

Paul's Letter to the

ROMANS

An English Translation of the Greek Text

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Greeting

PART 1

- 1** FROM: Paul, a bond-servant of Jesus, the *messiah*—named as an apostle, set apart for the proclamation of God's good news. 1:1
- 2** This good news was promised beforehand by his prophets in the holy writings. ²It is about his Son—he who, so far as his physical being is concerned, was born of the lineage of David; he who, so far as his spirit of holiness is concerned, was designated the Son of God by a supernatural sign, by virtue of his resurrection from the dead—it is about Jesus, the *messiah*, our Lord. ³It is through him that we received our gift, even apostleship, to bring about an obedient response of belief, for the sake of his name, among all the Gentile peoples. ⁴Indeed, you—named to belong to Jesus, the *messiah*—are included among them. 1:2-6
- 3** TO: all those recipients of God's love living in Rome—appointed as *hagioi*. 1:7a
- 4** "*Charis*"¹ to you and "*shalom*"—from God, our Father, and from our Lord, Jesus, the *messiah*. 1:7b

Introduction

PART 2

- 5** In the first place, I want to offer my thanks to God for you all, in view of the fact that Jesus is the *messiah*, for your belief is being talked about throughout the whole world. 1:8
- 6** God—whom I serve in my spirit in my proclaiming the good news of his Son—he is my witness to how unceasingly I bring you to mind. ²In my prayers, I am always asking if perhaps even now somehow I might, by the will of God, succeed in coming to you. ³I long to see you in order that I might impart to you some spiritual gift to the effect that you would be established—that is, to the effect that both you and I might be mutually fortified in our belief while I am among you, each by the belief of the other. ⁴I do not want you to be unaware of the fact, my brothers, that I have purposed numerous times to come to you so that

1. *Charis* is a Greek word that denotes a "gift." In this context, Paul likely means to denote the gift of rescue from condemnation and destruction into the blessing of everlasting life in the new creation. Paul likely uses this word here because it is similar in its sound to the standard Greek greeting. Paul seems to be using *charis* in the place of the standard Greek greeting.

I might have some results among you, just as I have had among the rest of the Gentile peoples, but so far I have been prevented.

1:9–13

- 7** I am a debtor—to Greeks as well as to Barbarians, to the intellectually sophisticated as well as to the simple. ²Hence, my eagerness to proclaim the good news to you who are in Rome also. ³For I am not embarrassed by this message of good news; it amounts to the power of God that results in deliverance for everyone who believes—to the Jew, first and foremost, but also to the Greek. ⁴For in it, the *dikaiosune* of God is granted to those who believe by reason of their belief. ⁵Just as it is written: "*the one who is dikaios by reason of his believing shall attain Life.*"²

1:14–17

Segment 1 — Paul's Gospel and Ethnic Equality: Divine Mercy to All Jesus-Believers

§ 1 • Paul's Gospel and Its Implications for Jewish Privilege

§ 1.1 • The Backdrop to Paul's Gospel: The Universal Need for Mercy in the Face of God's Wrath

PART 3

- 8** The wrath of God will be brought forth from heaven against all the disregard of God and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in their unrighteousness.

1:18

- 9** God will bring forth his wrath because what can be known about God is evident among them; God makes it evident to them. ²From the creation of the cosmos, the invisible truths about him are understood by way of the things he created. ³His eternal power and deity are clearly seen, with the result that they are without a defense. ⁴He will bring forth his wrath because, while they know God, they do not acknowledge his glory as God nor respond in gratitude. ⁵Rather, they become unintelligently futile in their reasonings and their ignorant heart is darkened. ⁶Claiming to be wise, they respond like ignorant fools and swap the glory of the incorruptible God for an image that is the representation of corruptible man, and of birds, and of four-footed beasts, and of crawling reptiles.

1:19–23

- 10** For this very reason, God abandons them to impurity in the desires of their hearts with the result that they degrade their bodies. ²These very people swap the truth from God for a lie and worship and serve the creature rather than the creator (who—as is certainly so—is eternally praiseworthy). ³On account of this, God gives them over to degrading passions. ⁴So indeed, their females swap the natural use of their sexuality for one that is against nature. ⁵And, similarly, the males also, forsaking the natural use of the female, become consumed by their lust toward one another—males, committing a shameful act with males. ⁶And they bring upon themselves the penalty that is required of their error.

1:24–27

2. *Habakkuk* 2:4. The *dikaioi* individual is one who shall be forgiven his evil and mercifully granted eternal life. Here Habakkuk refers to an individual who is deemed *dikaioi* by reason of his openness to the promises of God that is evident by virtue of the fact that he believes those promises.

11 Inasmuch as they do not judge God worthy to keep in mind, God abandons them to their defective mind such that they do those things that are not morally appropriate, being filled with all unrighteousness—with opposition to the good, with such an utter disregard for goodness that there is no boundary they are not willing to transgress, with readiness to harm others: ²They are full of envious spite, murder, conflict, deceit, malice. ³They are malicious gossips, hurlers of cruel insults, haters of God, insolently injurious people with an exaggerated sense of their own importance, people puffed up with a delusional self-concept, people who make false boasts about their achievements, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, ignorant, utterly faithless and untrustworthy, unaffected by normal human feeling and compassion, implacable, utterly lacking in mercy. ⁴And while these very same individuals understand the demands of God's justice—that people who practice such things are worthy of death—not only do they do these same things, but they also grant approval to those who practice such things.

1:28–32

12 So you stand without a defense—O man—every one of you who passes judgment. ²For insofar as you condemn the other person, you bring condemnation upon yourself. ³For the one who is passing judgment is practicing the very same things, and we know that the just sentence of God is rightly and truly upon those who practice such things.

2:1–2

§ 1.2 • Being Ethnically Jewish is No Protection from the Wrath of God

§ 1.2.1 • Authentic, Inward Repentance Is The Universal Condition for Divine Mercy

PART 4

13 But do you suppose this, O man—you who pass judgment on those who practice such things and do the very same things—that you will escape the judgment of God? ²Or, do you take for granted the wealth of his kindness, even of his forbearance and patience, not realizing that God's willingness to be kind is intended to lead you to repentance? ³But, in accord with your hardness and your unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath for yourselves in the day of wrath and of the realization of the righteous judgment of God. ⁴He will pay back to each according to his deeds—on the one hand, Life in the final age is for those who, in accord with their perseverance in doing good deeds, seek glory and honor and incorruption; on the other hand, fury and wrath is for those who, out of hostility to God, disobey the truth and obey unrighteousness. ⁵Tribulation and distress is upon every last person of the man who pursues evil—of the Jew, first and foremost, but also of the Greek. ⁶But glory, honor, and *shalom* is to everyone who does what is good—to the Jew, first and foremost, but also to the Greek.

2:3–10

14 Now there is no favoritism with God. ²Anyone who sins apart from the Covenant will, in fact, be destroyed apart from the Covenant; and anyone who sins within the Covenant will be judged in light of the requirements of the Covenant. ³It is not the hearers of the divine instruction who are *dikaioi* before God; rather, it is the doers of the divine instruction who will be deemed *dikaioi*. ⁴Indeed, when Gentiles, who do not have the Covenant by natural birthright, do the things required by that Covenant—even though these people do not possess the Covenant for themselves—such things are a covenant. ⁵Such people demonstrate

the deed required by that covenant written on their hearts—accordingly, in the day when God will judge the hidden parts of men, their conscience (by which I mean their reasonings about alternative actions, as they either indict or else defend each alternative) will bear witness for them, according to my account of the good news received through Jesus, the *messiah*.

2:11-16

§ 1.2.2 • The Mastery of Torah, By Itself, Will Not Rescue One from the Divine Wrath

PART 5

15 Now if you bear the name "Jew" and rest upon the Covenant and boast in God and know his will and, being instructed by the *Torah*, approve the finer things—and if you are persuaded that you yourself are a guide to the blind, a light to those in darkness, a tutor to the ignorant, a teacher of children who has mastered the essential form of knowledge and truth contained in the *Torah*—you, then, who teach the other person, do you not teach yourself? ²You who proclaim not to steal, do you steal? ³You who say not to commit adultery, do you commit adultery? ⁴You who abhor idols, do you steal what is sacred? ⁵You who boast in the *Torah*, through your transgression of that *Torah* you are dishonoring God. ⁶The name of God is being blasphemed among the Gentile nations because of you, just as it is written.

2:17-24

16 So indeed circumcision has profit if you strive to perform your covenantal obligations; but if you are a transgressor of your covenantal obligations, your circumcision has become as uncircumcision. ²So, indeed, if the uncircumcised man keeps the requirements of the Covenant, will not his uncircumcision be considered as circumcision? ³The man born uncircumcised who completes the requirements of the Covenant will indeed condemn you who, in spite of having the letter of the divine instruction and circumcision, are a transgressor of the Covenant. ⁴For it is not the one who is so in outward appearance who is a Jew; neither is circumcision what appears outwardly on the body. ⁵Rather, a Jew is he who is so in his hidden part; and circumcision is of the heart—it is by the Spirit, not by the letter. ⁶His praise is not from men, but from God.

2:25-29

§ 1.2.3 • Response to Objection: If Mastery of Torah Does Not Save, There Is No Advantage to Being a Jew

§ 1.2.3.1 • The Advantage of the Jew: What It Is

PART 6

17 What, then, is the advantage of being a Jew? ²And what is the benefit of circumcision? ³It is great in every way! ⁴Primarily, it is because they were entrusted with the revelations of God.

