

# Romans.

## A translation.





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The cover exhibits a plaster fresco portrait of the baker T. Terentius Neo and his wife. The original is located at the Naples National Archaeological Museum in Naples, Italy, invoice number 9058.

This portrait was discovered in the ruins of Pompeii. It was located on the wall of the home of Terentius Neo (VII, 2,6) Pompeii was destroyed by the eruption of Mount Vesuvius on August 24, AD 79. Both Pompeii and the city of Herculaneum were completely destroyed and buried under heavy layers of ash. This home was excavated by Giuseppe Fiorelli from 1863 to 1868.

Terentius holds a papyrus scroll. He wears a traditional Roman toga. His wife grasps a stylus and wax tablet. They operated a bakery from their home. They represent a type of prosperous Roman couple that corresponds to the patrons Akula and Priscilla, who work together (Acts 18:2-3), own their own home, and provide support for the church (Romans 16:3-5).

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## Romans.

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### **I write to Rome.**

*I am Paul.*

I am Paul, a slave of the messiah, Jesus. I am his chosen delegate. God appointed me to preach his good news. He promised the good news by his prophets through the holy scriptures.

The good news concerns his son. He descended from David physically. The holy spirit powerfully declared him to be God's son. This is because of the resurrection from the dead. He is Jesus the messiah, our lord.

We gained favor through him. He designated us for faithful obedience. We proclaim his name among all the gentiles. You live among them. Jesus the messiah also chose you.

I write to you who live in Rome. You are loved by God. You are chosen. You are holy. We wish you favor and peace from God, our father, and from the lord, Jesus the messiah.

*I thank my God for you.*

But first, I thank my God for each of you through Jesus the messiah. The whole world has heard about your faith. God is my witness: I serve him with my life. I tell the good news about his son.

I consistently mention you. I always get in my prayers: Somehow, if God permits, may I finally succeed in visiting you? I really want to see you. I want to share a spiritual gift with you. It will strengthen you. This will encourage you because of the mutual faith we share.

I do not want you to be unaware, brothers: I often intended to visit you. Something has prevented it even up to this moment. I want to bear some fruit in you, just like I have with the rest of the gentiles. I have an obliga-

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*I write to Rome.*

*I thank my God for you.*

tion to both Greeks and foreigners, wise and uneducated. I am eager to bring the good news to those of you in Rome.

I am not ashamed of the good news. It is God's power for salvation to all believers. This applies first to the Jew, but also to the gentile. The good news completely reveals God's righteousness by *faith*. Just like it says,  
The righteous man lives by faith.<sup>a</sup>

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## There is only one God.

*God will show his Anger.*

God will show his Anger from heaven against all the ungodly and wicked men. They block the truth with their wickedness.

The existence of God should be clear to them. God made it clear to them. Since the creation of the world, he made his invisible qualities visible. The created things should be able to see these qualities. This is his eternal and divine power. They have no excuse.

They knew God. However, they did not honor or thank him as God. Their thinking was vain. Their dull hearts became dark. They claimed to be wise. However, they really were foolish. They changed the wonder of the immortal God into a copy of a mortal image: a man, birds, animals, or reptiles.

*God handed them over.*

God handed them over to their lustful hearts. They degraded their own bodies with impurity. They traded God's truth for a lie. They worshiped and served the creation instead of the creator. Praise him forever. Truly!

God handed them over to disgraceful lust. Females traded their normal behavior for abnormal.

Similarly, males also abandoned normal behavior with a female. Men burned with desire for each other. Men did shameful things with other men. They received a reward that corresponds to their perversity.

They preferred not to acknowledge God. So, God handed them over to a warped mind. They chose what is inappropriate.

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a) Habakkuk 2:4.



They were filled with of all kinds of wickedness, evil, greed, and malice. They were full of envy, murder, rivalry, deceit, and meanness. They were gossipers, slanderers, God-haters, rude, arrogant, and boastful. They were scoundrels, disobedient to parents, senseless, disloyal, heartless, and merciless. They know God's justice: Those who live like this deserve death. They not only practice these things. They approve of others who do the same.

*You do what you criticize.*

Hey, man, and everyone who criticizes. You have no excuse. When you criticize someone else, you condemn yourself. You do the same things you criticize. We know that God's judgment is accurate about those who do such things.

Hey, man. Consider this. You criticize those who do such things. You still do the same. Will you escape God's judgment? Are you taking his rich kindness and patient tolerance for granted? Are you unaware that God's kindness is supposed to make you change?

Because of your hard and unchanging heart, you stored up anger against yourself for the Day of Anger. God will reveal his righteous judgment.

He will reward each person for his conduct.<sup>a</sup>

Some patiently pursue eternal life through wonderful, honorable, and immortal good deeds.

Out of self-gratification, others are disobedient to the truth. They are motivated by wickedness, anger, and rage. Trouble and distress will come to the life of every man who produces evil. This applies to the Jew first, but also to the Greek.

Glory, honor, and peace will come to everyone who does good. This applies to the Jew first, but also to the Greek. There is no discrimination with God.

Lawlessness destroys anyone who sins lawlessly. The law judges anyone who sins under law. *Hearing* the law does not justify anyone with God. *Doing* the law will justify.

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a) Proverbs 24:12.

