This term is frequently used of human government, a particular civilization, or to humanity in general. Here it refers to the “new world order” when the dominion of the earth will be transferred to Jesus Christ and the holy ones (See: Psalm 37; Daniel 7:13-14,18). Since Christ is “Abraham’s Seed” to whom the Land inheritance was made along with Abraham, His coming Kingdom is seen as the fulfillment of the promise God made to Abraham, to give all the Land to him and to his ‘Seed’ who is Christ.

⁷⁴ Under the Law, Israel had only a conditional and temporary right to the Land God promised Abraham, if they kept God’s Law.

⁷⁵ The heirs of the Land promise that God made to Abraham and to his ‘Seed’

⁷⁶ God promised Abraham the Land as a permanent inheritance because of Abraham’s trust, which God credited to him as “justice.”

⁷⁷ Since God’s promise of the permanent Land inheritance to Abraham and to his ‘Seed’ was unconditional (a promise, not a conditional contract), the fact that Israel failed to keep the Law, and was subsequently ejected from the Land cannot undermine the unconditional promise God made to Abraham and his ‘Seed.’ This is why it was necessary for another ‘Seed’ to come out of Abraham’s loins that could partake of the permanent and unconditional promises. That ‘Seed’ is Christ and all who have been baptized into Him. (Gal. 3:16-29).

⁷⁸ It was infractions of the Law that disqualified Israel from retaining possession of the Land (Deut. 28-30). Thus, if the Law and its penalty are removed, there is no longer an obstacle to maintaining the permanent possession of the inheritance.

⁷⁹ Those who formerly lived under the Law, yet trusted God – like Moses, David, and the prophets

⁸⁰ Gen. 17:1-8

The Quality of Abraham's Trust

Facing this, he trusted God who raises the dead,⁸¹ and calls what does not exist as existing. 18 Who, being past expectation,⁸² trusted upon the expectation⁸³ for him to become the father of many nations, according to what had been declared, "*thus shall be your seed.*"⁸⁴ 19 And not being weak in trust, he did not consider his own body (already having been as good as dead – being about a hundred years old) and the deadness of Sarah's womb. 20 Yet, he did not doubt the promise of God in unbelief, but he was empowered by trust, giving glory to God, 21 and being fully persuaded that what He had promised He was capable of performing. 22 Through this it was credited to him as justice. 23 Yet this was not written because of him alone, (that [justice] was credited to him), 24 but also because of us to whom it is intended to be credited – those trusting upon the One who aroused Jesus our Master from among the dead, 25 (who was surrendered for our offenses, and was aroused for our justification).

Chapter 5

The Hope of the Glory of God

Having been justified⁸⁵ out of trust⁸⁶, we have peace toward God through our Master, Jesus Christ. 2 Through Him we have taken hold of the access (in trust) into this grace in which we have come to stand. And we brag upon the hope of the glory of God.⁸⁷

3 Yet not only this, but we even brag [about this hope] in severe hardships, having observed that the hardship produces endurance, 4 and endurance [produces] character, and character [produces more] hope. 5 Yet the hope does not humiliate, because the love of God has been poured into our hearts through the holy Breath having been given to us.⁸⁸

⁸¹ Abraham's trust in God's promises led him to conclude that God would make good on his promise to give Abraham that land by means of resurrection. This is why Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob insisted that their bones be buried in the holy Land.

⁸² Past expectation of having a child by natural procreation, due to his great age and Sarah's infertility

⁸³ The expectation of the fulfillment of God's promise

⁸⁴ Gen. 15:5

⁸⁵ Declared not guilty, pardoned

⁸⁶ Calvinists teach that trust is imparted when a person is justified by God. However, this clause indicates that God justifies us out of trust, making justification dependent on a prior trust.

⁸⁷ The "hope of the glory of God" is defined clearly in Rom. 8:18-25. See also Psalm 37.

⁸⁸ The holy Breath is the deposit on the inheritance, which is our hope (Eph. 1:13-14).

Reconciled to God through Christ

6 Even while [in] our weak condition, Christ died for the ungodly according to the appointed time.⁸⁹ 7 For rarely would anyone die for a just person. Yet for the good person someone might venture to die. 8 But God exhibits His love to us, that still being sinners, Christ died for us.

9 Much more accordingly, having been justified now in His blood, we shall be rescued from the wrath⁹⁰ through Him. 10 For if while being enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be delivered in His life.⁹¹ 11 And not only that, but [we are] also bragging in God through our Master, Jesus Christ, through whom we received the reconciliation.

*Death Reigns on Earth Now through Adam's Sin
But the Just Shall Reign in Life through Christ*

12 Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the system, and through sin death [entered], and thus death came to all men because all sinned, 13 (for until the Law [came] sin was in the system, yet sin is not credited without the Law present. 14 Still, death reigned from Adam to Moses even over those not sinning in the likeness of Adam's side-stepping), he is a symbol of the impending One. 15 But the gift is not like the offence [in this way]: For if the many⁹² died because of the offence of the one, much greater the grace of God and the gracious gift in the one Man, Jesus Christ, overflows unto the many.⁹³ 16 Also the gift is not like the result of the one failure.⁹⁴ For indeed the judgment resulting in condemnation extends from one [failure]. Yet the gift extends to justification from many offences. 17 For if death reigns [now]⁹⁵ by the offense of one, much more those receiving the superabundance of grace and of the gift of justification shall reign⁹⁶ in life⁹⁷ through the One, Jesus Christ. 18 Consequently then, just as

⁸⁹ The time of Christ's death was appointed by God and revealed to Daniel. (Dan. 9:24-26).

⁹⁰ Psalm 37

⁹¹ See: John 14:19; Rom. 6:5,8

⁹² Paul used the term "the many" as a reference to the sons of God. (See vs. 19).

⁹³ Paul's point is to draw a comparison between Adam and Christ in the manner in which the actions of one affect "the many" (who are the sons of God). However, he then drew a distinction in the effect. Those who sin according to Adam's sin, receive the same punishment. But, those who receive the benefit of Christ's gift do so superabundantly.

⁹⁴ That is, Adam's sin which resulted in the curse on the whole race.

⁹⁵ While the aorist indicative usually implies a past action (if that action is an event), it is sometimes used to encapsulate something in its entirety which takes place over a long period of time. In such cases, the proper form in English is present tense. The context seems to demand this usage here.

⁹⁶ They shall reign in the future Kingdom.

through one offense the sentence⁹⁸ comes to all mankind, in the same way through one just act for all mankind⁹⁹ comes justification of life.¹⁰⁰

19 For even as through one man's disobedience the many were designated sinners,¹⁰¹ thus also, through the obedience of the One, the many¹⁰² shall be designated just ones.

20 Yet, the Law came alongside so that the offense should increase.¹⁰³ But where sin increased, grace was overflowing 21 so that even as sin reigned in death,¹⁰⁴ so also grace might reign through justice into permanent life,¹⁰⁵ through Jesus Christ our Master.

Chapter 6

Our Death in Baptism is the Condition for the Resurrection

What then shall we say? Shall we persist in sin so that grace might increase?¹⁰⁶
 2 May it not be! How can we who died to sin continue to live in it? 3 Or are you ignorant that all of us who were immersed into Christ Jesus¹⁰⁷ were

⁹⁷ Resurrection

⁹⁸ The sentence passed upon the whole human race was physical death. The sentence was established because of Adam's sin, yet is carried out on his posterity because we also sin (vs. 12). Notice that Paul interpreted God's threat to Adam, "in the day that you eat thereof you shall surely die," as physical death. (Adam died within one millennial "Day" at 930 years old).

⁹⁹ Christ died for all mankind. The Calvinist doctrine of "Limited Atonement" is overthrown by this verse.

¹⁰⁰ That is, being declared just in order to take part in the first resurrection and reign with Christ.

¹⁰¹ That "the many were designated sinners" does not imply that Adam's guilt was transferred to all his descendants, as the Augustinian doctrine of "original sin" claims. Rather, since Adam's disobedience was adjudicated with the sentence of death, a judicial precedent was set. We were therefore also designated "sinners" and sentenced to death on the same grounds. Likewise, since Christ paid the sentence for all mankind in His atoning death, all who are in Christ will be designated "just," a requirement for inheriting the earth in the age to come (Ps. 37:28-29).

¹⁰² Here Paul used the adjective "many" as a substantive in the masculine gender (with the definite article and without modifying another noun). The use of "the many" as a substantive is rare. It appears in Romans first in verse 15. Yet, Paul clearly defined the term for us in Rom. 12:5. "Thus we, *the many*, are one body in Christ." (See also: 1 Cor. 10:17,33). Thus the first group which he called "the many" (who were formerly designated sinners) are the same people as the second group "the many" (who will be designated just). He was speaking about Christ's followers in both cases, "the elect," comparing their former condition with their future glory. Notice the distinction between "the many" in verse 19 and "all mankind" in verse 18. Jesus also used the same term (the many) for His followers in Matt. 24:12, "Because iniquity shall abound, the love of *the many* shall grow cold. But the one enduring to the end shall be delivered."