3:1-2

18 Now what if some have not believed? ²Their unbelief does not bring to nothing the trust from God, does it? ³•Of course not! ⁴God must be true though every man be a liar. ⁵As it is

written, "... so you will be vindicated with regard to your promises and will prevail when you are judged."³

3:3-4

19 Now if our unrighteousness establishes the righteousness of God, what would we suggest?
 2. • God, when he deals out wrath, is not unjust, is he? 3. (I mean, when he deals out wrath in response to the individual.) 4. Of course not! 5. Because, otherwise, how could God judge the world?

3:5-6

20 But if by my lie the truth of God is magnified to his glory, then why am I nevertheless condemned as a sinner? 2. It is not as we are slandered with and as some claim that we say—"we should do evil in order that good might come." 3. The condemnation of whomever would think and act like this is just.

3:7-8

§ 1.2.3.2 • The Advantage of the Jew: What It Is Not

PART 7

21 What am I saying then? 2. Are we better than they? 3. Absolutely not! For we have already accused Jews as well as Greeks—all of them—of being under sin. 4. As it is written,

"5. *There is none righteous, not even one.*"⁴

"6. *There is no one who understands.*"⁵

"7. *There is no one who seeks for God.*"⁶

"8. *All have turned aside and, at the same time, made themselves worthless.* 9. *There is no one who does good, there is not even as many as one.* 10. *Their throat is an open grave; they deceive with their tongues.* 11. *The poison of snakes is behind their lips; their mouth is full of curses and bitter hatred.* 12. *Their feet are quick to spill blood; destruction and misery are in their paths and the path to peace they do not understand.* 13. *There is no fear of God before their eyes.*"⁷

14. So we know that, whatever the Covenant says, it speaks it to those who are within that Covenant, to the effect that every mouth might be silenced and the whole world might be made liable to judgment by God. 15. For this reason, no human being will ever be decreed *dikaïos* in his sight on the basis of deeds that satisfy the Covenant; for, indeed, through the Covenant comes the knowledge of sin.

3:9-20

§ 1.3 • The Gospel: Mercy Is Granted, Without Distinction, to Anyone Who Embraces the Truth of Jesus

§ 1.3.1 • The Gospel of Jesus Supercedes Mercy through Covenant-keeping

PART 8

22 Now then, apart from the Covenant, a *dikaïosune* from God has been made manifest, attest-

3. *Psalm* 51:4b.

4. *Psalm* 14:1, but not *verbatim*.

5. *Psalm* 14:2, implied.

6. *Psalm* 14:2, implied.

7. *Psalm* 13:3, in LXX; cf. *Psalm* 14:3.

ed to by the *Torah* and the Prophets—even a *dikaioisune* from God granted to all those who believe in view of their belief concerning Jesus, the *messiah*.

3:21–22a

- 23** Now there is no distinction. ²Indeed, all have sinned and come short of the glory of God and are decreed *dikaiois* as a gift by his grace in view of the redemption price which was paid by the Messiah, Jesus—the very one whom God purposed as a propitiatory offering with a view to our believing in his blood. ³This was for an indication of his righteousness in the face of the overlooking of our previously committed sins by the forbearance of God. ⁴It was toward an indication of his righteousness in the time here and now, to the end that he might be righteous even as he is the one who decrees the unrighteous person *dikaiois* on the basis of his belief in Jesus.

3:22b–26

§ 1.3.2 • Mercy Through Belief in Jesus Eliminates Jewish Privilege

PART 9

- 24** Where, then, is our boast? ²It is excluded! ³In view of what sort of *torah*? ⁴Instruction to perform deeds that satisfy the Covenant? ⁵No! Rather, in view of a *torah* involving belief. ⁶Indeed, we have concluded that a person is decreed *dikaiois* on the basis of his belief, apart from deeds that satisfy the Covenant.

3:27–28

- 25** Or, is God only God in relation to the Jews? ²Is he not also God in relation to the Gentiles? ³Yes! Also in relation to the Gentiles, if indeed God is one. ⁴He will declare the circumcision *dikaiois* as a result of their belief, and he will declare the uncircumcision *dikaiois* in keeping with their belief.

3:29–30

§ 2 • Paul's Gospel in Relation to the Teaching of Torah

§ 2.1 • Evidence from Abraham With Regard to Mercy Coming to Him Who Believes

PART 10

- 26** Are we, then, invalidating the *Torah* through our claim that *dikaioisune* is granted to belief? ²Of course not! ³Rather, we are supporting the *Torah*.

3:31

- 27** What shall we say that Abraham, our forefather by physical descent, has found? ²Now if Abraham is pronounced *dikaiois* on the basis of good acts, he has a basis for boasting. ³But before God he does not. ⁴For what do the scriptures say? ⁵"*And Abraham believed God and it was credited to him, resulting in dikaioisune.*"⁸ ⁶Now to one who performs good acts, his recompense is not considered as a gift of grace; but, rather, as what is due. ⁷But to one who does not perform good acts—yet who believes in the one who decrees the ungodly man *dikaiois*—his belief is taken into account, resulting in *dikaioisune*.

4:1–5

8. *Genesis* 15:6.

28 And in accord with this, David describes the blessing upon the man to whom God credits *dikaiosune* apart from good acts:

“²·Blessed are those whose lawless deeds have been forgiven and whose sins have been hidden from view. ³·Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord will not take into account.”⁹

4:6–8

§ 2.2 • Evidence from Abraham With Regard to Divine Mercy to Gentiles

PART 11

29 So then, is this blessing for the circumcision, or is it also for the uncircumcision? ²·Now we are saying that, for Abraham, his believing was taken into account, resulting in *dikaiosune*. ³·So then, how was it taken into account? ⁴·While he was among the circumcision, or among the uncircumcision? ⁵·Not among the circumcision, but among the uncircumcision. ⁶·And he received the sign of circumcision as a seal on the *dikaiosune* connected to his believing, which was among the uncircumcision. ⁷·With the following result: he is the father of all who, in spite of their uncircumcision, believe such that *dikaiosune* is also credited to them; but, further, he is the father of the circumcision—not with respect to those who are merely from the circumcision *per se*, but with respect to those who follow in the steps of the belief that our father Abraham had while he was yet among the uncircumcision.

4:9–12

30 Now the promise to Abraham, or to his offspring, that he would be heir of the world was not with a view to the Mosaic Covenant; rather, it was with a view to the *dikaiosune* connected with believing. ²·Now, if it is those under the Mosaic Covenant who are heirs, then believing has been rendered of no effect and the promise has been set aside.

4:13–14

31 Now the Covenant brings about an awareness of wrath. (²·Where there is no covenant, there is no transgression.) ³·For this reason, the promise is by virtue of believing, with the result that it is in accordance with grace, to the end that the promise is made sure to all of the offspring—not only to the offspring of Abraham who is under the Mosaic Covenant, but also to the one who is an offspring by imitating Abraham’s belief. ⁴·He is the father of us all, as it is written, “/ have appointed you a father of many peoples.”¹⁰

4:15–17a

§ 2.3 • Abraham’s Belief as the Paradigm of That Which Marks the Heir of Mercy

PART 12

32 In the sight of Him whom he believed—of God, who makes the dead to live and who calls those things that have no being into being—this man, with a hope that was against hope, believed in his becoming the father of many peoples in accord with what had been said, “So shall your offspring be.”¹¹ ²·And, in that he did not weaken in his belief, he did not take note of his own body—which had already been brought near to death (since he was around a

9. *Psalm* 32:1–2.

10. *Genesis* 17:5.

11. *Genesis* 15:5.

hundred years old)—nor of the deadness of Sarah's womb. ³With respect to the promise of God, he was not torn in unbelief; rather, he grew strong in belief. ⁴Giving glory to God, he indeed became fully convinced that what he had promised he was in fact able to do. ⁵For this very reason, it was taken into account for him, resulting in *dikaiosune*.

4:17b–23

33 Now it was not written in consideration of him alone—"it was credited to him"¹²—rather, also in consideration of us to whom it is going to be credited—to us who believe in him who raised up Jesus, our Lord, from the dead—he who was delivered up because of our transgressions and was raised up because of our *dikaiosis*.

4:24–25

§ 3 • Jesus, Apart from Law, as the Basis for Salvation

§ 3.1 • The Positive Prospects and Privileges for the Jesus-Believer

PART 13

34 So then, being decreed *dikaios* by virtue of our belief, we have peace with God through our Lord, Jesus, the *messiah*. ²Through him, due to our believing, we have our introduction into this grace in which we stand, and we boast in a confident, eager expectation of the glory of God.

5:1–2

35 Not only this, but we also boast in our tribulations, knowing that our tribulation is resulting in perseverance, our perseverance in attestedness, and our attestedness in confident, eager expectation; and this expectation will not bring us to shame, because the fact of God's love for us has been poured out in our hearts in the form of the Holy Spirit granted to us.

5:3–5

36 Now indeed, while we were deficient in our moral worthiness—in just that moment—the *messiah* died for us God-haters. ²Now someone will hardly die for a righteous man; but perhaps for a good man there is, in fact, someone who dares to die. ³But God evidences *his* very own love toward us in this: even though we are sinners, the *messiah* died for us. ⁴Much more assuredly, therefore, shall we, being now decreed *dikaios* by his blood, be rescued from the Wrath through him. ⁵For if, being enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, with much greater assurance, having been thus reconciled, shall we be rescued into his Life.