The gentiles do not possess the law. However, sometimes they instinctively obey the law. Even though they do not have the law, it is like they do. They demonstrate lawful conduct written on their hearts. Their conscience will testify through their own reasoning: They are either accused or innocent.

On that day, God will judge men's secrets according to my gospel through the messiah, Jesus.

Suppose that you call yourself a Jew. You rely on the law. You boast about God. You know his will. You approve of the best things. The law instructs you. You present yourself as a guide for the blind. You are a light to those in darkness. You tutor the ignorant. You teach infants. You possess a form of knowledge and truth about the law.

You teach others. Why don't you teach yourself? You tell people not to steal. Why do you steal? You inform others not to commit adultery. Why do you commit adultery? You despise idols. Why do you rob temples? You boast in the law. Why do you dishonor God by breaking the law?

The gentiles slander God's name because of you.<sup>a</sup>

Just like it says.

Circumcision is wonderful if you follow the law. But if you intend to break the law, it is like you were never circumcised.

If the uncircumcised man keeps the legal regulations, doesn't his lack of circumcision count as if he was circumcised? Suppose a man who is uncircumcised by birth observes the law. Suppose that you are circumcised by the rules, but you break the law. The uncircumcised man will judge you as a lawbreaker.

Not everyone who appears to be a Jew really is. Not everyone who appears physically circumcised really is. Being a Jew is an private matter. Circumcision is a spiritual heart issue, not a rule. It does not come from the praise of men. It does come from the praise of God.

What is the advantage to being a Jew? What benefit is circumcision? It is beneficial in many ways and in every manner. They believed the sayings of God first. What difference does that make? Some were unfaithful.

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a) Isaiah 52:5.

Does their unfaithfulness nullify God's integrity? In no way! God is true even if every man is a liar. Just like it says,

Your sayings are justified. Your judgment will win.<sup>a</sup>

*Everyone falls short.*

If our wickedness demonstrates God's righteousness, what can we say? Is God unjust for inflicting his Anger? I speak in human terms. In no way! How is God going to judge the world? If my lie makes God's integrity more wonderful, can he still declare me a sinner? Isn't this their slander? They claim that we say, "If we do evil, won't good come?" Their punishment is appropriate.

So, are we any better? Not at all. We accuse both the Jews and Greeks. They are all in sin. Just like it says,

Not one is righteous.

No one understands.

No one seeks God.

Everyone has turned away.

They are together corrupt.

No one does good.

There is not even one.<sup>b</sup>

Their throats are open graves.

Their tongues are deceptive.<sup>c</sup>

They have snake poison on their lips.<sup>d</sup>

Their mouth is full of cursing and bitterness.<sup>e</sup>

Their feet are quick to spill blood.

Their paths contain ruin and misery.

They do not know a peaceful way.<sup>f</sup>

Their eyes do not fear God.<sup>g</sup>

We know that the entire law speaks to those who say they are under the law. It shuts every mouth. The whole world is accountable to God.

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a) Psalms 51:4.

b) Psalm 14:1-3, 53:1-3.

c) Psalm 5:9.

d) Psalm 40:3.

e) Psalm 10:7.

f) Isaiah 59:7-8.

g) Psalm 36:1.

The works of the law cannot justify any flesh before God. Sin is defined through the law.

God's righteousness is still revealed without the law. The law and the prophets testify: Every believer gains God's righteousness through faith in Jesus the messiah.

There is no difference: Everyone has sinned. Everyone is less wonderful than God. But God freely makes them righteous by his favor. He redeems them by the messiah, Jesus. God planned the sacrifice through faith in Jesus' blood. He demonstrated his righteousness by overlooking the sins committed in the past. God provided relief to demonstrate his righteousness right now. It proves that he is righteous. He makes those who believe in Jesus righteous.

Where is the bragger? God shut him up.

What kind of law was this? One of deeds? No. It was a law of faith. We claim that a man is made righteous by faith separate from deeds of the law.

Is he only the God of the Jews? No. What about the gentiles? Yes. He is also the God of the gentiles. There is only one God. He makes circumcision righteous by faith. He also makes uncircumcision righteous through faith. Is the law nullified because of faith? In no way! We confirm the law.

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## Trust counts as righteousness.

*Abraham believed God.*

What should we say? How should we view our physical ancestor Abraham? If Abraham is justified by deeds, he can boast. However, he cannot boast to God. What does the scripture say?

Abraham trusted God. This counts as his righteousness.<sup>a</sup>

An employee's pay is not considered a favor. It is an obligation. Someone else might not work, but instead trusts the one who makes the ungodly righteous. His trust counts for righteousness.

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a) Genesis 15:6.

David issued a blessing for the man whom God credits righteousness apart from deeds.

It is a blessing when God forgives his wickedness.

God covers up his sins.

A man is blessed when the lord does not count his sins at all.<sup>a</sup>

So, who is blessed? Circumcised or not circumcised? We say, Abraham's faith counts as righteousness.<sup>b</sup>

How did it count? By circumcision or uncircumcision? It is not by circumcision. It is by uncircumcision.

He received circumcision as a sign. It sealed his faithful righteousness while he was uncircumcised. He was the father of everyone who believes while uncircumcised. It also counts as righteousness for them.

He is the father of circumcision not only for those who are circumcised. Our father Abraham also leads the uncircumcised who follow in his faithful footsteps.