¹⁰³ It is not that God desired sin to increase, but rather that sin might be clearly defined and magnified by the Law.

¹⁰⁴ Sin reigns in death in the present age.

¹⁰⁵ In the age to come, grace will reign in the just Kingdom of Jesus Christ characterized by permanent life.

¹⁰⁶ Paul dealt here with the objection of the unbelieving Jews against the Christians mentioned in Rom. 3:8 "Also, [why] not [do] as we are slandered and as some claim that we say, that 'we should do evil so that good may come,' (whose condemnation is just)."

¹⁰⁷ Water baptism is the mechanism for joining the believer to Christ (see: Acts 2:38; 1 Cor. 12:13; Gal. 3:26-29).

immersed into His death? 4 We were therefore buried together with Him through immersion into death,¹⁰⁸ so that exactly like Christ was aroused from among the dead, through the glory of the Father, thus we also might follow in renewal of life.¹⁰⁹

5 For if we have been planted¹¹⁰ together in the form¹¹¹ of His death,¹¹² indeed we also shall be [in the form] of the resurrection, 6 knowing this: that our old human was crucified together,¹¹³ so that the body of sin¹¹⁴ might be rendered impotent, no longer to enslave us to sin. 7 For the one who died¹¹⁵ has been justified from sin. 8 Now if we died together with Christ,¹¹⁶ we believe that we will also live together with Him,¹¹⁷ 9 having observed that Christ (having been aroused from among the dead) is no longer dying – death no longer has jurisdiction over Him. 10 For to whatever He died, He died to sin once.¹¹⁸ Yet, to whatever He lives, He lives to God. 11 In the same manner also you, consider yourselves to be dead indeed to sin,¹¹⁹ but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Master.¹²⁰ 12 Do not, therefore, permit sin to dominate in your dying body,¹²¹ to hearken to it in its longings. 13 Neither be volunteering your body-parts to sin for implements of injustice. But be volunteering yourselves to God, (just like the living from among the dead),¹²² and your body-parts as implements of justice to God. 14 For sin will not dominate you; for you are not under Law but under grace.

15 What then? Shall we sin because we are not under Law but under grace? May it not be! 16 Have you not observed that you are slaves to whomever you volunteer

¹⁰⁸ Col. 2:12,20

¹⁰⁹ Walk in resurrected life (in the resurrection), after being raised from the dead bodily exactly as Jesus was.

¹¹⁰ In 1 Cor. 15:42-45, Paul used the metaphor of the body being “planted” in the hope of reaping the resurrection. Here he shows that the “planting” is done in water baptism, with the reaping occurring at the resurrection.

¹¹¹ Immersion is a like representation of Christ’s death (vs. 2)

¹¹² Baptism is the symbol of Christ’s death.

¹¹³ Gal. 2:20

¹¹⁴ Our body corrupted by sin and under the penalty of death

¹¹⁵ The one who has been baptized into Christ’s death

¹¹⁶ If we were baptized

¹¹⁷ 2 Tim 2:11

¹¹⁸ That Christ “died to sin” cannot mean that He stopped sinning, since He never sinned. Rather, once He was crucified, the wages of our sin (death) no longer had any power over him. Once He was resurrected “death” had no power over Him anymore.

¹¹⁹ In the same way that Christ “died to sin” we are to reckon ourselves “dead to sin” – that the ultimate penalty (death) no longer has power over us because of the hope of resurrection.

¹²⁰ Baptized believers are to live in a reality that does not yet exist, as though already resurrected in the Kingdom. Our resurrected life and immortality currently resides in Him (See: 2 Cor. 4:11; 2 Cor. 5:1; Phil. 3:20-21; Col. 3:4).

¹²¹ The body is dying because of sin and the curse – death (Gen. 2:16-17; Gen. 3:19; Rom. 5:12)

¹²² Col. 3:1

yourselves for obedience as slaves? You are slaves of whoever you obey, whether of sin [leading] to death, or of obedience [leading] to justification.

17 Yet thanks be to God that you used to be slaves of sin, but from the heart you hearkened to the kind of teaching you were given. 18 And having been freed from sin, you were enslaved to justice. 19 (I am speaking as a man¹²³ because of the weakness of your flesh). For exactly as you volunteered your body-parts as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness for lawlessness, in this way now volunteer your body-parts slaves to justice for purity. 20 For when you were slaves of sin, you were free from justice. 21 What fruit therefore did you have at that time, about which you are now ashamed? For indeed, the end result of those things is death. 22 Yet now, having been freed from sin and having been enslaved to God, you have your fruit unto purity. And the end result is permanent life. 23 For the salary of sin is death.¹²⁴ But the gift of God is permanent¹²⁵ life, in Christ Jesus our Master.

Chapter 7

Baptism Compared to a Second Marriage Covenant

Or are you ignorant, brothers, (for I am speaking to those who know the Law), that the Law dominates the person¹²⁶ as long as they live? 2 For the married¹²⁷ woman has been bound to the living husband by law. Yet, if the husband should die, she has been released from the law of the husband. 3 Consequently then, she will be called an adulteress of the living man if she should become [joined] to

¹²³ Using human metaphors and human reasoning

¹²⁴ In Paul's writings, the final destiny of the wicked is always "death," to "perish" (Rom. 2:12), or "destruction" (Rom. 9:22) which he defines as "permanent extermination" (2 Thess. 1:9). While the Greeks (esp. Plato) claimed that the soul of man was immortal (from which they inferred the transmigration of souls – reincarnation), according to Paul, God alone has immortality (1 Tim. 6:16). He grants "immortality" only to some (Rom. 2:8) based on what they do with the Gospel (2 Tim. 1:10). He decrees "death" to the rest. Paul always presents the destiny of the righteous and the wicked as a choice between "death" and "permanent life." There is no hint of God's tormenting the wicked forever in Paul's writings.

¹²⁵ The Greek word "αιωνιαν" (usually translated "eternal" or "everlasting") does not mean that the implied action continues forever (perpetual), but rather the result of the action is forever (permanent). See 2 Thess. 1:9 & Jude 1:7.

¹²⁶ There are two Greek words for "man" – "ανθρωπος" and "ανδρος." The former can refer to an individual man, or to mankind generally inclusive of both male and female. The latter, however, always refers to a man (a male as distinguished from a female), and is usually employed if the writer is referring to a married man. Here, the term used is "ανθρωπος," while in the rest of the passage (vss. 1-3) "ανδρος" is used, referring to the husband. Consequently, here it refers to both genders being bound to each other, not only the man. The use of the masculine pronoun is normal in Greek when referring to both genders together.

¹²⁷ The Greek word is "υπανδρος" (literally, "under man")

another husband. Yet, should the husband die, she is free from the law of the [husband], to be no adulteress [when] becoming [joined] to a different man.

4 Similarly my brothers, you also became dead to the Law through the body of Christ, for you to become [joined] to another – the One aroused from among the dead – so that we should be bearing fruit to God.

5 For when we were in the flesh, the passions of sins (those through the Law) were operating in our body-parts to produce fruit unto death. 6 Yet now we have been released from the law of death in which we were being held, so as to yoke us in renewal of breath, and not to obsolete script.¹²⁸

The Law Reveals Our Failures

7 What then shall we say? That the Law is sin? May it not be! Rather, I did not understand sin except through the Law. For I had not even observed coveting except the Law said, “You shall not covet.” 8 Yet sin, gaining an opportunity through the commandment, produced in me all covetousness. For without Law sin is dead.

9 I lived apart from Law once, but when the commandment came, sin became alive and I died. 10 And it was found that the commandment which was [intended] for life, this was to me for death. 11 For sin, gaining opportunity through the commandment, seduced me and through it killed me. 12 Therefore the Law is holy, and the commandment is holy and just and good. 13 Has death become good to me? May it not be! Rather, sin, so that it might appear sin, is producing death through what is good, so that sin may become exceedingly sinful through the commandment.

*The Futile Struggle with the Law for Those Still Walking in the Flesh*¹²⁹

14 For we have observed that the Law is pneumatic,¹³⁰ yet I am fleshly,¹³¹ having been sold¹³² under sin. 15 For I do not know what I am doing! I am not practicing that which I

¹²⁸ The Marriage covenant of the Law is now “obsolete script” for those joined to Christ.

¹²⁹ Verses 14-25 refer to the old nature which is still able to defeat us if we allow it. This section deals with the pitiful state of a struggling believer who has yet to follow Paul’s instructions in Rom. 6:10-23, to stop volunteering his body parts to sin and instead keep on volunteering his body parts to justice until he becomes a slave to justice and freed from the old master.