5:6–10

37 And not only this, but we also boast in God in view of our Lord, Jesus, the *messiah*—the one through whom we now receive reconciliation.

5:11

§ 3.2 • The Centrality of Jesus in the Story of Salvation

PART 14

38 So then, just as, in view of one man, sin entered into the world and death through sin and in

12. *Genesis* 15:6.

this way death spread to all men because all sinned, (2.Now up to the time of the Covenant, sin was in the world. 3.Sin is not registered when there is no covenant; but death nevertheless reigned from Adam to the time of Moses, even upon those who had not sinned in the likeness of Adam's transgression—he who is the prototype of what was going to come.)

5:12–14

39 But, it is not the case that—as the transgression, so also the gift. 2.For if, by the transgression of the one man, "the many" die, much more assuredly does the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one man—Jesus, the *messiah*—prevail with respect to "the many." 3.Furthermore, the gift is not like that which arises through the one who sinned; for—on the one hand—judgment leading to condemnation results from one transgression, but—on the other hand—the gift of grace is in response to many transgressions which would lead to a just penalty. 4.So, if, by the transgression of the one, death reigns through that one, much more assuredly, those who are receiving the prevailing reality of grace—that is, of the gift of *dikaioisune*—these will reign in Life through the one, Jesus, the *messiah*.

5:15–17

40 So then, just as in connection with the one transgression there was condemnation for all men, so also in connection with the one punishment there was *dikaiosis* leading to Life for all men. 2.For just as, in connection with the disobedience of the one man, “the many” are classed as sinners, so also, in connection with the obedience of the one man, “the many” will be classed as *dikaiois*.

5:18–19

41 Now the Covenant came in alongside to the end that transgression might increase; but where sin increases, grace overwhelmingly prevails, to the effect that, just as sin reigns, leading to death, so, correspondingly, grace—in the form of *dikaioisune*—reigns, leading to Life in the final age through Jesus, the *messiah*, our lord.

5:20–21

Segment 2—Paul's Response to Two Major Objections to His Gospel

§ 1 • Response to First Objection: Paul's Gospel Promotes Moral Laxity

§ 1.1 • Contra Its Detractors, Paul's Teaching Does Promote Righteous Obedience

§ 1.1.1 • Paul's Teaching Entails the Purposive Pursuit of Righteousness, Not the Purposive Pursuit of Sin

PART 15

42 What are we saying? 2.That we should persist in sin so that grace might increase?

6:1

43 Absolutely not! 2.We who died to sin—how could we continue to live in it?

6:2

44 Or do you not know that—we who have been baptized into Messiah Jesus—we have been baptized into his death? 2.So, as a result of our baptism into his death, we have been buried with him with the result that, just as the *messiah* was raised from the dead with a view to the glory that was to be his from the Father, so we too might walk in that newness of Life. 3.For if we have been united with him in the likeness of his death, then indeed we shall also

be in the likeness of his resurrection.

6:3-5

45 Understand this: the old person that we were was crucified with him with the intent that that body of sin might be idled—as a consequence, we no longer serve sin. ²Now the one who dies is decreed *dikaïos* from his sin. ³Accordingly, if we die with the *messiah*, we believe that we will also live with him—and we know that the *messiah*, having been raised from the dead, is never to die again. ⁴Death no longer has mastery over him.

6:6-9

46 Now with respect to the death that he died, he died for sin once and for all. ²And with respect to the life that he lives, he lives for God. ³In the same way, count yourselves to be dead with regard to sin, and living for God in Messiah Jesus. ⁴Sin, then, is not to continue to reign in your mortal body such that you continue to obey its desires. ⁵And do not present your members to sin to be implements of unrighteousness. ⁶Rather, present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members to God as implements of righteousness; for sin shall not be master over you.

6:10-14a

§ 1.1.2 • The Gospel Paul Teaches Results in Righteous Obedience While the Demands of the Covenant Do Not

PART 16

47 Now you are not under the Covenant but under grace. ²So what follows? ³Can we sin because we are not under the Covenant but under grace?

6:14b-15a

48 Of course not! ²Do you not realize that to whomever you present yourselves as servants to obey, you are servants to whomever you obey—whether that be sin, leading to death, or obedience, leading to *dikaïosune*?

6:15b-16

49 Thanks be to God, because, you were servants of sin, but you became obedient from the heart to the content of that teaching to which you were introduced and, having been freed from sin, you became servants of righteousness.

6:17-18

50 I speak with reference to your actual human experience, accounting for the moral weakness of your present physical existence. ²Just as you presented your members as servants to uncleanness and lawlessness resulting in your lawlessness, so now present your members as servants to righteousness resulting in your holiness. ³When you were servants of sin, you were at liberty with respect to righteousness. ⁴So, what sort of fruit were you getting back then? ⁵You are shamed by those things now. ⁶In fact, the end of those things is death. ⁷But now—being free from sin and in servitude to God—you get fruit coming out of you signifying holiness; and its end is Life in the final age. ⁸For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God in Messiah Jesus, our Lord, is Life in the final age.

6:19-23

-- (b) --

51 Or, do you not know, brothers—now I am speaking to those who understand the

Covenant—that the Covenant is in force over a man only for as long as he has Life through it?

7:1

52 A woman who is married to a man has been put under obligation by the law to a living husband. ²If that husband dies, she is released from the legal obligation concerning her husband. ³So then—while her husband is living—she will be named an adulteress if she comes to be with another man. ⁴But if her husband dies, she is free of her legal obligation such that, even if she comes to be with another man, she is not an adulteress.

7:2–3

53 So then, my brothers, with the body of the *messiah* in view, you were put to death by the Covenant, with the result that you can come to be with another—with him who was raised from the dead. ²And all this is to the end that we might bear fruit for God. ³While we were confined within our natural-born humanity, the desires of sin—those exposed by the Covenant—were at work in our members to bear fruit leading to death. ⁴But now, we are free of the Covenant—having died by that by which we were held—with the result that we serve by the new reality of the Spirit and not by the old reality of the letter.

7:4–6

§ 1.2 • Contra Its Detractors, Paul's Teaching Does Not Entail That the Mosaic Covenant Promotes Evil

§ 1.2.1 • The Mosaic Covenant Reveals a Person's Sin to Him

PART 17

54 So what are we saying? ²That the Covenant is sin?

7:7a

55 Of course not! ²Rather, I would never have understood sin if not for the Covenant. ³In fact, I would never have known of my unrighteous desiring if the Covenant had not said, "Do not have any unrighteous desire," and sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by that commandment, produced in me every unrighteous desire.

7:7b–8a

56 Now, apart from the Covenant, sin is dead. ²I was once alive apart from the Covenant; but when the commandment came, sin became alive and I died. ³And I discovered something: the commandment that was to lead to Life, this commandment led to death. ⁴For sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, deceived me and through it killed me.

7:8b–11

57 So then, the Covenant is holy and the commandment is holy and righteous and good.

7:12

§ 1.2.2 • An Individual's Sin, Not the Mosaic Covenant, Brings Condemnation

PART 18

58 So then, did that which is good become death for me?

7:13a

59 Of course not! ²Rather, it was my sin. ³The Covenant was given in order that my sin might become evident, bringing death to me through that which is good. ⁴It was given in order

that through the commandment my sin might become more than abundantly sinful. ⁵For we understand that the Covenant is spiritual, but I am of natural-born humanity, sold into bondage under sin. ⁶For I do not understand what it is that I am producing. ⁷Indeed, it is not the case that, what I truly want, this I act on. ⁸Rather, what I hate, this I do.

7:13b-15

60 Now if, what I do not really want to do, this I do—I am in agreement with the Covenant that it is good. ²Now then, no longer can I think that “I” am causing it. ³Rather, it is sin dwelling within me. ⁴Indeed, I come to understand that it does not reside in me—that is, in my natural-born humanity—to do what is good. ⁵For to will it is present within me, but to produce the good I do not find.

7:16-18

61 Now it is not the case that I do the good that I want to do; rather, the evil that I do not want to do, this I engage in. ²But if the very thing I am not wanting to do, this is what I am doing, then no longer can I think that “I” am causing it; rather it is sin dwelling within me. ³I discover, therefore, this contrary set of instructions within the me who wants to do good—for evil is present within me!

7:19-21

§ 1.3 • A Fresh, Complementary Articulation of Paul's Gospel That Clearly Shows How It Promotes Righteous Obedience

§ 1.3.1 • Divine Mercy Is Promised to Those Who Follow the Instruction of the Spirit

PART 19

62 Now in my inner man I delight in the Covenant from God. ²But I see a different set of instructions in my members, waging war against the set of instructions of my mind and making me captive to the instructions of sin existing in my members. ³I am a wretched man! ⁴Who will rescue me from this body doomed to death?

7:22-24

63 Thanks be to God! ²He will—through Jesus, the *messiah*, our Lord.

7:25a

64 So then, with my mind, I do, in fact, serve the instruction of God, yet in my natural-born humanity, the instruction of sin. ²Even so, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Messiah Jesus, who do not walk in accord with the counsels of their sinful humanity, but in accord with the counsels of the Spirit. ³Indeed, the instruction of the Spirit—resulting in Life in Messiah Jesus—sets me free from the instruction of sin—resulting in death.