The promise to Abraham and his descendants did not come through the law, but through his faithful righteousness. He became the heir of the world. If he was heir by the law, his faith became empty. The promise has been canceled. The law produces Anger. But if there is no law, there is no transgression.

This is why the promise is from faith. It is by grace. This makes the promise firm for all his descendants. It does not apply just to those who follow the law. It includes those who follow Abraham's faith. He is the father of us all. Just like it says,

I made you the father of many nations.<sup>c</sup>

So he believed that God brings the dead to life. God makes things exist that do not exist. Abraham believed against all hope that he would become the "father of many nations."<sup>d</sup> This is according to what was said, "This is how your descendants will be."<sup>e</sup>

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a) Psalm 32:1-2.

b) Genesis 15:6.

c) Genesis 17:5.

d) Genesis 17:5.

e) Genesis 15:5.

Even though his faith was not weak, he considered his life nearly over. He was about one hundred years old. Sarah's ability to have children was over. He did not faithlessly doubt God's promises. His faith remained strong. He gave honor to God. He was convinced that God could do what he promised. So,

This counts as his righteousness.<sup>a</sup>

It was not just written about *him* that,

This counts as his ...<sup>b</sup>

It was also written about *us*. It counted for us in the future.

We believe that he raised Jesus, our lord, from the dead. He took on our misbehavior. He rose to make us righteous.

### *God reconciled us.*

Our faith made us righteous. So, we have peace with God because of our lord, Jesus the messiah. We have access to this favor by faith through him. We stand up and boast because of our hope in God's glory.

Not only that, but we even boast during persecution. We know that persecution creates patience. Patience produces character. Character brings hope. There is no shame in hope. God's love is poured into our hearts through the holy spirit. He gave it to us.

When we were still weak, the messiah died for the ungodly. It is unlikely that anyone would die for a righteous person. Possibly someone might die for a good person. God demonstrated his love for us: While we were still sinning, the messiah died for us. Even more so, he makes us righteous by his blood. This saves us from his Anger.

While we were still enemies, God reconciled us through the death of his son. Our reconciliation results in salvation even more because he is alive.

Not only this, we also boast in God through our lord, Jesus the messiah. Through him we finally achieved reconciliation.

Therefore, sin came into the world through one man. Death was the result of sin. Death spread to all men because every person sins. Before the law, sin was in the world. However, sin did not count because there was no law. So, death ruled from Adam to Moses, even over those who

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a) Genesis 15:6.

b) Genesis 15:6.

did not sin the same transgressions as Adam. He was a model for the future.

The gift was not like the misbehavior. Many died because of the misbehavior of one person. Even more, God's favor and the gift overflow for the many. This is the mercy of the one man, Jesus the messiah.

The gift does not come through the sin of that one man. The judgment of one man lead to condemnation. The gift leads to acquittal from much misbehavior. Death ruled over one man's misbehavior because of that one man. Even more they receive the abundant favor and gift of righteousness in life. They rule through the one man, Jesus the messiah.

One man's misbehavior lead to condemnation for all men. One righteous act lead to the justification of life for all men. One man's disobedience made many people sinners. One man's obedience made many people righteous.

The introduction of the law increased misbehavior. When sin increased, grace increased even more. Sin produced death. Grace produced eternal life through the righteousness of Jesus the messiah, our lord.

#### *Sin does not control us.*

What should we say? Should we continue sinning so grace can increase? In no way! If we died to sin, how can we stay in it?

Are you unaware? We were immersed into the messiah, Jesus. Weren't we immersed into his death? When we were immersed, we were buried with him into death. The messiah rose from the dead by the father's glory. In the same way, we live a new life. We are united to him by a similar death. We will also have a similar resurrection.

We know this: Our former person was crucified with him. We destroyed our sinful body. We do not obey sin anymore. Dead people are acquitted from sin. We died with the messiah. We trust that we will live with him. We know that the messiah rose from the dead. He is not dead any more. His death no longer controls him.

If anyone is dead, he is dead to sin once and for all. If he is alive, he lives for God. Consider yourselves dead to sin. Live for God in the messiah, Jesus. Do not let sin rule over your mortal bodies. Do not obey its passions. Do not turn your body parts into wicked instruments for sin.

Instead, present yourself to God as if you were brought back to life from the dead. Turn your body parts into righteous instruments for God.

Sin does not control you. You are not under law. You are under grace. So what? Should we sin, since we are not under the law, but under grace? In no way!

Don't you know that a slave must submit himself to obey? You are slaves to whom you obey. Will you be a slave of sin, which leads to death? Or, will you be a slave of obedience, which leads to righteousness?

Thank you, God! You all were slaves to sin. But now you have obeyed from the heart. You are committed to this pattern of teaching. You are freed from sin. You are slaves to righteousness.

I speak in human terms about your physical weakness. You did present your body parts as impure and wicked slaves to do wicked things. Now present your body parts as slaves of righteousness for holiness. You were slaves of sin. You are now freedmen for righteousness.

What benefit did you get before? These things make you ashamed now. The end of those things was death. Now you are free from sin. You are slaves of God. You have the benefit of holiness. The end is eternal life. The payment for sin is death. God's gift is eternal life in the messiah, Jesus our lord.

*A woman is obligated to her husband.*

Are you unaware, brothers? I am speaking to those who are familiar with the law: Doesn't the law govern a man while he is alive?