¹³⁰ Of the Breath of God

¹³¹ Still carrying the body of flesh with its appetites for things that are contrary to God

¹³² I am “fleshly” (following the appetites of the body), having been sold as a slave to sin who remains the master because the Christian allows it. This is our natural tendency unless you “consider yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Master.” (Rom. 6:11)

am willing [to do]. But I do what I hate! 16 Yet if I am doing that which I am not willing [to do], I am conceding that the Law is good. 17 Yet I am no longer doing it, but the sin residing¹³³ in me. 18 For I have observed that good does not reside in me (that is in my flesh). For the willingness is with me, yet I cannot find the [means] to accomplishing the good. 19 For I am not doing the good which I am willing [to do], but I am practicing the evil which I am unwilling [to do]! 20 Yet if I am doing that which I am unwilling [to do], I am no longer doing it, but the sin residing in me [is doing it]. 21 Consequently, I find this principle: That in my willingness to do the good, the evil is lying beside me. 22 For I am delighted with the Law of God according to the inward man. 23 Yet I see a different law in my body-parts raging war against the law of my mind, leading me captive to the law of sin which is in my body-parts. 24 What a miserable man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death?¹³⁴ 25 [It is] through Jesus Christ our Master! I give thanks to God! In summary, then, I am myself indeed serving the Law of God in the mind,¹³⁵ yet the law of sin in the flesh.

Chapter 8

The Victorious Life & Hope of Those Walking in the Holy Breath

Consequently,¹³⁶ nothing is now condemning to those in Christ Jesus. They are not walking according to flesh, but according to the Breath.¹³⁷ 2 For the law of the “Breath of life”¹³⁸ in Christ Jesus¹³⁹ has freed me¹⁴⁰ from the law of sin and

¹³³ The Greek word means to fully occupy a dwelling. “*The dwelling of sin in man denotes its domination over him ... [it is] no passing guest, but by its continuous presence becomes the master of the house.*” (TDNT, Vol. V, p. 135). Compare Rom. 8:9 where the Breath of Christ fully occupies the same space instead of sin, being the master of the house.

¹³⁴ Or “who will rescue me from this corpse?” Paul likely referred here to the ancient practice of torture, where a corpse was bound to the back of a prisoner, until its rotting, maggot-infested flesh began to consume the living flesh of the prisoner, until he also died.

¹³⁵ Rom. 12:1-3

¹³⁶ In light of having been freed from the Law and joined to Christ (Rom. 7:1-5)

¹³⁷ The “Breath” is given in baptism (Acts 2:38).

¹³⁸ The Greek word πνευμα literally means “breath” or “wind.” This clause seems to be a play on the creation account, where God breathed into Adam the “breath of life” and he became a living soul. In Rev. 11:11 exactly the same clause which appears here refers to the “breath of life” which the two witnesses received after being killed. (See also: Job 27:3; Job 32:8; Job 33:4).

¹³⁹ There is a “Breath of life” in Christ Jesus beyond the normal “breath of life” which animates all men.

¹⁴⁰ This occurs at baptism (Rom. 6:4-6).

death. 3 For the inadequacy of the Law, in which it was weak because of [our] flesh, God, sending His own Son in the form of sinful flesh,¹⁴¹ and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh¹⁴² 4 so that the justice of the Law may be filled up in us – the ones not walking according to flesh but according to the Breath. 5 For those being in accord with flesh are inclined from the flesh. But those [being] in accord with the Breath [are inclined from] the Breath. 6 For the inclination of the flesh [leads to] death, but the inclination of the Breath [leads to] life and peace. 7 This is because the inclination of the flesh is hostility unto God, for it is not in subjection to God’s Law, neither is it able [to be]. 8 So those in flesh¹⁴³ are not able to please God. 9 However, you are not in flesh but in the Breath,¹⁴⁴ if indeed the Breath of God is residing¹⁴⁵ in you. Yet if anyone does not have¹⁴⁶ the Breath of Christ¹⁴⁷ he is not Christ’s. 10 But if Christ [is] in you,¹⁴⁸ indeed the body is dead¹⁴⁹ through sin, yet the Breath is life¹⁵⁰ through justice.¹⁵¹ 11 And if the Breath of the One who aroused¹⁵² Jesus from among the dead is residing in you, the One who aroused Jesus from among the dead will also bring to life your dying bodies through His Breath residing within you. 12 Consequently then, brothers, we are not debtors to the flesh, to be living in accord with the flesh. 13 For if you are living in accord with the flesh you are about to die, but if with the Breath you are killing the habits of the body, you shall live! 14 For all those being led by the Breath of God, these are sons of God. 15 For you did not receive¹⁵³ a breath of slavery again, [leading] to fear, but you received the Breath

¹⁴¹ Because Jesus assumed a human body, He was assuming a fallen and therefore sinful substance – flesh. This does not mean He sinned, but rather He carried in His flesh the plague of sin which is so powerful over man’s will – yet without actually sinning (Heb. 2:9-18 & Heb. 4:15).

¹⁴² Sin was condemned “in the flesh” of Jesus Christ when His body of flesh was crucified.

¹⁴³ “In flesh” is an abbreviated way of saying “in accord with the flesh.”

¹⁴⁴ In accord with the new Breath of God received at baptism

¹⁴⁵ The Greek term means to fully occupy a house as the master of the house. See note on Rom. 7:17 for the counterpart – Sin – as master of the house.

¹⁴⁶ The holy Breath is given to every repentant believer at baptism (Acts 2:38-39). Thus, every child of God has a measure of the Breath of God in him.

¹⁴⁷ Paul used the terms “Breath of God” and “Breath of Christ” interchangeably in this verse (see John 14:15-23).

¹⁴⁸ Paul refers to the Breath being in us as Christ in us, since it is also the Breath of Christ (vs. 9).

¹⁴⁹ The death sentence which comes with the curse will still claim our bodies.

¹⁵⁰ The Breath dwelling in us is life itself.

¹⁵¹ This seems to refer back to Rom. 1:17. The body will die because of sin and the curse, but the holy Breath within will bring life in the resurrection for the just.

¹⁵² The Greek word means to arouse from sleep.

¹⁵³ at your baptism

of adoption in which we call the Father, “Abba.”¹⁵⁴ 16 The same Breath jointly proclaims along with our breath that we are the children of God.

The Inheritance of the Sons of God

17 And if [we are] children, [we are] also inheritors,¹⁵⁵ indeed [we are] God’s inheritors and Jesus Christ’s co-inheritors,¹⁵⁶ even if we jointly suffer so that we may also be jointly glorified. 18 For I consider that the sufferings of the present appointment are not comparable to the glory about to be revealed unto us. 19 For the anticipation of the creation is awaiting the revealing of the sons of God. 20 For the creation was subjected to futility,¹⁵⁷ not voluntarily, but through the One who subjected it in hope, 21 because the same creation shall be released from the slavery of corruption¹⁵⁸ unto the freedom of the glory of the children of God. 22 For we have observed that all creation groans in unison, and travails in unison, until now. 23 Yet not only this, but we ourselves, having the first-fruits¹⁵⁹ of the Breath, we also groan in ourselves awaiting the adoption, the redemption of our body. 24 For we were rescued in this hope.¹⁶⁰ Yet, if hope is seen it is not hope. For if someone [already] sees, why is he also hoping? 25 But if we are hoping for what we do not [yet] see, we await it through endurance. 26 And similarly the Breath also assists our frailty. For we have not perceived what we should pray, according to what is necessary. But the same Breath intercedes over us¹⁶¹ with unspoken sighing. 27 And the One searching the hearts has perceived what the inclination of the Breath is, because in accord with God it engages over the holy ones.

God’s Commitment to Us

28 Now we have observed¹⁶² that everything works together for good for those loving God, (those being called in accord with His proposal¹⁶³); 29 [and] that those whom He

¹⁵⁴ A Hebrew term of endearment for a father, similar to the English term “daddy”

¹⁵⁵ This term refers specifically to the permanent land promise of the Abrahamic Covenant. See: Gal. 3:15-18, 26-29

¹⁵⁶ Jesus Christ is the inheritor of the nations and all the Land that God promised to Abraham and his ‘Seed’ (who is Christ). See: Psalm 2; Gal. 3:16.

¹⁵⁷ Gen. 3:17-19

¹⁵⁸ Deut. 32:43 LXX; Isa. 34; Isa. 65:17-25; Isa. 66:10-13,22-24; Rev. 22:3

¹⁵⁹ The “Breath of life” through Christ first produces holiness before it gives life to our mortal bodies in the resurrection.

¹⁶⁰ The “hope” contained in the Gospel, for which we were baptized, is the resurrection of the body to an inheritance on the restored earth.

¹⁶¹ The Breath of Christ (vss. 9-10) is interceding over us (cf. vs. 34 & Heb. 7:25).