7:25b-8:2

65 Now with regard to what the Covenant was unable to do because it was ineffectual in view of the innate moral depravity of our natural-born humanity—God, having sent his own Son in the likeness of sinful humanity, responding even to sin, condemned sin in that humanity to the effect that the due penalty of the moral law might be fully exacted for our benefit, who do not walk in accord with the counsels of our natural-born humanity, but in accord with the counsels of the Spirit.

8:3-4

§ 1.3.2 • Examination of the Relation between Responsiveness to the Spirit and Eternal Life

PART 20

- 66** Now those who are in accord with the counsels of their natural-born humanity purposefully pursue the things recommended by that natural-born humanity; but those who are in accord with the counsels of the Spirit purposefully pursue the things recommended by the Spirit. ²Now the purposeful pursuit proposed by one's natural-born humanity results in death; but the purposeful pursuit proposed by the Spirit results in Life and *shalom*. ³Because the purposeful pursuit proposed by one's natural-born humanity is hostile to God. ⁴It does not subject itself to the instruction of God; it is not even able to do so. ⁵So those who exist within the sphere of their natural-born humanity are not able to please God. 8:5-8
- 67** But you do not exist within the sphere of your natural-born humanity; rather, you exist within the sphere of the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells within you. 8:9a
- 68** Now if one does not have the spirit of the *messiah*, this one is not of him. ²But if the spirit of the *messiah* is in you, while your bodily existence is condemned to die because of sin, yet your spirit results in Life on account of *dikaosune*. ³Indeed, if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells within you, the one who raised the *messiah* from the dead will also give Life to your mortal bodies in view of the indwelling of his Spirit within you. 8:9b-11
- 69** So then, my brothers, we are not debtors to our natural-born humanity such that we must live in accord with that natural-born humanity. ²If you are living in accord with your natural-born humanity, you are about to die; but if, because of the Spirit, you are putting to death the practices of bodily existence, you shall live. ³For whoever is led by the Spirit of God, these are the sons of God. 8:12-14
- 70** Now you have not taken on a spirit of slavery again, resulting in fear; rather you have taken on a spirit consonant with your adoption as sons, in which we cry out, "*Abba*"—"Father." 8:15
- 71** The Spirit himself bears witness along with our spirit that we are children of God—and if children, then also heirs (not only heirs of God, but also fellow-heirs with the *messiah*)—if we experience with him the longing to be glorified with him. 8:16-17

§ 1.4 • Parenthetical Reflections on the Resultant Psycho-emotional State of the Spirit-led Jesus-believer

§ 1.4.1 • Reflections on the Longing Suffered by the Spirit-led Jesus-believer

PART 21

- 72** Now I count it that the experiences of longing in this current time are not fit to be compared to the glory that is about to be realized in us. 8:18

- 73 The anxious yearning of the creation eagerly awaits the unveiling of the sons of God. ²For the creation was made subject to futility—not voluntarily, but because of Him who put it in subjection on the basis of his confident expectation that the creation itself would in fact be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God. ³We know that the entire created order groans with them and is in labor with them till now. 8:19–22
- 74 Not only this, but also we ourselves—because we have the first fruits of the Spirit—even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly awaiting our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body; for it is in confident anticipation that we are saved. ²Now an anticipation that is being seen is not an “anticipation”—for why would one “anticipate” what he sees? ³But if we anticipate what we are not seeing, then with perseverance we eagerly wait for it. 8:23–25
- 75 Now in just this same way—by creating in our spirit this yearning for glory—the Spirit comes to the aid of our weakness. ²For we do not know how we might pray that accords with what is necessary. ³But, in and through our wordless groanings, the Spirit himself is making an appeal to God for us. ⁴And he who searches hearts knows what the intent of the Spirit is—namely, that he makes an appeal on behalf of the *hagioi* that accords with what God requires. 8:26–27

§ 1.4.2 • Reflections on the Confidence of the Spirit-led Jesus-believer

PART 22

- 76 Now we know that, to those who love God—to those who are named in accordance with his purpose—all things work together to bring about the good—that is, we know that those whom he chooses for himself in advance, he in fact predestines to be conformed to the image of his Son, to the end that he might be the firstborn among many brothers; and that those whom he predestines, these he in fact invites; and we know that those whom he invites, these in fact he decrees to be *dikaïos*; and that those whom he decrees to be *dikaïos*, these in fact he will glorify. 8:28–30
- 77 What then shall we say in response to these things? 8:31a
- 78 If God is for us, who is against us? ²Indeed, he did not spare his own Son. ³Rather, he delivered him up for the benefit of us all. ⁴How will he not, along with him, grant all these things to us? 8:31b–32
- 79 Who will bring an accusation against those named by God? ²God is the one who decrees *dikaïos*. ³Who is the one who brings condemnation? 8:33–34a
- 80 The *Messiah* is he who died—or rather who, being raised up, is in fact at the right hand of God. ²He indeed is the one who appeals to God on our behalf. ³What will exclude us from this love of the *messiah*? ⁴Tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness,

or peril, or sword? ⁵As it is written, "*For your sake we are put to death the whole day. We are counted as sheep for the slaughter.*"¹³

8:34b–36

81 And in all these things we are overwhelmingly victorious in consequence of the one who loves us. ²For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, neither *angeloi* nor *archai*, neither things happening now nor things about to happen in the future, no powers—neither the highest realm, nor the lowest realm—nor any other created thing will be able to exclude us from the love of God which is in Messiah Jesus, our Lord.

8:37–39

§ 2 • Second Line of Objection: Paul's Gospel Entails a Failure of God's Promises to the Jews

§ 2.1 • Preface: Paul Expresses Grief Over His Kinsmen's Rejection of the Gospel

PART 23

82 I am telling the truth with regard to the *messiah*. ²I am not making false assertions (my convictions, stemming from the Holy Spirit, testify in support of me), because I have great sorrow and unceasing grief in my heart. ³I could wish to be *anathema*; I myself could wish to be excluded from the *messiah*, in the place of my brothers, my kinsmen by physical descent. ⁴These very ones are Israelites. ⁵To these belong the adoption as sons, and the glory, and the covenants, and the granting of Torah, and the temple service, and the promises. ⁶To these belong the fathers; and, with regard to what concerns physical descent, from these is the *messiah*, the one who is over all things. ⁷May God be praised into the ages. ⁸Amen!

9:1–5

§ 2.2 • Response to Objection: If Salvation Comes to Belief Rather than Covenant-keeping, then God's Promises to the Jews Have Failed

§ 2.2.1 • God's Promises Have Not Failed: His Promise Was to Israel as a People, Not to Individual Jews

§ 2.2.1.1 • God Never Promised Salvation to Every Individual Jew

PART 24

83 Now it is not as if the promise of God has failed. ²For it is not the case that all those who are descended from Israel, these are Israel. ³Neither is it true that all his children are the “seed” of Abraham. ⁴Rather, “*In Isaac a ‘seed’ for you shall be named.*”¹⁴ ⁵It is not the case that the children by physical descent, that these are the children from God. ⁶Rather, the children of the promise are accounted as the ‘seed.’ ⁷This is the wording of the promise: “*At this time next year I will come and Sarah shall have a son.*”¹⁵ ⁸And not only this, but also Rebekah conceived by this promised one—by Isaac, our father. ⁹When they had not yet been born, before they had done anything good or evil, in order that the chosen purpose of God might continue— not resulting from their actions, but as consequence of the one who appoints—it was said to her, “*The older shall serve the younger.*”¹⁶ ¹⁰Just so it was written, “*Jacob I loved; and Esau I hated.*”¹⁷

9:6–13

13. *Psalm* 44:22.

14. *Genesis* 21:12.

15. *Genesis* 18:10.

16. *Genesis* 25:23.

17. *Malachi* 1:2.

§ 2.2.1.2 • For God Not To Save Every Individual Jew Is Not Unrighteous of Him

PART 25

84 So what are we saying? ²There is no unrighteousness with God, is there? ³Of course not! ⁴To Moses he says, “*I will grant mercy to whomever I grant mercy and I will show compassion on whomever I show compassion.*”¹⁸

9:14–15

85 So then, ultimately it is not from the one who is choosing it and it is not from the one who is running after it; rather, it is ultimately from God, the one who grants mercy. ²With reference to Pharaoh the Scriptures say, “*For this very reason I raised you up—so that I might demonstrate my power through you and so that my name might be proclaimed in all the land.*”¹⁹ ³So, he shows mercy to whomever he wants and he hardens whomever he wants.

9:16–18

86 You will say to me then, “Why then does he still find blame? For who has ever resisted his will?” ²But to the contrary, who are you, O Man—the one defending himself against God? ³The thing shaped will not say to the one shaping it—“Why did you make me like this?”—will it? ⁴Rather, does not the potter have a right with respect to the clay to create from the same lump that which will be a vessel for honor and that which will be for dishonor?

9:19–21

§ 2.2.1.3 • God's Purpose Is To Preserve Israel As A People And Eventually Save Many, But Not That Every Jew Will Be Saved

PART 26

87 Now if, while being willing to demonstrate his wrath and make his power known, God endures with great patience vessels of wrath made for destruction, it is precisely so that he might make known the abundance of his glory upon vessels of mercy prepared for a destiny in glory. ²(To be such vessels of mercy, he appoints even us, not only from among the Jews, but also from among the Gentiles.) ³It is, in fact, as he describes it in Hosea, “*I will call that which is not my people ‘my people’ and her who was not loved ‘loved.’*”²⁰ ⁴And “*it shall be in that place where it was said to them ‘You are not my people’, there they shall be called sons of the living God.*”²¹ ⁵Yet, with regard to Israel, Isaiah cries out, “*Even though the number of the sons of Israel is to be as the sand of the sea, it is but a remnant that will be saved; for the Lord, to cut them off and bring them to an end, will execute his decree upon the land.*”²² ⁶And as Isaiah foretold, “*If the Lord of Sabaoth does not leave to us some descendents, we become like Sodom and come to be like Gomorrah.*”²³

9:22–29

18. *Exodus* 33:19.