For example: The law obligates a married woman to her *living* husband. If the husband dies, she is released from any rule about her husband. However, while her husband is alive, she is considered an adulteress if another man takes her. However, if her husband dies, she is free from the rule. Then she is not an adulteress if another man takes her.

So, my brothers. The messiah's body put *you* to death with regard to the law. Then *you* belong to another. God brought him back from the dead. Now we bear fruit for God.

We used to function physically. Sinful passions worked in our body parts through the law. They bore fruit for death. Since we are dead now, our relationship with the law is annulled. It was holding us down. We serve with a new spirit, not by the old written code.



What are we saying? Is the law sinful? In no way! We cannot know about sin unless there is a law. Coveting would be unknown unless the law said,

Do not covet.<sup>a</sup>

Sin got its opportunity through the command. It produced coveting in me. Without the law, sin does not exist. Previously, I was living without any law. Then the command arrived. Sin came alive. I was dead. The command was supposed to make me live. It actually brought death. Sin created an opportunity. It tricked me, using the command. That is how it caused my death.

The law is holy. The command is also holy, righteous, and good. Did that good thing become death to me? In no way! Sin exposed itself. Sin produced death in me by that good thing. Through the command, sin made what is sinful extremely clear.

*I do what I do not want.*

We know that the law is spiritual. However, as a physical person, sin has auctioned me off. I am unaware of the consequences of my conduct. I do things that I do not want. I hate what I actually do. Since I do things against my wishes, I agree that the law is a good thing. So, it is not me that produces these things. It is sin living inside of me.

I know something that does *not* physically live inside me: goodness. I try to do what I intend. What actually happens is not good. I do not actually want to do good. Instead, I do what I do not want: evil. When I do what I do not want to do, it is not actually me doing it. It is sin living in me.

Then I discovered the law. It actually made me want to do good. Evil is still close to me. My inner person is pleased with God's law. However, I observe another law in my body parts. It fights against the law in my mind. The sinful law takes me prisoner. It controls my body parts.

I am a miserable person. Who will rescue me from this deadly body? I thank God through Jesus the messiah, our lord. I myself make my mind a slave to God's law instead of the sinful law in my body.

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a) Exodus 20:17.

*You live by the spirit.*

There is nothing that now condemns those who are in the messiah, Jesus. The spiritual law brings life in the messiah, Jesus. It freed you from the sinful law and death.

It was impossible for the law to do this. It was weak physically. So God sent his own son in a similar sinful body. Concerning sin, he condemned sin with his body.

The details of the law are fulfilled in us. We do not live physically. We live spiritually. Those who live physically focus what is physical. Those who live spiritually focus what is spiritual. A physical mentality receives death, but a spiritual mentality receives life and peace.

A physical mentality hates God. They cannot submit to God's law. Those who live physically cannot please God. *You* do not live physically. You live spiritually. God's spirit lives in you.

If anyone does not have the messiah's spirit, he does not belong to him. If the messiah is in you, the body is dead to sin. The spirit lives for righteousness.

The spirit that rose Jesus from the dead lives in you. The same one that raised the messiah from the dead will make you alive. That spirit himself will live in your mortal bodies.

Brothers, we have no physical obligation to live physically. If you live by what is physical, then you will die. If you kill your body's conduct by the spirit, then you will live.

When God's spirit leads people, they become God's sons. You did not take on the perspective of a slave, returning to fear. You took on the perspective of adoption. We cry out, "Daddy! Father!"

Our spirit testifies with that same spirit, "We are the children of God!" If we are children, then we are also heirs. We are God's heirs. But we are also coheirs with the messiah. We suffer with him. So, God honors us with him. I consider myself unworthy to experience the current sufferings. They forecast the honor that God revealed for us.

The creation has an eager expectation. They are waiting for God to present his son. The creation is subject to futility. This is not their preference. It is by force. This creation hopes for freedom from decaying slavery. They want the wonderful freedom to become God's children. We know

the entire creation groans and suffers up to this moment. Not only that, but some get the first fruits of the spirit. We groan with them while we wait for our adoption. He will redeem our bodies.

Hope saves us. Visible hope is not hope. Who hopes for what you can already see? We hope for what we cannot see. We are waiting patiently.

Likewise, the spirit helps our weakness. We do not know how we are supposed to pray. The spirit intervenes with wordless groans. He searches our hearts. He knows our real intentions. He negotiates with God by that intent.

*Who can be against us?*

We know this: Everything works out for those who love God. They are selected according to his purpose.

He knew about them beforehand. He intended to reform them to be like his son. He was the firstborn of many brothers. He invited those he intended. He made the ones he invited righteous. He honored the ones he made righteous.

What should we say about these things? If God is on our side, who can be against us? He did not exclude his own son. He handed him over for all of us. How is it that both of them will not grant us everything?

Who is going to accuse God's selected ones? God is the righteous one. Who will condemn? The messiah died, but then rose. He sits at God's right hand. He represents our interests.

What is going to separate us from the messiah's love? Trouble? Anguish? Persecution? Famine? Nakedness? Danger? The sword? Just like it says,

They kill us all day long.

They treat us like sheep for slaughter.<sup>a</sup>

In every way, we are better than winners because he loves us.