¹⁶² The term is the perfect tense form of the verb meaning to “see.” It refers to what is known by observation.

knew previously¹⁶⁴ He predefined¹⁶⁵ [to be] fashioned¹⁶⁶ from¹⁶⁷ the image of His Son, for Him to be the firstborn¹⁶⁸ among many brothers.¹⁶⁹ 30 And whom He predefined,¹⁷⁰ these He also called.¹⁷¹ And whom He called, these He also justified.¹⁷² And whom He justified, these He also glorified.¹⁷³

31 What then shall we say [in response] to these things?¹⁷⁴ If God is for us, who is against us? 32 Surely the One not sparing His own Son, but gave Him for us all, how shall [He] not also together with Him grant everything¹⁷⁵ to us?

33 Who will bring charges against God's chosen ones? God is the justifier! 34 Who is the one judging? Christ is the one who died, yet rather was also aroused, who is also at the right [side] of God,¹⁷⁶ who also intercedes over us.

35 Who shall separate us from the love of the Christ? Tribulation? Or distress? Or persecution? Or famine? Or nakedness? Or danger? Or sword? 36 According as it has been written that, *"For Your sake we are killed all day long, we are accounted as sheep of the slaughter."*¹⁷⁷ 37 But in all these things we are conquering beyond, through the One having loved us. 38 For I have become convinced that neither death, nor life, nor

¹⁶³ The term means something laid out before another. Here it refers to the Abrahamic Covenant laid out before Abraham by God.

¹⁶⁴ The Greek word does not mean to have knowledge of something before it exists, as it is interpreted by Calvinists. Rather, it means to know someone previously, as demonstrated by Paul's use of the term in Acts 26:4-5 *"My manner of life from my youth, which was spent from the beginning among my own nation at Jerusalem, all the Jews know. They **knew me from the first**, if they were willing to testify, that according to the strictest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee."* Those whom God knew previously were men like Abraham and David, examples that Paul used in chapter 5. God had an intimate relationship with Abraham, and because of this, He appointed him to the following things. (God previously knew Abraham intimately: Gen. 18:17-20).

¹⁶⁵ The Greek word is a compound of "prior" and "boundary."

¹⁶⁶ Paul was referring to the resurrection of the body here, not to molding of character. In Phil. 3:21, the only other place this term appears in the New Testament, it refers to our bodies being transformed in the resurrection like Christ's resurrected body.

¹⁶⁷ Most translations have "conformed to." If this was the meaning, "image" would be in the dative case. Instead, it is in the genitive case, meaning from.

¹⁶⁸ Paul used "firstborn" here not for order of physical birth, but of the resurrection to permanent life. (See: Col. 1:18; Rev. 1:5).

¹⁶⁹ See Hebrews 9:15

¹⁷⁰ Predefined for resurrection

¹⁷¹ God called Abraham (Heb. 11:8-9).

¹⁷² God justified Abraham (Rom. 4:1-8)

¹⁷³ God glorified Abraham (Gen. 12:2-3). The word "glorified" means to bestow honor upon someone.

¹⁷⁴ God has already proven His commitment to His people in the past, Abraham and David being perfect examples.

¹⁷⁵ God will not fail to grant to us everything that He has promised – the resurrection and the inheritance.

¹⁷⁶ Paul alluded here to Psalm 110, where Christ is seated at the right of God acting as our priest *"according to the order of Melchisedek"* (Heb. 7:25).

¹⁷⁷ Psalm 44:22

messengers, nor rulers, nor powers, nor imminent things, nor impending things, 39 nor height, nor depth, nor any other creation¹⁷⁸ shall be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Master.

Chapter 9

Paul's Sorrow for Israel's being Set Aside

I am telling the truth in Christ. I am not lying, my conscience testifying together with me in the holy Breath, 2 that my sorrow is great and my heart is continually pained. 3 For I had been wishing myself to be excommunicated from Christ over my brothers, my fellow-countrymen according to the flesh, 4 who are Israelites, whose [are] the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the Law-giving, and the divine-service,¹⁷⁹ and the promises; 5 whose [are] the fathers, and out of whom is the Christ (according to the flesh), the One being above all, blessed God¹⁸⁰ unto the ages, amen!

Why God Chose Baptized Christians to Complete the Abrahamic Covenant

6 Yet, it is not as though the word of God has failed. For not all those out of Israel¹⁸¹ are Israel.¹⁸² 7 Neither because they are Abraham's seed¹⁸³ [are they] all [his] children,¹⁸⁴ but "*in Isaac shall be called to you seed.*"¹⁸⁵ 8 That is, the children of the flesh – these are not the children of God, rather the children of the promise¹⁸⁶ He accounts for seed. 9 For the word of promise was this: "*According to this set time*¹⁸⁷ *I will return, and Sarah shall [have] a son.*"¹⁸⁸

¹⁷⁸ It is a mistake to conclude from this passage the impossibility of departing from God. All of the things listed are external to the believer, and act against his will. (See: Rom. 11:21-22).

¹⁷⁹ The Priesthood

¹⁸⁰ The deity of Christ is strongly affirmed in this statement. Without the definite article, "God" here refers to His essence or substance rather than to a particular identity. See: John 1:1-2.

¹⁸¹ That is, not all who came from the loins of Israel (Jacob) are reckoned as "Israel."

¹⁸² Reckoned to be "Israel" as the heirs of the promises to Abraham and his "seed."

¹⁸³ Literally, "sperm"

¹⁸⁴ There is a contrast being drawn here between "seed" which is only a potential child, and actual "children" who are rightful heirs (see: Rom. 8:17).

¹⁸⁵ Gen. 21:12

¹⁸⁶ "The promise" refers to the Abrahamic Covenant promise, that the Land would be given to Abraham and to his "Seed" as a permanent inheritance (Gen. 17:8; Psalm 105:9-12)

¹⁸⁷ That is, this same time next year. The LXX reads, "*according to this set time, to the hour, I will return...*"

¹⁸⁸ Gen. 18:14

10 Yet not only this, but also Rebecca conceived from one, of Isaac our father.¹⁸⁹ 11 For not yet having been born, not yet practicing any good or evil, so that according to God's choice the proposal¹⁹⁰ might continue,¹⁹¹ (not from deeds, but from the One calling), 12 it was declared to her that *"the older shall serve the younger."*¹⁹² 13 Accordingly¹⁹³ it has been written, *"I loved Jacob, but I hated Esau."*¹⁹⁴

14 What then will we declare? Not that there is injustice with God! May it not be! 15 For He says to Moses, *"I will be merciful to whomever I may be merciful, and I will pity whomever I pity."*¹⁹⁵ 16 Consequently then, it¹⁹⁶ is not through the determined one, nor yet through the pursuing one, but of God¹⁹⁷ – the One being merciful.

17 For the Scripture says to Pharaoh that *"unto this same [purpose] I raised you up, that I should display in you my power, and that My name should be heralded in every land."*¹⁹⁸

18 Consequently, then, He is merciful to whomever He determines. Yet He hardens whomever He determines.¹⁹⁹

¹⁸⁹ In the case of Abraham, the seed of promise (Isaac) and the seed according to the flesh (Ishmael) came from two different women – Sarah and Hagar. Lest some might suppose that the inheritance is determined by the mother, Paul also demonstrated that not even all of Sarah's descendants are children of promise. Isaac's descendants were twins from the same mother (Rebecca), yet Esau and his descendants were rejected, and Jacob and his descendants were chosen to carry the covenant.

¹⁹⁰ See Rom. 8:28

¹⁹¹ That is, the Abrahamic Covenant might continue from generation to generation to its fulfillment in that one "Seed" who is Christ (Gal. 3:16), and ultimately in the realization of the inheritance in the Kingdom (Rom. 8:17-27).

¹⁹² Gen. 25:22-23 The election was not to permanent salvation or damnation, but to God's using one nation above the other to accomplish His plan.

¹⁹³ In accord with the nation of Esau (Edom) serving the nation of Jacob (Israel) it has been written by Malachi ...

¹⁹⁴ Malachi 1:2-3 This was written long after Jacob and Esau had become great nations. It was not spoken about the boys before they were born, but about the nations that they had become. God explained that He had shown special favor to Jacob's descendants and displeasure upon Esau's descendants, not for permanent salvation and damnation, but in bringing about His purposes in the earth through the nation of Israel. Malachi continues by showing that Jacob's descendants had rebelled against God, and were under condemnation. Ultimately, God will discern between the righteous and wicked of Jacob's descendants. The wicked descendants of Jacob will be ashes under the feet of the righteous, who will inherit the Land (Mal. 3:16 – 4:3).

¹⁹⁵ Gen. 33:19 In the context, God was explaining why He was allowing Moses to see His glory but no one else.

¹⁹⁶ This refers back to verse 11, the way in which God chooses to "continue" the Abrahamic Covenant to its ultimate fulfillment, whether using Isaac instead of Ishmael, Jacob instead of Esau, or the Apostles and gentile churches instead of the Jewish nation.

¹⁹⁷ The sense is that the continuation of the "proposal" (Abrahamic Covenant) over the centuries does not depend on human perseverance, but on God's choosing of whom He will use to carry out His plan.