19. *Exodus* 9:16.

20. *Hosea* 2:23, very loosely.

21. *Hosea* 1:10.

22. *Isaiah* 10:22–23, loosely.

23. *Isaiah* 1:9.

§ 2.2.2 • Paul's Assessment of Individual Jews Who Are His Contemporaries: They Have "Stumbled Over the Stumbling Stone"

§ 2.2.2.1 • Israel's Failure to Attain *Dikaiosune* Has Been Due to Its Rejection of God's Provision for *Dikaiosune*

PART 27

88 So what are we saying? ²That the Gentile peoples, who are not pursuing *dikaiosune*, obtain *dikaiosune*—even the *dikaiosune* that is by virtue of believing; but Israel, while it pursues a Covenant that holds out the possibility of *dikaiosune*, does not attain *dikaiosune* within that Covenant. ³Why? ⁴Because the *dikaiosune* they pursue is not by virtue of their believing; rather, it is as if it were by virtue of their deeds. ⁵They stumble over the stumbling stone. ⁶As it is written, “Look, I am placing in Zion a ‘stumbling stone,’ even a rock that harms; but anyone who believes in it will not be brought to shame.”²⁴

9:30–33

89 Brothers, the desire of my heart and my petition on their behalf is for their salvation. ²I would vouch for them that they have a zeal for God; but it is not in accordance with knowledge. ³Being ignorant of the *dikaiosune* purposed by God and seeking to establish their own, they do not make themselves subject to the *dikaiosune* purposed by God. ⁴For the purposed focus of *Torah* is the *messiah*, resulting in *dikaiosune* for all those who believe.

10:1–4

§ 2.2.2.2 • *Dikaiosune* Can Be Obtained Under the Covenant, But Only If One Believes

(A) • The Unbelief of Paul's Contemporaries in Judaism Is the Unbelief that Moses Warned Against

PART 28

90 Moses does indeed write of a *dikaiosune* that is by virtue of the Covenant—“*The man who does these things shall attain Life by these things.*”²⁵ ²But this *dikaiosune* is by virtue of belief! ³Moses writes thus: “*Do not say (in your heart) ‘Who will ascend up into heaven?’...*”²⁶ (⁴That is, correspondingly, ‘to bring the *messiah* down.’) ⁵Or, “*...‘Who will descend into the Abyss?’...*”²⁷ (⁶That is, correspondingly, ‘to bring the *messiah* up from the dead.’) ⁷Rather, what does he say? ⁸“*The thing God asks is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart...*”²⁸ (⁹That is, correspondingly, God’s requirement with regard to the belief that we proclaim—namely, that if you proclaim with your mouth Jesus as your Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.) ¹⁰For one believes in his heart, resulting in *dikaiosune*; and one confesses with his mouth, resulting in salvation. ¹¹For the Scripture says that everyone who “*believes in it will not be brought to shame.*”²⁹ (¹²Now there is no distinction between the Jew and the Greek; for the same one is Lord over all men, abounding in riches

24. *Isaiah* 28:16 as modified by *Isaiah* 8:14.

25. An allusion to *Leviticus* 18:5.

26. An allusion to *Deuteronomy* 30:12.

27. An adapted allusion to *Deuteronomy* 30:13.

28. *Deuteronomy* 30:14.

29. *Isaiah* 28:16.

for all those who call upon him.)

10:5–12

(B) • Naming the Name of God Is Not Enough to Be Saved; Salvation Goes to Those Who Actively Believe

PART 29

91 Now, it is true "*everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved.*"³⁰ ²•Even so, how do they call upon one in whom they do not believe? ³•And how do they believe what they do not hear? ⁴•And how do they hear apart from someone proclaiming it? ⁵•And how do they proclaim it if they are not sent? ⁶•It will be just as it is written: "*How graceful... are the feet of those proclaiming the good news of good things.*"³¹ ⁷•But, indeed, not everyone will listen to the good news.

10:13–16a

92 Indeed, Isaiah says, "*Lord, who believed the message you delivered to us?*"³² ²•So, then, belief is to follow from the delivered message—and the delivered message concerned the subject of the *messiah*. ³•Yet, I say, they do not hear it, do they?

10:16b–18a

§ 2.2.3 • Gentiles Coming to Belief While Israel Does Not Is In Accord With the Predictions and Purposes of God

§ 2.2.3.1 • God Purposed to Respond to Israel's Making Him Jealous By Making Israel Jealous

PART 30

93 So, on the one hand, "*Their voice goes out to the whole earth, and their words to the ends of the world.*"³³ ²•But, I say, Israel does not comprehend, do they? ³•In the first place, Moses says, "*I will make you jealous by what is not a people, by a people without understanding I will anger you.*"³⁴ ⁴•Then Isaiah is forthright and says, "*I will be found by those who are not seeking me; I will become manifest to those who are not inquiring about me.*"³⁵ ⁵•But with regard to Israel, he says, "*The whole day long I have reached out my hands to a disobedient and obstinate people.*"³⁶

10:18b–21

§ 2.2.3.2 • In Spite of Their Stubborn Refusal to Believe in Jesus, God Has Not Rejected the Very People He Chose for Himself

(A) • To Make His People Jealous, God Has Hardened the Majority of Contemporary Jews, But He Has Not Rejected His People

PART 31

94 I say, then: God has not rejected his people, has he? ²•Of course not! ³•Indeed, I am an Israelite, from the “seed” of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. ⁴•God has not rejected his people, whom he previously chose for himself.

11:1–2a

95 Or do you not know what the Scriptures say about Elijah, as he pleads with God against Is-

30. *Joel* 2:32.

31. *Isaiah* 52:7.

32. *Isaiah* 53:1.

33. *Psalms* 19:4.

34. *Deuteronomy* 32:21.

35. *Isaiah* 65:1.

36. *Isaiah* 65:2.

rael? ²“Lord, they have killed the prophets; they have torn down your altars. I alone remain; and they seek my life.”³⁷ ³And what does the divine oracle say to him? ⁴“I have kept seven thousand men for myself who have not bowed the knee to Baal.”³⁸ ⁵In the same way, therefore, there is a remnant in the present time in accord with the choice of his grace. (⁶Now if it is by grace, then no longer can we think that it is by virtue of practices required by the Covenant; for then this grace is no longer a grace.)

11:2b-6

96 What then? ²What Israel is seeking, that Israel has not obtained. ³Yet the chosen have obtained it, and the rest were hardened. ⁴It is as is written, “God gives them a spirit of stupor”³⁹ — “eyes that do not see and ears that do not hear”⁴⁰ — down to this very day. ⁵And David says, “Let their table become a snare and a trap, even a stumbling block and a retribution to them. Let their eyes be darkened so that they cannot see, and bend their backs through everything.”⁴¹

11:7-10

97 I ask, then: they do not trip such that they fall, do they? ²Of course not! ³Rather, at the occasion afforded by their transgression, salvation comes to the Gentiles in order to make them jealous.⁴² ⁴Now if their transgression is riches to the world and their failure is riches to the Gentiles, how much more certainly will their fulfillment of their obligations prove so!

11:11-12

(B) • Gentiles Have Not Replaced Jews In God's Purposes; God Will Eagerly Keep His Promises to the Jews When They Repent

PART 32

98 Now I am speaking to you who are Gentiles. ²Inasmuch then as I am an apostle to the Gentiles, I glorify my service if somehow I might provoke my kinsmen to jealousy and save some from among them. ³Now if their rejection is the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance be, but life from the dead? ⁴If the first piece is holy, the lump is also; and if the root is holy, the branches are too.

11:13-16

99 Now if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive, were grafted in among them and became a partaker with them of the rich root of the olive tree, then don't be arrogant toward the branches. ²If you are inclined to be arrogant, remember—you do not bear the root, the root bears you.

11:17-18

100 You will say then, “Branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in.” ²Good for you! ³They were broken off for their unbelief, and you stand because of your belief. ⁴Do not be conceited, but fear. ⁵For if God did not spare the natural branches, he will not spare you either. ⁶Behold, then, the kindness and severity of God. ⁷To those who fell, severity.

37. *I Kings* 19:10,14.

38. *I Kings* 19:18.

39. *Isaiah* 29:10.

40. *Deuteronomy* 29:4.

41. *Psalms* 69:22-23.

42. This is an allusion to *Deuteronomy* 32:21.

.....

8. But to you, God's kindness, if you continue in his kindness; otherwise, you too will be cut off.

11:19–22

101 But they too, if they do not continue in their unbelief, will be grafted in; for God is able to graft them in again. 2. Now if you were cut off from what according to nature is a wild olive tree and were grafted, contrary to nature, into a cultivated olive tree, how much more certainly will these, in accordance with nature, be grafted into their own olive tree?