I am convinced: Nothing can separate us from God's love through the messiah, Jesus our lord, including death, life, angels, rulers, the present, the future, powers, height, depth, or any other created thing.

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a) Psalm 44:22.

## Not all Israel are Israelites.

*The gentiles acquired righteousness.*

I am telling the truth by the messiah. I am not lying. My conscience testifies with me by the holy spirit. This brings a lot of grief and constant pain to my heart: I wish I could personally be cursed by the messiah for my brothers. They are my relatives. They are the Israelites.

The adoption, honor, covenant, legal code, worship, and promise came from them. The fathers belong to them. The messiah physically came from them.

God is over everything. Bless him forever. Truly.

It is not like God's word is a failure. However, not everyone from Israel is an Israelite. Not every descendant of Abraham is his child. Instead,

Your descendants are from Isaac.<sup>a</sup>

This means: God's children are not the physical children. The promised children are considered descendants.

This is the content of the promise.

I will return about this time. Sarah will have a son.<sup>b</sup>

Not only that, but Rebecca shared a single bed with Isaac, our father. We were not even born yet. They had done nothing, either good or bad. But God's chosen plan remained. It was not by works. It was his decision. He told her.

The older will serve the younger.<sup>c</sup>

Just like it says,

I loved Jacob. I hated Esau.<sup>d</sup>

What are we supposed to say? Is God wicked? In no way!

He told Moses,

I will show mercy when I want. I will have pity when I want.<sup>e</sup>

a) Genesis 21:12.

b) Genesis 18:10.

c) Genesis 25:23.

d) Malachi 1:2-3.

e) Exodus 33:19.

So, it is not by determination nor effort. It is by *God's mercy*. The scripture says about Pharaoh,

This is why I lifted you up: I demonstrated my power through you. This way my name will be proclaimed to the whole world.<sup>a</sup>

So, he shows mercy when he wants. He hardens when he wants.

You might ask me, "How can he blame anyone? Who can resist his will?"

Hey, man. Who are you to challenge God?

The product cannot ask the manufacturer, "Why did you make me this way?"<sup>b</sup>

Doesn't the pottery-maker have the right to turn a lump of clay into either a fancy dish or a plain pot?

If God wants, can he show his Anger? Can he demonstrate his power? Can he act with extreme patience? Can he store up his Anger for destruction? Can he display his glorious riches as merciful containers? Can he plan them in advance for honor?

He did not choose us just from the Jews. He also chose from the gentiles. It says in Hosea,

I will call the Not-my-people, "My-people."

And the ones that I did not love, "My beloved."<sup>c</sup>

In the exact place where they told them,

"You are not my people."

They will call them, "Sons of the living God."<sup>d</sup>

Isaiah shouted for Israel,

Even if the sons of Israel are more numerous than the sand in the sea,

He will save some.

The lord will do what he said in the world.

It is definite. He will be quick.<sup>e</sup>

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a) Exodus 9:16.

b) Isaiah 29:6.

c) Hosea 2:23.

d) Hosea 2:1.

e) Isaiah 10:22-23.

Isaiah also predicted,

If the lord almighty abandoned us, the descendants,  
We would become like Sodom. We would be the same as  
Gomorrah.<sup>a</sup>

What can we say? The gentiles did not pursue righteousness. They still acquired righteousness. That righteousness was from faith. Israel pursued a legal righteousness through the law. They did not acquire it. Why is that? It was not from faith. It was from works. They tripped over a stone and stumbled. Just like it says,

Look. I put a stumbling stone in Zion.

It was a rock to trip over.

Whoever believes in him

Will not be ashamed.<sup>b</sup>

Brothers. It is my heart's wish and prayer to God for their rescue. I confirm that they are zealous for God. They just lack understanding. They are uninformed about God's righteousness. They try to stand on their own righteousness. They do not submit to God's righteousness.

*Everyone will be safe.*

The messiah is the conclusion of the law. He makes all believers righteous. Moses wrote about the righteousness of the law.

The man who does these things will live by them.<sup>c</sup>

Righteousness comes from faith. So, he says,

Do not ask in your heart, "Who will ascend up to heaven?"<sup>d</sup>

This puts the messiah down. Or,

Who will ascend into the Abyss?<sup>e</sup>

This brings the messiah back from the dead. What should it say?

Your word is near. It is in your mouth and heart.<sup>f</sup>

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a) Isaiah 1:9.

b) Isaiah 28:16.

c) Leviticus 18:5.

d) Deuteronomy 30:12.

e) Deuteronomy 30:13.

f) Deuteronomy 30:14.

We proclaim this faithful word:

Agree with your mouth that Jesus is lord.

Believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead.

Then he will save you.

Belief in your heart brings righteousness. Confession with your mouth brings salvation. Scripture says,

Everyone who believes in him is without shame.<sup>a</sup>

There is *no* difference between Jew and Greek. He is everyone's lord. He gives riches to all his guests.

He saves *everyone* who appeals to the Lord's name.<sup>b</sup>

How can they appeal to what they do not believe? How can they believe what they have not heard? How can they hear unless someone proclaims? How can they proclaim if no one sends them? Just like it says,

Feet are beautiful when they announce good news.<sup>c</sup>

However, not everyone submits to the good news. Isaiah says,

Lord, who believed our message?<sup>d</sup>

Faith comes from the message. The message regards the messiah. I must ask: Didn't they hear? Definitely!