¹⁹⁸ Exod. 9:16 Israel is here compared to Pharaoh – hardened – and that God's name will now be proclaimed in every land by the calamity that was soon to overtake Jerusalem, and by the proclamation of Christians dispersed throughout the earth.

¹⁹⁹ God alone decides through whom He will work out His covenants and promises. Instead of Israel being the conduit to bring the Abrahamic Covenant to completion, God has chosen to use Christians instead. God has hardened Israel, and now has mercy on the nations.

Paul Answers His Jewish Critics

19 [No doubt] you will protest to me, “Why does He still accuse? For who has withstood His determination?” 20 Indeed, O man,²⁰⁰ who are you to contradict God? The thing shaped will not speak to the one who shaped it, “Why did you make me like this?” 21 Or does not the potter have authority over the clay, from the same lump to make a vessel valuable indeed, yet also a worthless [vessel]?

22 Yet if God intending to demonstrate His wrath and to make His power known, carries in great patience the vessels of wrath having been adapted for destruction,²⁰¹ 23 [it is] so that He may make known the wealth of His glory upon the vessels of mercy, which he prepared for glory – 24 us whom He also called, (not only out from the Jews,²⁰² but also out from the nations), 25 just as also in Hosea He says: *“I will call the ‘not-My-people’ ‘My-people,’ and the ‘not-having-been-loved’ [I will call] the ‘having-been-loved.’”*²⁰³ 26 And *“It will be in the location²⁰⁴ where it was declared to them you are not My people, there they will be called sons of the Living God.”*^{205 206}

27 Yet, Isaiah calls out over Israel, *“If the number of the sons of Israel should be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be delivered. 28 For a concluding word, and cutting short in justice, because a cutting-short word the Master shall work upon the Land.”*²⁰⁷ 29 Also accordingly, Isaiah previously declared, *“If the Master of armies had not set aside a seed for us, we might have become like Sodom, and we might have been compared to Gomorrah.”*²⁰⁸

30 What then shall we say? That the nations who do not pursue justice acquired justice which is from trust? 31 Yet Israel, pursuing a law of justice, does not attain to a law of justice? 32 Why? Because [they pursue] not from trust, but as from works of law. For they tripped over “the stumbling stone.” 33 Accordingly as it has been written: *“Look! I am placing in Zion a stone of stumbling, and a rock of scandal, and all the ones believing in Him shall not be disgraced.”*²⁰⁹

²⁰⁰ The Greek word is “ανθρωπος” which answers to the Hebrew “adam” meaning “of dust.”

²⁰¹ The Jewish nation destined for destruction by the Roman armies, fulfilled in AD70. See Luke 19:41-44.

²⁰² Technically, the term “Jews” (Judeans) refers to people of the southern kingdom of Judah (and Benjamin).

²⁰³ Hosea 2:23

²⁰⁴ This refers to the Valley of Jezreel, Megiddo, see: Hosea 1:4-5

²⁰⁵ Hosea 1:10

²⁰⁶ This whole passage in Hosea refers to the 10 northern tribes of Israel, disbursed during the Assyrian captivity.

²⁰⁷ Isa. 10:22-23

²⁰⁸ Isa. 1:9

²⁰⁹ Paul combined two passages here, Isaiah 8:14-15 & Isaiah 28:16

Chapter 10

Jesus Christ is the Personification of Justice in the Law

Indeed, brothers, the desire of my heart and [my] petition towards God over Israel is for [their] deliverance. 2 For I testify to them that they have zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. 3 For being ignorant of the Justice of God, and seeking to establish their own justice, they were not submissive to the Justice of God.²¹⁰ 4 For Christ was the objective²¹¹ of the Law unto justice to all the believing ones.²¹² 5 For Moses writes of the justice from the Law, that the “Man²¹³ doing these [things] shall be alive through them.”²¹⁴

6 And the justice from trust says this: “Do not say in your heart, ‘Who will ascend into heaven’?”²¹⁵ (That is to bring Christ down). 7 Or “‘Who shall descend into the deep’?”²¹⁶ (That is to bring Christ out from among the dead). 8 But what does it say? “The message is near you, in your mouth and in your heart,”²¹⁷ this is the message of trust which we are proclaiming. 9 That if you should covenant with your mouth Master Jesus, and you should believe in your heart that God awakened Him from among the dead, you shall be delivered. 10 For in the heart it is believed unto justice, and in the mouth it is covenanted unto deliverance. 11 For the scripture says, “all the ones believing in Him shall not be disgraced.”²¹⁸ 12 For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek. For the same Master of all is rich unto all those calling²¹⁹ Him to themselves. 13 For, “Whoever should be calling to themselves the name of the Master²²⁰ shall be delivered.”²²¹

²¹⁰ “Justice” is personified in Jesus Christ. See: 1 Cor. 1:30

²¹¹ The Greek word means the intended fulfillment.

²¹² The objective of the Law was not to establish one’s own righteousness by perfect obedience, but to point to the only one who could measure up to its just standard.

²¹³ Paul adds the definite article “the man doing them” – referring this passage to Jesus Christ as that perfect Man who fulfilled the justice and judgments of the Law.

²¹⁴ This is a direct quote of Leviticus 18:5 LXX, “And you shall keep all My ordinances and all My judgments, and do them, which a man doing shall have life in them.” Throughout the Law, continued life and the permanent possession of the Land inheritance was through perfect obedience to the Law. “You shall follow what is altogether just, that you may live and inherit the land which the LORD your God is giving you.” (Deut 16:20).

²¹⁵ Deut. 30:12-13

²¹⁶ Paul interpreted Moses’ words, which were spoken about the Word of God, to Jesus Christ. The implication is that Moses wrote of Jesus Christ in veiled language.

²¹⁷ Deut. 30:14

²¹⁸ Isaiah 28:16 (see Rom. 9:33)

²¹⁹ The Greek word means to “surname” using the middle voice – hence to take the name of another to one’s self. Here it refers to people taking to themselves the name of Jesus Christ – to be called by His name – a Christian.

²²⁰ Surnaming one’s self after Jesus Christ is done in baptism. “And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling to yourself the name of the Master.” (Acts 22:16)

²²¹ Joel 2:32

The Good News of the Kingdom

14 How then will they call to themselves to Whom they have not believed? And how will they believe [the message] of Whom they have not heard? And how will they hear without a preacher? 15 And how will they preach unless they are commissioned?²²² Accordingly it has been written, *“How beautiful are the feet of those announcing peace, those announcing good things?”*²²³

Israel’s Obstinacy

16 But not all obey the good news. For Isaiah says, *“Master! Who has believed our announcement?”*²²⁴ 17 Consequently, trust comes from hearing, and hearing²²⁵ [comes] through the proclamation of God.²²⁶

18 I say, however, did they not hear? Certainly! *“Into every land went forth their speech, and unto the ends of the inhabited world went forth their message.”*²²⁷ 19 But I say, did Israel not know? First, Moses says, *“I will provoke you over a non-nation. I will vex you over an ignorant nation.”*²²⁸ 20 And Isaiah is very bold and says, *“I was found by those who did not seek Me, I became apparent to those not inquiring of Me.”* 21 But to Israel he says, *“All day long I have held out My hands to an obstinate and contradicting²²⁹ people.”*²³⁰

²²² The Greek word is the verb form of the word “Apostle.” It refers here to Jesus’ commissioning the eleven and Paul for this task. Thus, Paul was taking the following statement from Isaiah and applying it to Jesus’ Apostles.

²²³ Isaiah 52:7 This entire chapter is about the Gospel of the Kingdom, the eventual restoration of Jerusalem. And this is the message that Paul and the other Apostles proclaimed.

²²⁴ Isaiah 53:1 It is significant that Isaiah used the first person plural (our report) rather than the first person singular (my report). This shows that Isaiah expected his message of the Suffering Messiah to be heralded by others besides himself. Paul’s citation of this passage in this context shows that Paul considered himself part of those with beautiful feet proclaiming the good message along with Isaiah himself.

²²⁵ Since Paul did not write “hearing the proclamation” but “hearing [comes] through the proclamation,” he was contrasting physical hearing (in the previous clause) with really “hearing” – that is receiving the message. Isaiah also said that Israel “hears” but do not really “hear” (Isaiah 6:9-10). Jesus quoted this passage also in reference to Israel’s not really “hearing” because their hearts were dull (Mark 4:11-12), thus Jesus’ frequent statement, *“He who has ears to hear, let him hear.”*

²²⁶ That is through the Gospel as announced by the Apostles. See Rom. 1:16.

²²⁷ Psalm 19 – the Gospel message proclaimed in the heavens for all to see, told in the sequence of signs of the Zodiac, which the Jews called “Mazzaroth” (Job 38:32).

²²⁸ This is quoted from the Song of Moses (Deut. 32:21), and referenced again in Romans 11:11,14.

²²⁹ The Greek term has the sense heckling, to publically dispute what God says.