11:23–24

(C) • Jewish Unbelief Is Temporary, A Part of God's Hidden Purposes

PART 33

102 Now, brothers, I do not want you to be ignorant of this secret—lest you be wise by your own estimation: a partial hardening has occurred in Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has arrived, and so will all Israel be saved. 2. It is just as it is written, “*There will be a Deliverer for Zion; he will turn away ungodliness from Jacob... this is my covenant with them (when I take away their sins)...*”⁴³

11:25–27

103 As far as their response to the good news is concerned, they are enemies with respect to you. 2. But, as far as God's choice is concerned, they are loved because of the fathers; for the gifts and appointment of God are irrevocable. 3. Now just as you once were disobedient to God, but now are shown mercy because of their disobedience, so these also now are disobedient during the time of your mercy so that they might, in fact, be shown mercy. 4. For God shuts up all in disobedience so that He might show mercy to all.

11:28–32

-- (b) --

104 Oh, the depth of the extreme extent of God's wisdom and knowledge! 2. How unsearchable are his judgments and how unfathomable are his ways! 3. Who knows the mind of the Lord? 4. Or, who becomes his counselor? 5. Or, who has first gives to him that it should be paid back to him? 6. For from him and with a view to him and for him are all things. 7. To him be glory into the last age. Amen.

11:33–36

Segment 3—Instructions Regarding the Pursuit of Holiness

§ 1 • Exhortation to Live Holy Lives in Gratitude for Divine Mercy

§ 1.1 • The Pursuit of Holiness Is the Appropriate Thank-offering in view of God's Grace

PART 34

105 Therefore, in view of the mercies of God, brothers, I urge you to present your bodies a living offering, holy, acceptable to God. 2. It is your ultimately true religious service.

12:1

43. *Isaiah* 59:20–21

-- (b) --

106 Now do not be conformed to this age; rather, be transformed by the renewal of your mind such that what the will of God is—namely, that which is good, pleasing, and in keeping with God’s ultimate purpose for you—will meet with your approval.

12:2

107 Through the grace given to me, I say to everyone among you not to esteem yourself more highly than you ought to esteem yourself. ²Rather, esteem yourself so as to be thinking soundly about yourself. ³For, to each and every person, God apportions a portion of his trust. ⁴Just as we have many members in one body—and all the members do not have the same function—so likewise the many of us are one body in the *messiah*, and each of us is a member of one another, even though we have gifts of grace that differ in accordance with the grace given to us. ⁵If it is prophecy, then it is in accord with that proportion of his trust. ⁶If it is service, then it is in that service. ⁷If you are one who teaches, then it is in that teaching. ⁸If you are one who exhorts, then it is in that exhortation.

12:3–8a

108 The one who gives is to be doing so with generosity. ²The one who provides for others is to be doing so with eagerness. ³The one who does acts of mercy is to be doing so with joyfulness. ⁴Our love is to be unhypocritical.

12:8b–9a

PART 35

109 You are to ...

- ² abhor what is evil, be attached to what is good.
- ³ be people who are affectionate toward one another with brotherly love.
- ⁴ be people who take the lead in giving honor to one another.
- ⁵ be people who do not falter when it comes to zeal—being aflame by the spirit toward serving the Lord.
- ⁶ rejoice in hope; persevere through tribulations; in prayer, stand poised in readiness for the realization of your hope.
- ⁷ share in the needs of the *hagioi*, pursuing hospitality.

12:9b–13

110 Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse—such that you rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep.

12:14–15

111 Be attentive toward one another equally; do not be attentive to the “important people,” but associate with the lowly. ²Do not be attentive to yourself.

12:16

112 Do not return evil for evil. ²Take care, before all men, to do what is good. ³So far as it is possible from you, live at peace with all men. ⁴Do not avenge yourselves, loved ones.

5. Rather, make room for the Wrath. 6. As it is written: “Vengeance is mine... I will repay,”⁴⁴ says the Lord. 7. And then, “If your enemy is hungry, feed him. 8. If he thirsts, give him something to drink. 9. For by doing this you heap coals of fire upon his head....”⁴⁵ 10. Do not be conquered by evil, rather conquer evil with good.

12:17–21

§ 1.2 • Addressing a Controversy Regarding What Holiness Demands: How Should One Relate to Governmental Authority?

PART 36

113 Every person is to place himself under the prevailing authorities. 2. For there is no authority if it is not by God, and those that exist have been placed there by God. 3. Consequently, the one who stands in opposition to the authority has taken a stand against the directive of God.

13:1–2a

114 Now, those who have taken a stand against it will receive a sentence on themselves. 2. Those who rule are not a terror to good behavior, but to bad behavior. 3. Do you want not to be afraid of the authority? 4. Do good, and you will have praise from him; for he is a servant of God for you, to bring about a good thing. 5. But if you do bad, then be afraid! 6. For he does not carry the sword without purpose. 7. Indeed, he is a servant of God, an avenger who brings wrath against the one who practices bad behavior.

13:2b–4

115 So then, to place oneself under the ruler’s authority is a necessity, not only because of the ruler’s wrath, but also as a matter of moral conviction. 2. For this reason, to be sure, complete your tribute obligations. 3. For they are ministers of God, attending to God’s wishes with regard to this very thing.

13:5–6

116 Give to all the things that are due them: tribute to the one owed tribute, tax to the one owed tax, fear to the one owed fear, honor to the one owed honor.

13:7

§ 1.3 • Love as the Comprehensive Demand of Holiness

PART 37

117 Leave no unsatisfied debts to anyone—except to love one another. 2. The one who loves the other person has fulfilled the Covenant. 3. For this—do not commit adultery; do not murder; do not steal; do not desire to do such; and any other such commandment⁴⁶—is summed up in this one word of command: “You shall love you neighbor as yourself.”⁴⁷ 4. Love does no wrong to one’s neighbor; accordingly, love is the fulfillment of the Covenant.

13:8–10

44. *Deuteronomy* 32:35,41.

45. *Proverbs* 25:21–22.

46. Cf. *Exodus* 20:13 ff.

47. *Leviticus* 19:18.

§ 1.4 • Exhortation to Be Alert With Respect to Holiness

PART 38

118 And do all this, understanding the time!—that already is the hour for us to awaken from sleep. ²Now, in fact, is our salvation nearer at hand than when we believed it was. ³The night is far spent; the day draws near. ⁴Therefore, we should take off the works of darkness; we should put on the weapons of light. ⁵We should walk decently, as in the day—not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual promiscuity and licentiousness, not in strife and jealousy. ⁶Rather, put on the Lord, Jesus, the *messiah*, and have no regard for the *sarx*, so far as its desires are concerned.

13:11–14

§ 2 • Dealing with Disagreement Over What Holiness Demands

§ 2.1 • Exhortation Not to Let Differences Between Jewish and Gentile Religious Scruples Destroy Mutual Acceptance

PART 39

119 Accept the man who has faulty beliefs—not in order to dispute his views. ²One person believes he can eat all things; but the one with faulty beliefs eats vegetables. ³The man who eats is not to hold in contempt the man who does not eat; and the man who does not eat is not to condemn the man who does eat, for God accepts him. ⁴Who are you—the one condemning the servant of another? ⁵To his own master he either stands or falls. ⁶And he shall be made to stand, for the Lord is able to make him stand.

14:1–4

120 One person counts one day above another day; another person counts every day alike. ²Each is to be fully convinced in his own mind. ³The man who considers the day special, he considers it so for the Lord; and the man who does not consider the day special, it is for the Lord he does not so consider it. ⁴And the man who eats, he eats for the Lord; for he gives thanks to God. ⁵But the man who does not eat, it is for the Lord that he does not eat, and he too gives thanks to God.

14:5–6

121 No one among us lives to the fullest for his own sake, and no one dies to the things of life for his own sake. ²As a matter of fact, if we live to the fullest, we live to the fullest for the Lord. ³And if we die to the things of life, we die to the things of life for the Lord. ⁴So, if we live to the fullest or if we die to the things of life, we are the Lord's. ⁵Now to this end the *messiah* died and then lived, that he might be master over both those who die to the things of life and those who live to the fullest.

14:7–9

122 Now you, why do you condemn your brother? ²And you, why do you hold your brother in contempt? ³For we shall all stand at the judgment seat of God. ⁴For it is written, “As surely

as I give life,"⁴⁸ says the Lord, I declare "that every knee shall bow to me and every tongue shall acknowledge God."⁴⁹ 5. Accordingly, then, each one of us shall give an account of himself to God. 6. Therefore, we should no longer pass judgment on one another.

14:10–13a

§ 2.2 • Exhortation Not to Allow Gentile Freedom With Regard to Diet to Destroy the Belief of a Jewish Brother

PART 40

123 Better, rather, you are to conclude this —not to put down an obstacle for your brother to trip over, nor a snare. 2. I have understood and have become convinced by the lord, Jesus, that nothing is defiling in and of itself. 3. But to the one who considers something to be defiling, to that person it is defiling. 4. Now if through food your brother is brought to grief, then you are no longer walking in accord with love. 5. Do not destroy with your food that one for whom the *messiah* died. 6. At all events, what is good is not to be impeached on account of you.

14:13b–16

124 Now the Kingdom of God is not food and drink, rather it is righteousness and peace and joy by the Holy Spirit. 2. Now the man who serves the *messiah* in this way is acceptable to God and approved by men. 3. So then, we should pursue the things of peace and the things that build one another up. 4. Do not destroy the work of God for the sake of food. 5. On the one hand, all things are clean; but, on the other hand, they are bad to the man who eats so as to become a cause of stumbling. 6. It is good neither to eat meat nor to drink wine nor to do anything by which your brother stumbles.