Their voice went all over the earth.

Their message went to the end of the inhabited world.<sup>e</sup>

### *Did God reject his people?*

I must ask: Didn't Israel know? First, Moses said,

I will make you jealous of a non-country.

I will make you angry about the gentiles who do not understand.<sup>f</sup>

Isaiah spoke boldly.

I discovered the ones who did not seek me.

I became obvious to those who are not seeking me.<sup>g</sup>

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a) Isaiah 28:16.

b) Joel 3:5.

c) Isaiah 52:7.

d) Isaiah 53:1.

e) Psalm 19:4.

f) Deuteronomy 32:21.

g) Isaiah 65:1.

But, he spoke to Israel.

I reached out my hands all day  
To a disobedient and rebellious people.<sup>a</sup>

So, I ask: Did God reject his people? In no way!

I am an Israelite. I am a descendant of Abraham. I am from the tribe of Benjamin.

God did not reject his chosen people.<sup>b</sup>

Don't you know what the scriptures say about Elijah? He plead with God about Israel.

Lord! They killed your prophets. They destroyed your altars. I am the only one left. They want to take my life.<sup>c</sup>

What answer did he get?

I still have 7,000 men left. They have not kneeled to Baal.<sup>d</sup>

Even now, a remnant exists. He selected them according to his favor. If it is by favor, then it is no longer by works. Otherwise, favor would not be favor.

So what? Israel did not get what they sought. The chosen ones did. The rest became hard. Just like it says,

God gave them a confused spirit.  
Their eyes could not see. Their ears could not hear.  
As long as it is today.<sup>e</sup>

David also said,

Make their table a snare and a net.  
Create an obstacle and a payback.  
Darken their eyes so they cannot see.  
Bend their back all the way backwards.<sup>f</sup>

Let me ask: Did he make them stumble so they would fall? In no way!

Because of this misbehavior, the salvation of the gentiles occurred. This made them jealous. Their misbehavior made the world rich. Their loss made the gentiles rich. It will be even better when they gain fulfillment.

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a) Isaiah 65:2.

b) 1 Samuel 12:22.

c) 1 Kings 19:10.

d) 1 Kings 19:18.

e) Isaiah 29:10.

f) Psalm 69:22.



I am speaking to you gentiles: This is why *I* became the messenger to the gentiles. I honor my mission. It makes my own relatives jealous so I can save some of them.

Their rejection reconciles the world. What does their reconciliation mean? Doesn't it bring them back to life from the dead? If the first part is holy, so is the whole lump. If the root is holy, then the branches are too.

*He pruned them.*

Some branches were pruned. You are the wild olive grafted on the tree branches. You get to share the sap from the olive root. Do not brag about the branches. If there is any boasting, *you* do not support the root. The root supports *you*. So, is this your claim? "He pruned the branches to graft us in."

Fine. He pruned them because of their unfaithfulness. You remain because of belief. Do not think you are any better. Instead, be afraid. God did not spare the natural branches. He will not spare you, either.

Observe both how kind and also how stern God is. Harshness fell on some, but God's kindness on you. If you persevere, you will receive kindness. Otherwise, he will cut you off. If you do not remain in disobedience, then he will graft you in. God can graft them back in again.

Suppose that you were physically pruned from a wild olive tree. Then suppose you were physically grafted into a commercial olive tree. It is easier to graft an olive branch back into a similar species.

I do not want you to be ignorant, brothers. This is a secret: Do not consider yourselves wise. Part of Israel became hardened until the gentiles were allowed to enter. This is how all Israel will be rescued. Just like it says,

The redeemer will come from Zion.

He will turn Jacob away from wickedness.

This is my covenant with them:<sup>a</sup>

I will remove their sins.<sup>b</sup>

They are enemies of the gospel for your benefit. They are chosen to be loved for the benefit of the forefathers. They receive a gift and an invitation from God. It cannot be canceled.

a) Isaiah 59:20.

b) Isaiah 27:9.

You disobeyed God before. Now you receive mercy directly because of this disobedience. Those who still disobey will receive mercy by the same mercy you got. God shut up everyone who is disobedient so he can show everyone mercy.

Wow. The mercy is deep.

Also the wisdom, and the knowledge of God.

His judgments are beyond understanding.

His paths are untraceable.

Who knows the thoughts of the lord?

Who can be his advisor?<sup>a</sup>

Who has given him anything?

Who can repay him?<sup>b</sup>

Everything is from him, through him, and for him.

Give honor him forever. Truly.

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## Show love.

*We are one body.*

I want to encourage you, brothers, because of God's compassion. Present your bodies as a living sacrifice. This is holy and pleasing to God. It is your intended duty. Do not give in to the pressure. Change. Think in a new way. Figure out what God's will is. It is good, pleasing, and complete.

I speak to all of you because of the favor God gave me. Do not think more highly of yourself than necessary. Think reasonably. God gave different amounts of faith to each person.

We have a single body. It has many parts. Each part does not have the same purpose. We are numerous. But in the messiah, we are still one body. Each part functions as one body. Each has different benefits according to the favor God gave you.

For example, some prophesy according to the size of their faith. Some serve in ministry. Some provide instruction as teachers. Some comfort as encouragers. Some give generously. Others lead diligently. Others gladly show mercy.