²³⁰ Isaiah 65:1-2

Chapter 11

God's Rejection of Israel is Temporary

I am asking then, has God cast off His people? May it not be! For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin.

2 God did not cast off His people whom He knew previously.²³¹ Or have you not observed what the Scripture says? In Elijah's pleading with God concerning Israel, he says, "*Master! They have killed Your prophets and torn down Your altars, and I was left alone, and they are seeking my life!*"²³² 4 But what was the divine response? "*I have reserved to Myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal.*"²³³ 5 In the same way, then, a remnant according to the choosing of grace has been established in this time also.

6 (Yet if it is in grace, it is no longer from works. Or else grace is no longer really grace. But if grace is no longer from works, then work is no longer work).²³⁴

7 What then [am I saying]? Israel did not encounter what it sought after. But the election encountered it and the rest were calloused, just as it had been written, "*God gave to them the breath of slumber, eyes not to see, ears not to hear*"²³⁵ until the day – "*Today.*"²³⁶ 9 And David says, "*Let their table become a trap, and a snare, and a stumbling stone, and retaliation*"²³⁷ to them. *Let their eyes be darkened to not see, and their back stooped together continually.*"²³⁸

11 I ask then, did they stumble so that they should [utterly] fail? May it not be! Rather, in their failure the deliverance [comes] to the nations, to provoke them to jealousy. 12 And if their failure is the prosperity of the system, and [if] their emptying is prosperity of the nations, how much rather their fullness?

Paul's Warning to the Non-Israelites

13 Now to you non-Israelites I say, (as I am indeed an Emissary to the nations), I am flaunting my position if perhaps I might provoke [to jealousy]²³⁹ those of my flesh, and

²³¹ Paul referred here to God's faithfulness to those of His people in ancient times who were faithful to Him.

²³² 1 Kings 19:10

²³³ 1 Kings 19:18

²³⁴ That is, external "works" are no longer a valid way of gaining God's favor as His chosen conduit through which He will fulfill His promises.

²³⁵ Isaiah 29:10

²³⁶ Psalm 95:7 (See also Hebrews 3:7 – 4:10 LGV & commentary notes).

²³⁷ That the hardening of Israel was "retaliation" to them proves that God does not harden people arbitrarily. Rather, it is God's reaction to their own stubbornness.

²³⁸ Psalm 69:22-23

²³⁹ Deut. 32:20-22; Rom. 10:19

rescue some of them. 15 For if their rejection [means] the restoration of the system, what would recovering [some be], except life out from among the dead?

16 Now if the first-grain is holy, so also is the dough.²⁴⁰

*The Parable of the Olive Tree*²⁴¹

Also, if the root is holy, so also are the branches. 17 But if some of the branches were broken off, and you – being a wild olive – were grafted among them, and you became a joint-partaker of the root and of the richness of the olive tree, you must not flaunt [yourself as] of the branches. But if you flaunt [yourself], you are not carrying the root. The root is carrying you! 19 Will you then proclaim, “The branches were broken off so that I could be grafted in?” 20 Truthfully! They were broken off because of disbelief. Yet you have stood in trust. Do not be arrogant, but be fearful. 21 For if God did not spare the natural branches, neither may He spare you! 22 Observe, then, the kindness and the harshness of God: harshness indeed on the falling ones, yet kindness upon you if you should remain within the kindness. Otherwise, you also will be cut off.

23 But those also, if they no longer remain in disbelief, will be grafted in. For God is able to graft them in again. 24 For if you were according to nature cut from a wild olive tree, and contrary to nature were grafted into the good olive tree, how much rather will these – the natural ones – be grafted into their own olive tree?

Israel’s Eventual Deliverance from Exile

25 For I am unwilling for you to be ignorant of this mystery, brothers, so that you should not be over-confident among yourselves. Because partial hardening has been done to Israel until the fullness of the nations should come about,²⁴² 26 and thus all Israel shall be delivered. Accordingly it has been written, “*The Deliverer shall arrive from Zion, and He shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob.* 27 *And this is the covenant from Me to them,*”²⁴³ (whenever I should take away their sins). 28 Indeed, according to the good news they are enemies because of you.²⁴⁴ But according to the choosing, they are

²⁴⁰ This refers to the loaves offered to God at the Temple during the day of First-Fruits, (Lev. 23:9-11; Ezek. 44:30).

²⁴¹ The Olive Tree parable is drawn from Jeremiah 11:16-17 (the good olive tree – Israel) and Jeremiah 12:1-12 (the wild olive trees – the heathen nations).

²⁴² Luke 21:24

²⁴³ Isaiah 59:20-21 LXX

²⁴⁴ Unbelieving Israel became enemies of God so that the nations might be delivered.

beloved because of the patriarchs.²⁴⁵ For the gifts and the invitations of God are irrevocable.

30 For just as you also were once disbelieving in God yet now you were shown mercy in their disbelief, thus also these [are] now disbelieving in this mercy of yours so that they also may be shown mercy. 32 For God together-encloses all into disbelief so that He may be merciful to all.

Paul's Hymn of Praise

33 O the depth of wealth, and of wisdom, and of knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable are His ways! 34 For who has known the mind of the Master? Or who became His advisor? 35 Or who gave to Him first and [it] must be repaid to him? Because everything is from Him, and by Him, and unto Him! To Him be the glory unto the ages, Amen!

Chapter 12

Our Personal Responsibility

Accordingly, brothers, I implore you by God's mercies to present your bodies a living sacrifice, separated, well pleasing to God, [which is] your logical divine service. 2 And do not be together-molded to this age, but be transformed with the renewal of your mind, so that you can discern what is the good, well-pleasing, and complete will of God.

Our Collective Responsibility

3 For by the grace given to me, I am saying to everyone who is among you not to be overly disposed beyond what is necessary to be disposed, but to be disposed appropriately to each one, as God distributes a portion of a trust.²⁴⁶

4 For just as we have many members in one body, yet the members do not have the same function, 5 in the same way we are one body in Christ, and accordingly members of each other.

6 Yet having various gifts according to the grace that was given to us:

if prophecy, [in prophesying] according to the full measure of the trust;

7 if service,²⁴⁷ in the serving [according to the full measure of the trust];

²⁴⁵ God's covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob cannot be annulled (Psalm 105:8-10).

²⁴⁶ The 'trust' is that which God has entrusted us, the portion of one's pneumatic gift. (See Luke 19:11-27)

if teaching, in teaching [according to the full measure of the trust];
8 if exhortation, in exhorting [according to the full measure of the trust];
the sharer, with generosity [according to the full measure of the trust];
the presiding,²⁴⁸ with diligence [according to the full measure of the trust];
the compassionate, with cheerfulness [according to the full measure of the trust];
9 the loving, in sincerity, detesting what is wicked, being joined to the good.
10 [Do this being] fondly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, preferring the
value of one another, 11 with diligence, not slothful, fervent in breath, serving the
Master, 12 rejoicing in the expected Hope, persevering with prayer in the tribulation,²⁴⁹
13 contributing to the needs of the consecrated ones, pursuing hospitality.

A Refresher of the Sermon on the Mount

14 Bless those who persecute you;²⁵⁰ bless and do not curse. 15 Rejoice with those
rejoicing; mourn with those mourning. 16 Be mutually disposed to one another, not
being disposed to what is elevated, but carried towards the lowly. Do not become
preoccupied with yourselves.

17 Do not return evil for evil to anyone.²⁵¹ Model what is good before all men. 18 If
possible, as much as it depends on you, be at peace with everyone. 19 Do not avenge
yourselves, beloved, but differ to the vengeance [of God], for it has been written:
“Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,”²⁵² says the Master. 20 So if your enemy is hungry, feed
him. If he is thirsty, give him a drink. For by doing this, you will heap embers of fire on
his head.²⁵³ 21 Do not be defeated by what is evil, but defeat what is evil with what is
good.

²⁴⁷ The role of a “deacon”

²⁴⁸ The role of a “bishop” (overseer)

²⁴⁹ The use of the definite article here implies that Paul was referring to the particular “tribulation” that Jesus warned about in Matthew 24.

²⁵⁰ Matt. 5:11,44

²⁵¹ Matt. 5:38-48

²⁵² Deut. 32:35

²⁵³ The “embers of fire” placed upon the head of the wicked in this context likely refers to marking wicked persons for the wrath of God, by demonstrating the contrast between your right behavior and their bad behavior.

Chapter 13

Subjection to Proper Authority

Every soul, subject yourselves to the higher authorities. For there is no authority except from God.²⁵⁴ And the authorities that do exist have been set under God. 2 Therefore, the one resisting has defied the authority prescribed by God. And those who have defied [the authority] shall receive judgment to themselves.

3 For governors are not a terror for good deeds, but for evil [deeds]. Yet, you are not meant to fear the authority. Do good and you will have praise from it. 4 For it is God's servant for your good. Yet, if you should do evil, be afraid. For it does not wear the sword for nothing. For it is God's servant, a dispenser of punishment to the one who practices evil. 5 Because of this, it is necessary to be in subjection, not only because of punishment, but also because of conscience.