14:17–21

125 You have your own conviction. 2. Have it before God! 3. Fortunate is the one who does not condemn himself in what he deems acceptable. 4. Now the one who doubts is condemned if he eats, for it is not out of conviction, and everything that is not done out of conviction is sin. 5. Now we who are able to eat ought to bear with the faulty beliefs of those who are not able to eat and ought not to seek to please ourselves. 6. Each of us is to seek to please his neighbor by pursuing what is good for his edification. 7. For indeed, the *messiah* did not seek to please himself; rather, as it is written, "*The reproaches of the one reproaching you fell upon me.*"⁵⁰

14:22–5:3

§ 2.3 • Exhortation to Mutual Acceptance Among Jewish and Gentile Believers

PART 41

126 Whatsoever was formerly written down was written down for our instruction in order that through perseverance and the persuasion of these Scriptures we might have hope. 2. May the God of this perseverance and persuasion grant you to have the same perspective as one

48. Various passages assert this or something similar.

49. *Isaiah* 45:23.

50. *Psalms* 69:9.

another as regards Messiah Jesus, so that from a common passion you might glorify God—even the Father of our Lord, Jesus, the *messiah*—with one voice.

15:4–6

127 Accordingly, accept one another, just as the *messiah* accepted you for the glory of God. ²For I affirm the *messiah* to have been a servant. ³He became a servant of the circumcision, out of consideration for the truthfulness of God, in order to bring to pass his promises to the Fathers. ⁴And he became a servant with respect to the Gentile peoples, out of consideration for his mercy, in order to glorify God. ⁵It is as was written: “*Therefore, I will acknowledge you among the Gentile peoples and I will sing praises to your name.*”⁵¹ ⁶And again it says: “*Rejoice, O Gentiles, with his people.*”⁵² ⁷And again: “*Praise the Lord, all Gentile peoples; indeed all peoples are to praise him.*”⁵³ ⁸Yet again, Isaiah says, “*there shall be ... the branch from Jesse, even the one arising to rule over the Gentiles. On the basis of him the Gentiles will have hope.*”⁵⁴

15:7–12

128 May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you believe, so that you might abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

15:13

Concluding Remarks

PART 42

129 Now so far as you are concerned, my brothers, I, for my part, am in fact confident that you yourselves are full of goodness—since you have been given a complete understanding of all the implications of the gospel—and are also able to instruct one another. ²But I have written to you rather presumptuously by some measures, as one who—in line with the grace given to me from God to be a servant of Messiah Jesus with regard to the Gentiles by doing the work of a priest in regard to the good news from God—wants to remind you of its implications to the end that my offering of the Gentile people might be acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit. ³So then, in Messiah Jesus I have this basis to boast; I have the things that pertain to God. ⁴Yet I shall not presume to speak of anything that the *messiah* has not—in word and deed, by the power of signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God—accomplished through me to bring about the obedience of the Gentiles.

15:14–19a

130 As a consequence, I have spelled out fully the good news of the *messiah* from Jerusalem curving around to Illyricum, and have eagerly sought, thereby, to proclaim this good news where the *messiah* is not named, with the consequence that I do not build on a foundation laid by someone else. ²Indeed, it is in accord with what is written, “*Those to whom what concerns him has not been reported shall see; and those who have not heard will understand.*”⁵⁵

15:19b–21

51. 2 Samuel 22:50 // Psalm 18:49.

52. Deuteronomy 32:43.

53. Psalm 117:1.

54. Isaiah 11:10.

55. Isaiah 52:15.

-- (b) --

131 Now then, indeed, for many reasons I was continually prevented from coming to you. ²But now, I have no place left in these regions, and I have had, for many years, a great desire to come to you as I travel toward Spain. ³So I am fully expecting to see you as I am passing through and to be sent on my way there by you if, first, I might perhaps be satisfied with fragments of time spent with you. ⁴But right now I am traveling to Jerusalem in order to minister to the *hagioi* there. ⁵For Macedonia and Achaia are pleased to make something of a contribution to the poor among the *hagioi* in Jerusalem. ⁶Now they are pleased to do so—indeed they are debtors to them. ⁷For if the Gentiles are sharers with them in spiritual things, they ought, in turn, to serve them with physical things. ⁸Therefore, when I have completed this task and have confirmed receipt of this fruit for them, I shall leave for Spain by way of you. ⁹Now I know that, when I come to you, I shall come with a full and complete account of the blessing of the gospel of the *messiah*.

15:22–29

-- (c) --

132 I urge you, brothers—in view of our Lord, Jesus, the *messiah* and the love that comes from the Spirit—to strive together with me in your prayers to God on my behalf, that I might be rescued from those in Judea who are disobedient and that my service in Jerusalem might prove acceptable to the *hagioi*, so that, with joy, I might find rest among you when, by the will of God, I come to you.

15:30–32

-- (d) --

133 Now may the God of *shalom* be with you all!

15:33

134 Now I commit you to the one who is able to establish you in my proclamation of the good news—even the proclamation of Jesus, the *messiah*, which is in accord with the unveiling of a secret, a secret kept undisclosed in the times of past ages, but now made manifest, having been made known, in keeping with the writings of the prophets, to all the Gentile peoples, in accord with the authoritative pronouncement of the God of the ages, to bring about an obedient response of belief.

16:25–26

135 To the only, wise God—in view of Jesus, the *messiah*—to him be glory into the ages. Amen!

16:27

Accompanying Cover Letter

§ 1 • Introductions and Greetings

PART 43

136 Now I commend to you Phoebe, our sister—since she is a servant from the gathering which is in Cenchrea—that you might welcome her as a follower of the Lord in a manner fitting of the *hagioi* and support her in any matter in which she might have need of you. ²For indeed she has been a patron of many, even of me personally.

16:1–2

137 Greet Prisca and Aquila, my fellow-workers in Messiah Jesus. ²These individuals put their own necks at risk for my life. ³Not only do I give thanks for them, but so do all the gatherings of the Gentiles—especially the gathering at their house.

⁴Greet Epauetus, my beloved. ⁵He is the first offering to the *messiah* in Asia.

⁶Greet Mary. ⁷She has toiled much for you.

⁸Greet Andronicus and Junius, my kinsmen and my fellow-prisoners. ⁹They are eminent among the apostles; indeed, they came to be followers of the *messiah* before me.

¹⁰Greet my beloved Ampliatus as a follower of the Lord.

¹¹Greet Urbanus, our fellow-worker as a follower of the *messiah*, and my beloved Stachys.

¹²Greet Apelles, a tested and confirmed follower of the *messiah*.

¹³Greet those from the household of Arisobulus.

¹⁴Greet Herodion, my kinsman.

¹⁵Greet those from the household of Narcissus, those who are followers of the Lord.

¹⁶Greet Tryphaena and Tryphosa, individuals who have toiled as followers of the Lord.

¹⁷Greet the beloved Persis. ¹⁸She has toiled much on behalf of the Lord.

¹⁹Greet Rufus, chosen by the Lord; also greet his mother and mine.

²⁰Greet Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Herma, and the brothers with them.

²¹Greet Philologus and Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas, and all the *hagioi* with them.

²²Greet one another with a holy kiss.

16:3–16a

138 All the gatherings of the *messiah* greet you.

16:16b

§ 2 • Brief Remarks

PART 44

139 I urge you, brothers, to watch for those who are proposing dissenting ideas— even dangerous traps—in conflict with the teaching that you have learned. ²Veer away from them. ³For

such as these are not serving our Lord, the *messiah*; rather, they are serving their own appetites. ⁴And by their specious talk and polished speech, they deceive the heart of the guilelessly undiscerning.

16:17–18

140 Now word of your obedience reaches everywhere. ²Therefore, I rejoice over you. ³Yet, I want you to be wise in relation to what is good, and uncontaminated in relation to what is evil.

16:19

141 The God of *shalom*⁵⁶ will soon crush Satan under your feet.⁵⁷ ²The grace of our Lord, Jesus, be with you.

16:20

142 Timothy, my fellow-worker, sends you his greetings. ²Also, Lucius and Jason and Sosipater, my kinsmen.

16:21

§ 3 • Final Greetings from Tertius

PART 45

143 I, Tertius—the one writing this letter—greet you.

²Being a follower of the Lord, Gaius—host to me and to the whole believing community—sends you his greetings.

³Erastus, the city treasurer, sends you his greetings. ⁴Also, Quartus, his brother.

⁵The grace of our Lord, Jesus, the *messiah*, be with all of you. ⁶Amen.

16:22–24

56. The “God of *shalom*” describes God as the source and origin of *shalom*. See the *Glossary of Non-English Terms* for the meaning of *shalom*.