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a) Isaiah 40:13.

b) Job 41:11.

*Hold on to what is good.*

Show love without faking. Despise evil. Stick with what is good. Show brotherly love to each other with affection. Treat each other with great respect. Be determined, not lazy. Be spiritually hot. Serve the lord. Stay happy and hopeful. Be stable during trouble. Pray regularly. Contribute to the needs of holy people. Pursue hospitality.

Bless those who persecute you. Bless them. Do not curse them. Rejoice with people who are happy. Cry with people who are crying.

Consider each other with equality. Do not think you are better. Associate with humble people. Do not consider yourself wise. Never return evil for evil. Conduct yourselves honorably before all men. Within your abilities, live in peace with every man.

Do not seek revenge, beloved. Leave room for the Anger. Just like it says,

Revenge belongs to me. *I will repay.*<sup>a</sup>

The lord says this. But instead,

If your enemy is hungry, feed him.

If he is thirsty, give him something to drink.

By doing this, you will pile burning coals on his head.<sup>b</sup>

Do not conquer using evil. Conquer evil with good.

Every person must submit to the legal authorities. Now, there is no authority other than God. The ones that do exist are under God. He appointed them. Anyone who opposes the authorities opposes God's directions. These opponents will receive their punishment.

Rulers do not provoke fear for good behavior, but for evil conduct. You do not need to fear the authorities. Do good. Honor them. This will gain their respect. The ruler is God's servant for you to provoke good things. If you do evil, you should be afraid. They wear a sword for a reason. God's servant administers punishments to evil-doers. You must submit. This is not just to avoid punishment. It is also a matter of conscience.

This is why you have to pay taxes. They are God's assistants. For the same reason, they fulfill their duties. Pay everyone what you owe. If you owe taxes, then pay them. If you owe fees, then submit them. If someone

a) Deuteronomy 32:35.

b) Proverbs 25:21-22.

deserves fear, then fear him. If someone commands respect, then honor him. Owe nothing to anyone, except to love each other. Love fulfills the law. It says,

Do not commit adultery.<sup>a</sup>

Do not murder.<sup>b</sup>

Do not steal.<sup>c</sup>

Do not covet.<sup>d</sup>

If there is any other command, this statement sums it up,

Love your neighbor like yourself.<sup>e</sup>

Love is not mistreating your neighbor. Love is the fulfillment of the law.

We know the time is now. It is time to wake up. Our salvation is closer now than when we believed. Nighttime is over. It is almost daytime. Get rid of your dark deeds. Wear the armor of light. Live properly like it is daytime.

Do not participate in orgies and drunkenness. End sexual misconduct and indecent behavior. Avoid rivalry and jealousy. Wear the lord, the messiah, Jesus. Do not make plans to use your body for lust.

*Accept those with weak faith.*

Accept those with weak faith. Do not engage in arguments with them.

Some believe they can eat anything. The weak only consume vegetables. The ones who eat may not despise the non-eaters. The non-eaters may not criticize those who do. God accepts both. Who are you to judge someone else's custodian? He stands or falls by the same lord. He will be okay. The lord can take care of him.

Some prefer a certain day over another. Another considers all days the same. Each must be convinced in his own mind. The one who prefers a day does so for the lord. The one who eats does it for the lord. He thanks God.

The non-eater avoids eating for the lord. He also thanks God.

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a) Exodus 20:14.

b) Exodus 20:13.

c) Exodus 20:15.

d) Exodus 20:17.

e) Leviticus 19:18.

None of us lives for himself. No one dies for himself. If we do live, we live for the lord. If we die, we die for the lord. So, whether we live or die, we belong to the lord. This is why the messiah died and lived: By dying and living, he became the lord.

Why do you judge your brother? Why do you despise your brother? Everyone has to stand before God's judgement bench. Scripture says, "I am alive," says the lord. "Every knee will bow to me. Every tongue will confess God."<sup>a</sup>

Each of us will give an account to God for ourselves. So, do not judge each other any more. Instead, commit to this: Do not set any obstacles or traps for your brother.

I am completely convinced by the lord, Jesus. Nothing is vulgar by itself. If someone considers something vulgar, then it is vulgar.

If food troubles your brother, then you are not living by love. The messiah died for him. Do not destroy anyone because of your food. Do not let your good conduct cause slander. God's kingdom is not about eating or drinking. It is about righteousness, peace, and joy in the holy spirit. The person who serves the messiah in this way becomes both pleasing to God and also acceptable to men.

Pursue peaceful things and matters that strengthen each other. Do not destroy God's work because of food. Everything is clean. However, it is evil for a man to make eating an obstacle.

It is better not to eat meat or drink wine if it makes your brother stumble. You have faith in your own mind. Keep it before God. Blessed is the man who does not condemn himself with his opinions. Whoever doubts what he eats is condemned. That is not from faith. Any conduct that is not from confidence is sin.

We should be the ones who are strong. We should put up with the problems of the weak. We do not please ourselves.

Everyone must please his neighbor. It is good to strengthen each other. The messiah did not please himself. Just like it says,

The insults of your attackers fell on me.<sup>b</sup>

He wrote this long ago for our instruction. We can have hope because of persistence and encouragement from the scriptures.

a) Isaiah 45:23-24.

b) Psalm 69:9.