6 This is also why you pay taxes. For they are officials of God performing for this same [purpose]. 7 Therefore, give to all what is owed: to the one [owed] tax, [pay] the tax; to the one [owed] a sum, [pay] the sum; to the one [owed] reverence, [give] reverence; to the one [owed] honor, give [honor]. 8 Do not owe²⁵⁵ anything to anyone, except to love one another. For the one loving the other has fulfilled the Law. 9 For the [commandments]: "You shall not commit adultery;" "You shall not murder;" "You shall not steal;" "You shall not bear false testimony;" "You shall not covet;"²⁵⁶ likewise any other commandment, the saying is summed up in this: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."²⁵⁷ 10 Love does not do evil to a neighbor. Thus, the completion of the Law is love.

The Impending Night

11 This also, having observed the time, because now is the hour for us to awaken from sleep. For now our deliverance is nearer than when we [first] trusted. 12 The night is fast approaching,²⁵⁸ and the Day²⁵⁹ has drawn near, we should put on the armor of light.²⁶⁰

²⁵⁴ All legitimate authorities have been instituted by God. This includes the family, the local church, and human government. This statement does not include illegitimate authorities, such as gangs, organized crime, etc.

²⁵⁵ Do not be delinquent, or default, or be indebted to anyone.

²⁵⁶ Exodus 20:13-17

²⁵⁷ Lev. 19:18; Matt. 22:39-40

²⁵⁸ The "night" refers to "the tribulation" (Rom. 12:12, Matt. 24:15ff).

²⁵⁹ The "Day" is the coming Kingdom of Jesus Christ (cf. 2 Peter 1:19)

²⁶⁰ Eph. 6:10-18

13 We should walk honorably as in the daytime,²⁶¹ not in partying and drunkenness, not in promiscuity and sensuality, not in quarrelling and anger, 14 but put on the Master, Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the desires of the flesh.

Chapter 14

Do not Offend with Your Freedom

Receive the one who is weak in the Trust, but not for disputations of debate. 2 One indeed trusts to eat anything. Yet the weak one eats vegetables. 3 The one eating [anything] must not despise the one not eating; and the one not eating [anything must not despise] the one eating. 4 Who are you to judge someone else's servant? He is standing or falling to his own Master. Yet, he will be made to stand, for God is able to [make him] stand. 5 One indeed values one day above [another] day. Yet someone else esteems every day. 6 The one honoring the day is honoring it to the Master. And the one not honoring the day, to the Master he is not honoring it. The one eating [anything] is eating to the Master, for he thanks God. And the one not eating [anything] is not eating to the Master and thanks God. 7 For no one of us lives to himself [alone]; and no one dies to himself [alone].²⁶² 8 For if we live, we live to the Master; and if we die, we die to the Master. If we should live of it we should die, we are the Master's in both. 9 For this purpose Christ also died and arose: so that He might become Master of the dead and of the living.

10 So why do you judge your brother? Or why do you also deride your brother? For we will all stand before the tribunal of Christ. 11 For it has been written, "*As I live, says the Master,*"²⁶³ "*that to me every knee shall bow and every tongue confess to God.*"²⁶⁴ 12 Consequently, then, each one of us shall give an account of himself to God. 13 Therefore, we should no longer judge one another, but rather determine this: not to set a hurdle or a trap for your brother.

14 I have perceived and been convinced in the Master Jesus that nothing is common²⁶⁵ by itself, except to the one deeming anything to be common, it is common to him.

²⁶¹ "As in the daytime" refers to as though we were already in the Kingdom which Paul just referred to as "the Day."

²⁶² That is, the way we live and the way we die affects many other people.

²⁶³ Numbers 14:21

²⁶⁴ Isaiah 45:23 LXX

²⁶⁵ The Greek word used here is not *ακαθαρος* (unclean), but *κοινος* (common). It is the same term used in Acts 2:44 & Acts 4:32 for the early Christians having all things "common." This term is the converse of "holy" which literally means set apart for a special unique purpose (not for common use). Eating certain foods that were "common" for the nations were forbidden for the Jews under the Law. However, these "common" foods had been approved by God for

15 Yet, if your brother is in distress because of [your] food, you are no longer walking according to love. Do not destroy the one for whom Christ died by your food. 16 Therefore, do not allow your good to be slandered. 17 For the Kingdom of God is not [about] eating and drinking, but [about] justice and peace and joy in the holy Breath. 18 For the one serving the Christ in these things is pleasing to God and approved to men. 19 Consequently then, we should pursue peace and what builds up one another. 20 Do not demolish the work of God because of food. All [foods] are clean, but it is evil to the man who eats with offence. 21 It is best not to eat meat, nor to drink wine, nor [anything] through which your brother is offended, or snared, or weakened. 22 You have trust, have it to yourself before God. Blessed is the one not condemning himself in what he approves. 23 But the one discriminating, if he should eat, has been condemned because he did not [eat] from trust. And all that is not from trust is sin.

Chapter 15

Follow Christ's Example

Yet we, the strong, are obligated to carry the apprehensions of the weak, and not to please ourselves. 2 Be agreeable – each of us – to [our] neighbor for good, toward building [him] up. 3 For Christ also did not please Himself, but in accord with what has been previously written: *“the heckling of those heckling You fell upon Me.”*²⁶⁶ 4 For whatever was previously written was written for our teaching, so that we might possess the Hope,²⁶⁷ through the resolution and the consolation from the Scriptures.²⁶⁸

5 Yet may the God of resolution and consolation give to you the same [good],²⁶⁹ to have an interest in one another according to Christ Jesus' [example], 6 so that with the same passion, with one mouth, you may glorify the God and Father of our Master, Jesus Christ. 7 Therefore, receive one another just as Christ received us into the glory of God.

the nations in general (Gen. 9:3-4). At the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15:29), Gentile Christians were given permission to continue eating non-kosher (common) foods. But they were forbidden from eating blood (just as God commanded Noah) and from eating meat sacrificed to idols. The latter would be considered “unclean,” but non-kosher would be considered “common.” Thus, we should not make the mistake of assuming that Paul in this passage considered meat offered to idols to be acceptable if one simply deems it to be acceptable.

²⁶⁶ Psalm 69:9

²⁶⁷ “The Hope” (with the definite article) refers to the Abrahamic inheritance (see vs. 8).

²⁶⁸ Hebrews 11 does exactly this: provides a list of examples of men and women of trust, who will receive the inheritance promise to Abraham because they persevered in trust.

²⁶⁹ The neuter gender of the pronoun “the same” has as its antecedent the neuter “the good” in verse 2.

The Reign of Jesus Christ

8 Yet I declare that Jesus Christ became a servant of circumcision for the truth of God in order to confirm the promises of the Patriarchs.²⁷⁰ 9 Yet the nations are [also meant] to glorify God for His mercy. For it has been written: *“For this reason I will avow to You among the nations, and play²⁷¹ to Your name.”*²⁷² 10 And again He says: *“Rejoice you nations with His people!”*²⁷³ 11 And again: *“Praise the Master all the nations, and applaud Him all the peoples.”*²⁷⁴ 12 And again, Isaiah says: *“There shall be the Root of Jesse, and the One standing up to be head of the nations. On Him the nations shall hope.”*²⁷⁵ 13 And may the God of the Hope fill you with all joy and peace to be faithful, that you should excel in the Hope by the power of the holy Breath.

Paul’s Preaching and Dispensing Pneumatic Gifts to the Nations

14 Now I myself have been persuaded concerning you, my brothers, that you are overflowing with goodness, having been filled with all knowledge, also being able to admonish each other. 15 Yet more confidently I wrote to you, brothers, partly as reminding you over again,²⁷⁶ because of the benefit, the one given to me under²⁷⁷ God 16 – for me to be an official of Jesus Christ unto the nations, officiating²⁷⁸ the good message of God, so that the offering of the nations may become acceptable, having been ceremonially purified by the holy Breath.²⁷⁹

17 I have, therefore, in Christ Jesus a boast [about] the things which are toward God. 18 For I will not dare to speak of anything that Christ did not perform through me in word and deed, for the obedience of the nations, 19 – in the power of signs and miracles, in the power of God’s Breath²⁸⁰ – to have filled up the good message of Christ from

²⁷⁰ The Abrahamic Covenant

²⁷¹ Ψαλλω – to strum or pluck the strings of an instrument, or to perform an instrumental arrangement with or without the voice.