May God give us persistence and encouragement to think the same way toward each other because of the messiah, Jesus. Single-mindedly glorify the God and the father of our lord, Jesus the messiah, with one mouth. Accept each other. The messiah accepted *you* into God's honor.

*The gentiles get extra mercy.*

I claim that the messiah became a servant of circumcision to demonstrate God's truth. He confirmed the promises given to the ancients. The gentiles got extra mercy so they can glorify God. Just like it says,

This is why I will confess you among the gentiles.

I will praise your name in song.<sup>a</sup>

It says it another way,

Rejoice with his people, gentiles.<sup>b</sup>

Again,

Praise the lord, all you gentiles.

All the people give him praise.<sup>c</sup>

Isaiah also says,

He will be Jesse's root.

He will rise to rule the gentiles.

The gentiles will hope in him.<sup>d</sup>

*I remain convinced about you.*

The God of hope will fill the faithful with complete joy and peace. You will overflow with hope by the holy spirit's power. I myself remain convinced about you, my brothers. You are full of goodness. You are filled with all knowledge. You are competent to advise each other.

I have written aggressively to you in part. I remind you by the favor given to me by God. He made me an assistant of the messiah, Jesus, to the gentiles. I sacrifice for the good news about God. Maybe my sacrifice for the gentiles is acceptable. The holy spirit makes it holy.

I can boast in the messiah, Jesus, about godly matters. I do not dare to speak about what the messiah has accomplished through me. The gen-

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a) Psalm 18:49

b) Deuteronomy 32:43.

c) Psalm 117:1.

d) Isaiah 11:10.

tiles now obey, both in word and in deed. God used powerful signs and wonders by his powerful spirit.

He brought me from Jerusalem all the way to Illyricum. I have fulfilled the good news about the messiah. I aspire to bring the good news where the messiah is unknown. I do not intend to build on someone else's foundation. Just like it says,

The will see what was not announced about him.

They will understand what they did not hear.<sup>a</sup>

Something prevented me from visiting you many different times. I do not need to stay here any longer. I wanted to visit you for several years. I am on my way to Spain. I hope to see you while passing through. You can help me along my way. I will enjoy your company for a little while.

I am going to Jerusalem right now to help the holy people. The Macedonians and Achaeans decided to give a contribution for the impoverished holy residents of Jerusalem. They felt they had an obligation to them. The gentiles shared in spiritual things with them. They owed it to them to serve them physically. So, they did it. They committed themselves to provide this benefit.

I will visit you on my way to Spain. If the messiah fulfills his blessing, then I will come to visit you.

I urge you, brothers, by our lord, Jesus the messiah, and the spirit's love. Struggle with me. Pray to God for me: Deliver me from the disobedient Jews. Make my service for the holy people in Jerusalem acceptable. Bring me to you joyfully by God's will. You refresh me. May the God of peace stay with you. Truly.

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### **Greet each other.**

I commend our sister Phoebe to you. She is a servant to the Cenchræ church. Make her welcome in the lord, appropriate for one of the holy people. Give her whatever she needs. She has been a patron to many people, including even myself.

Greet Priska and Akula. They are my coworkers for the messiah, Jesus. They risked their own necks for my life. I do not thank them all by my-

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a) Isaiah 52:15.

self. The gentile churches also thank them. The group that meets at their house thanks them.

Greet my beloved Epaphroditus. He was one of the first converts to the messiah in Asia. Greet Miriam. She worked hard for you. Greet my relatives Andronicus and Junias. They were inmates with me. They are outstanding representatives. They came to the messiah before me. Greet my beloved Ampliatus in the lord. Greet our coworker Urbanus and my beloved Stachys in the messiah. Greet Apelles. He is tested in the messiah. Greet the family of Aristobulus. Greet my relative Herodion. Greet the family of Narcissus who belong to the lord. Greet Tryphena and Tryphosa. They work hard in the lord. Greet the beloved Persis. She works hard in the lord. Greet Rufus. He is chosen by the lord. Greet his mother. She is my mother, too. Greet Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobus, Hermas, and the brothers who live with them. Greet Philologus and Julius, Nereus and his sister, Olympus, and all the holy people that live with them.

Greet each other with a holy kiss. All the messiah's churches greet you.

I urge you, brothers. Watch out for people who start dissensions and traps. They are opposed to the teaching you learned to follow. Turn away from them. They do not serve our lord, the messiah. They serve their own belly. They use fancy words and flattery to deceive unsuspecting hearts.

Your obedience is known everywhere. I am happy about you. I want you to have wisdom that leads to good, but innocent of what leads to bad.

The God of peace will soon crush the Satan under your feet. I wish the favor of our lord, the messiah, on you.

My coworker Timothy greets you. So do my relatives, Luke, Jason, and Sosipatros. (I am Tertius. I wrote this letter down in the lord. I greet you.) Gaius is my host and the host of the whole church. He greets you. The city manager Erastus and the brother Quartus greet you.

The favor of our lord, Jesus the messiah, is with all with all of you.<sup>a</sup>

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a) From the earliest and best manuscripts, the following text is likely not part of the original letter: "He can strengthen you by my good news and the preaching about the Jesus the messiah. He revealed the secret. It was silent from ancient times. The prophetic writings and the command of God make it clear now. He made it known so the gentiles could have obedient faith. Jesus the messiah. Truly."