²⁷² Psalm 18:49

²⁷³ Deut. 32:43

²⁷⁴ Psalm 117:1

²⁷⁵ Isaiah 11:10

²⁷⁶ Reminding them of his intention to travel to Rome to dispense pneumatic gifts to them (Rom. 1:8-12)

²⁷⁷ The benefit entrusted to Paul under God’s authority – to dispense pneumatic gifts through his hands

²⁷⁸ To serve as a priest in the holy things

²⁷⁹ That the Breath of God ceremonially purified the offering of the nations is first seen in Peter’s encounter with Cornelius and his household. This “purification” of nations was accomplished by the dispensing of pneumatic gifts (Acts 10:44-48). Peter later recalled this event as: *“So God, who knows the heart, acknowledged them by giving them the holy Breath, just as He did to us, and made no distinction between us and them, **purifying** their hearts in trust”* (Acts 15:8-10).

²⁸⁰ Mark 16:20; Heb. 2:3-4

Jerusalem all around unto Illyricum.²⁸¹ 20 Yet, thus being ambitious to proclaim the good message, not where Christ is [already] named (so that I would not build on another's foundation), 21 but in accord with what has been written, *"To those not informed about Him, they shall see, and those who have not heard shall understand."*²⁸²

Paul's Intention to Visit Rome

22 Therefore I was also hindered greatly in coming to you. 23 Yet now, having no more quarter in these regions,²⁸³ and having a desire to come to you for many years, 24 whenever I may be going [all the way] to Spain, I will come to you. For I expect, while passing through [Rome], to see you and to be sent there by you, if first I may be filled up in part by you.

25 Yet, now I am going to Jerusalem, dispensing to the holy ones. 26 For [the churches of] Macedonia and Achaia were pleased to provide a contribution to the poor holy ones in Jerusalem. 27 For they were delighted, and [they] are their debtors. For if the nations shared in their pneumatic things,²⁸⁴ they are obliged also to serve them in fleshly things. 28 Upon finishing this, then, and sealing to them this fruit, I will come by you into Spain. 29 Yet I have perceived that [by] coming to you, I shall be coming with that which fills²⁸⁵ of the blessing of the good message of Christ.

30 I am pleading with you, brothers, through Jesus Christ our Master, and through the love of the Breath, to struggle together with me in prayers to God for me, 31 so that I would be rescued from the unfaithful ones in Judea, and so that my service into Jerusalem may be well received by the holy ones, 32 so that I may come to you in joy by the will of God and be refreshed together with you. 33 And the God of peace [be] with all of you, amen.

²⁸¹ Illyricum was a Roman province between Italy and Greece, what is today Croatia, Bosnia Herzegovina, and Serbia. Thus, Paul had proclaimed the Gospel from Jerusalem all the way to the border of Italy.

²⁸² Isaiah 52:15 LXX

²⁸³ No more place to preach the Gospel where the Gospel had not already been preached

²⁸⁴ The blessings and inheritance of the Abrahamic Covenant, (see Rom. 4:1-25).

²⁸⁵ This is a reference to the pneumatic gifts that Paul intended to dispense to the Romans through his hands when he finally arrived there in person, (see Rom. 1:8-15 & 15:17-19). That pneumatic gifts were dispensed through the holy Breath by means of the hands of the Apostles, (see Acts 8:18 & 2 Tim. 1:6).

Chapter 16

Commendation of the Messenger

I commend to you Phoebe²⁸⁶ our sister, being²⁸⁷ a deaconess²⁸⁸ of the congregation in Cenchrea,²⁸⁹ 2 so that you may receive her in the Master, worthy of the holy ones, and may stand with her in whatever business she should require of you. For she also became an assistant of many, and also of me.

Salutations to Members of the Roman Congregation

3 Greet Priscilla and Aquila,²⁹⁰ my fellow workers in Christ Jesus, 4 (who, for the sake of my soul, risked their own necks, to whom not only I am thankful, but also all the congregations of the nations), 5 and the congregation according to²⁹¹ their house.

Greet Epanetus, my dear one, who is the first-beginning of Achaia²⁹² into Christ.

6 Greet Miriam, who labors much for us.

7 Greet Andronicus and Junia, my relatives and co-captives, who are famous among the Emissaries,²⁹³ who also have become in Christ before me.

8 Greet Amplias, my dear one in the Master.

9 Greet Urbanus, our co-worker in Christ, and Stachys, my dear one.

10 Greet Apelles, the tested in Christ.

Greet the [descendants] of Aristobulus.

11 Greet Herodion, my relative,

²⁸⁶ Phoebe carried the letter of Paul to the church in Rome.

²⁸⁷ Paul used the present participle form of the word “being” (continuous ongoing action), which strongly implies that “deaconess” was her ongoing role – an official office.

²⁸⁸ δῆκονον – the feminine form of the word translated “deacon.” It means a female servant. It is used only here and in verse 27 in the New Testament. However, “deaconesses” may have been in view in Paul’s instructions for “deacons” when he wrote: “Likewise the women also must be reverent ...” (wrongly translated as “their wives”) in 1 Tim. 3:11.

²⁸⁹ Cenchrea was a small harbor town on the south-east outskirts of Corinth, in Greece. This is where Paul took a Nazarite vow, when accompanied by Priscilla and Aquilla (Acts 18:18).

²⁹⁰ Priscilla and Aquila were apparently Jewish – Christian natives of Corinth. They are most likely the ones who started the church at Rome, perhaps after being converted by the preaching of Peter on the Day of Pentecost. They later were expelled from Rome under the decree of Claudius and returned to Corinth, where they gave Paul lodging while he preached in that city. They also accompanied him to Ephesus, where Paul left them to minister to that congregation (Acts 18:18-28). After Claudius’ banishment of Jews from Rome expired, they returned and again flourished in this congregation. Since Paul saluted them first of the members of the Roman congregation, it is apparent that they were very highly regarded.

²⁹¹ This expression probably means that the congregation met regularly in their house.

²⁹² A province of Greece, just northwest of Corinth

²⁹³ Andronicus and Junia were not Emissaries (Apostles) themselves, but were highly regarded by the Emissaries of Christ.

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Greet the [descendants] of Narcissus, those who are in the Master.

12 Greet Tryphena and Tryphosa, [who are] laboring in the Master.

Greet Persis, the dear one, who labors much in the Master.

13 Greet Rufus, the chosen one in the Master, and his mother and mine.

14 Greet Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermas, Patrobas, Hermes, and their brothers with them.

15 Greet Philologos and Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas and all the holy ones together with them.

16 Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the congregations of Christ greet you.

Shun the Heretics

17 I implore you, brothers, to note those [causing] division and scandal, away from the teaching which you learned, and shun them. 18 For such [people] do not serve our Master, Jesus Christ, but their own belly. Through flattery and eloquence they seduce the unsuspecting. 19 For your obedience has been rumored unto all. Therefore I rejoice over you. Yet I am willing for you to be wise indeed, into what is good, and undiluted to what is evil. 20 Yet the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet²⁹⁴ suddenly.²⁹⁵

The grace of our Master, Jesus Christ, [be] with you, Amen.

Salutations from

21 Timothy, my co-laborer, sends greetings, also Lucas, Jason, and Sosipater, my relatives.

22 (I, Tertius, who transcribed this letter, greet you in the Master).

23 Gaius, my host, who also [hosts] the whole congregation,²⁹⁶ sends greetings.

Erastus, the administrator of the city, and Quartus, the brother, send greetings.

24 The grace of our Master, Jesus Christ, [be] with you all, Amen.²⁹⁷

Benediction

25 To the One who is able to establish you according to my Good Message,²⁹⁸ and Jesus Christ's preaching²⁹⁹ in accord with the revealing of the mystery,³⁰⁰ (having been

²⁹⁴ Gen 3:15

²⁹⁵ ταχος – in a brief space of time – see Rev. 1:1 & 22:6

²⁹⁶ Apparently the church in Corinth met in the home of Gaius.

²⁹⁷ Some manuscripts omit verse 24.

²⁹⁸ This statement (My Gospel) refers to the version of the Gospel preached by Paul and recorded by Luke, his companion. (See note on Rom. 2:16). Luke's Gospel contains a written record of Jesus' preaching.

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concealed in past ages,³⁰¹ 26 yet now revealed through the prophetic writings³⁰² according to the decree of the permanent God, made known unto all the nations for obedience of trust), 27 to the only wise God [be] glory, through Jesus Christ, unto the ages, Amen.

(Written from Corinth; [brought] to the Romans by Phoebe, deaconess of the congregation in Cenchrea).

²⁹⁹ This is subjective genitive (Jesus' preaching) rather than objective genitive (preaching about Jesus). This refers to Jesus' preaching as recorded in Luke's Gospel. Dispensationalists claim that Paul's "my Gospel" and "the preaching of Jesus Christ" are the same thing, both referring to the message about Christ. Granville Sharp's 6th rule governing the use of the definite article and the copulative (καί) indicates that these are different things.

³⁰⁰ It was through Jesus' own preaching to His disciples on the day of His resurrection that the "mystery" was first revealed, (See Luke 24).

³⁰¹ Matt. 13:10-17; 1 Pet. 1:10-12

³⁰² When Jesus fully revealed the mystery to His disciples on the day of His resurrection, He did so out of the "prophetic writings" – Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms, (Luke 24:27, 32, 44-45).