57. This is an allusion to *Genesis* 3:15 as it is rightly translated and rightly understood.

 Glossary of Non-English Terms

- **Abba** > The word “*Abba*” is a transliteration of an Aramaic word meaning “father.”
- **anathema** > In the single instance where the word *anathema* is used in this translation of *Romans*, it is used to describe the condition of being set apart and devoted to destruction.
- **angeloi** > In this translation of *Romans*, the word *angeloi* [typically translated “angels”] is used when Paul intends to denote divine revelations, and not angelic beings.
- **archai** > In this translation of *Romans*, the word *archai* [typically translated “rulers”] is used when Paul intends to denote religious authorities. That is, *archai* are leaders or rulers over the religious lives of the Jews, not governmental rulers.
- **charis** > The word *charis* is a Greek noun usually translated by “grace.” It denotes a freely and generously given gift from God.
- **dikaios** > This word is misleadingly translated “righteous” by many English translations. As Paul uses this word, *dikaios* describes an individual who will be forgiven for his evil and will mercifully be granted eternal life rather than being required to satisfy justice by being duly condemned. God, the judge of mankind, is the one who declares an individual *dikaios*, simply by judicial decree. The *dikaios* individual is not “righteous” (in the sense that he is good). The *dikaios* individual is “pardoned.”
- **dikaiosis** > The Greek noun denotes the process whereby an individual is rendered *dikaios* by God. As Paul uses it, it denotes more than the judicial decree of God that renders an individual *dikaios*. It incorporates all aspects of the divinely-ordained process whereby a human being might come to be *dikaios* in the eyes of God. (So, for Paul, it incorporates, among other things, the death and resurrection of Jesus.)
- **dikaiosune** > For Paul, *dikaiosune* [= *dikaios*-ness] is the state of the individual who has been made *dikaios* in the eyes of God. It is the state that an individual is in when God has determined that he will grant him mercy and Life beyond the grave rather than condemn him to the punishment and destruction that he deserves. The *dikaios* individual is one who will be forgiven for his evil and will mercifully be granted eternal life rather than being required to satisfy justice by being duly condemned. The “*dikaiosune* of God” describes the state of *dikaiosune* that an individual finds himself in through the ways, provisions, and purposes of God. It is the state of *dikaiosune* that has its origin in God.
- **hagios** > The Greek adjective *hagios* is usually translated “holy.” When it is used as a noun, it describes a “holy one,” but it is usually translated “saint.” Paul uses the word in two different ways: (1) On the one hand, one who is *hagios* is one who has been selected by God for a particular role in his larger purposes. Namely, if one is *hagios* [= “holy”], then he has been selected to be mercifully raised to life after the grave in order to enjoy an existence in the new creation. (2) On the other hand, one who is *hagios* is one who has been inwardly transformed by the Spirit of God in order to mark him as an individual destined for an existence in the new creation. The set of inward attributes that so mark such an individual are called “holiness” [*hagiosune*]. Hence, *hagios* can also describe the “character” of someone who is being sanctified [*hagiazō*] by the Spirit of God. In other

words, when the Spirit of God sanctifies an individual in his inner being, he is said to be “holy” [*hagios*].

- ***hagioi*** > This Greek noun is the plural of *hagios* above. Typically translated “saints,” *hagioi* means “holy ones” in Greek. It describes individuals who have been selected by God for a particular role in his larger purposes. Namely, if one is *hagios* [= “holy”], then he has been selected to be mercifully raised to life after the grave in order to enjoy an existence in the new creation. It is the word that Paul typically uses to denote followers of Jesus.
- ***messiah*** > The *messiah* means the “anointed one” in Hebrew. The Messiah is the human individual whom God created to be the unique son in the line of King David who is destined to serve as the perfectly righteous king over God’s people Israel in that day when the nation of Israel has hegemony over all the nations of the earth.
- ***sarx*** > In the single instance where the word *sarx* [typically translated “flesh”] is used in this translation of *Romans*, it is used to denote the natural evil condition of a person’s physical existence in this present age. Hence, to have regard for the *sarx* would be to credit the sinful desires and values that come naturally to a person in this present physical existence as having legitimacy and value.
- ***shalom*** > The Hebrew word *shalom*, often translated “peace,” refers to the state of safety, flourishing, and abundance that the Jews expect to enjoy in the promised Kingdom of God and beyond. As it happens, it is the standard Jewish greeting (analogous to “hello” in English).
- ***torah*** > The Hebrew word *torah* means “instruction.” God’s *torah* is his instruction with regard to how his people are to live; it is his instruction with regard to what he expects of them. When it is capitalized—*Torah*—it denotes the Hebrew Bible or, more narrowly the first portion of the Hebrew Bible. When it is left uncapitalized—*torah*—it simply means “instruction” and is not intended to denote the Hebrew Bible.
- ***Torah*** > In this translation, I use *Torah* to designate the entirety of the Jewish scriptures. Strictly speaking, *Torah* denotes only one portion of their scriptures. It denotes the portion that describes the history of God’s making a covenant with Israel (the Law). However, as a matter of convention, it was also used as a shorthand for designating the entire Hebrew Bible. [That is, “Torah” was shorthand for “the Torah, the Prophets, and the Writings.”] The Hebrew word *torah* means “instruction.” God’s *torah* is his instruction with regard to how his people are to live. It is his instruction with regard to what he expects of them.

 Translator's Notes and Comments

- General Notes

1. My reconstruction of the text of *Romans* assumes the following: during the transmission of the text, what was originally a distinct document (a cover letter that accompanied the original letter to the Romans and served as a letter of introduction to the group of Jews who were carrying the original letter) was added to the main letter itself. Over time, later copyists mistakenly read it as simply Paul's original ending to the main letter itself. In the course of the transmission of the text, what were originally the final paragraphs of the main letter were somehow dislocated. Some copyist, recognizing that they read as concluding paragraphs and seeking to include them once again in the text of the letter, appended them to what, at that time, was seen as the end of the letter (which was really the end of the appended cover letter). This made these displaced paragraphs the final paragraphs of the letter as we know it in our English bibles today. Note, therefore, that ¶134 [16:25–26] and ¶135 [16:27] of my translation depart from the traditional order of the text. In the traditional text and translation these paragraphs occur as the final three verses of the biblical book. But I believe ¶134 and ¶135 were, originally, the last two paragraphs of the main letter of *Romans* and that the next paragraph [¶136] was the beginning of a separate and distinct letter of introduction that accompanied the main letter. I have reconstructed my text accordingly.
2. OCCASION of the letter: Several years before Paul wrote this letter, Emperor Claudius had banished all of the Jews from the city of Rome. Several of them had gone to Corinth. In Corinth some of these exiles had met Paul, believed his gospel, and become part of the Jesus-believing community in Corinth. When Claudius died, his edict was rescinded and the Jews were once again free to return to Rome and live there. On that occasion, several Jewish Jesus-believers in the Corinthian community decided to return to their homes in Rome. Paul used the opportunity of these individuals' return to Rome to have them deliver a letter to the Gentile believers in Rome. In ¶137 Paul is introducing to the Jesus-believing Gentile community in Rome the Jesus-believing Jews who are returning to Rome from Corinth. He is exhorting the Gentile believers in Rome to welcome these Jesus-believing Jews. (When he says, "Greet so-and-so," he is, in effect, saying "Welcome so-and-so.") In ¶136 Paul introduces Phoebe to the Jesus-believing Gentile community in Rome. Phoebe is the Jewish woman whom Paul trusted to carry this letter to them. And Paul exhorts them to offer Phoebe any help and support she might need.
3. PURPOSE of the letter: Paul has learned through many difficult conflicts that his Jewish contemporaries are hostile to the gospel that he teaches. He has become quite familiar with the kinds and nature of their objections. Paul knows that the Gentile believers in Rome—having been cut off from any interaction with Jews for the better part of a decade—are clueless with regard to the nature of the intense opposition to the gospel and to their beliefs that is about to come upon them. When the Jews begin to return to Rome, these Gentile Jesus-believers will be confronted with vigorous opposition from these Jews—not only from unbelieving Jews, but also from Jews who, while they ostensibly believe in Jesus, do not believe the gospel that Paul teaches. Paul is writing this

letter in order to prepare the Gentile Jesus-believers who are in Rome for the onslaught that is soon coming. In *Romans*, Paul intends to equip the Gentile believers there with the understanding that they will need in order to counter the coming objections.

- ¶1.1

1. As an “apostle” [= sent one] Paul conceives of himself as having been “sent” by God for the purpose of teaching, proclaiming, and explaining the meaning and significance of the fact that Jesus of Nazareth—the one crucified by the Romans—was the Messiah whom God sent into the world. Paul conceives of himself as having been especially authorized and equipped to proclaim this truth about Jesus. Paul has an understanding of the Truth that enables him to teach with an authority that is comparable to that of Jesus himself.

- ¶2

1. Paul introduces the concept of Jesus being the “Son” in this paragraph. To call Jesus the “Son” is to identify him as the individual who fulfills the promise made to King David. God promised David that he would establish his throne to the end of time, and that he would establish a relationship with one of David’s ancestors wherein he (God) “would be a father” to him, and wherein David’s ancestor “would be a son” to God. [Cf. 2 *Samuel* 7:1–17 ff. See 2 *Samuel* 7:14 especially.] The “Son of God” was the human individual who would exactly represent and reflect the very identity of God himself and who would enter into history in order to serve as the king over the Kingdom of God which God had promised to establish in Israel. As the King over Israel in the time of the Kingdom of God, he would lead Israel into a state of hegemony over all the nations of the earth. And he would bring about peace, justice, righteousness, and prosperity among the people of Israel and around the world. The traditional Christian view of the “Son” as the second person of the divine triune godhead is not in view here. That is not the meaning of Paul’s use of the word “Son” here. Indeed, we have no reason to think that Paul would even be familiar with that concept.

- ¶3

1. Paul uses the Greek word *hagios* in two different ways. He uses it in an objective sense that describes God’s disposition toward a human individual. And he uses it in a subjective sense that describes the subjective state of a human individual. In both sense *hagios* is typically translated “holy” in English. The fundamental meaning of *hagios* (holy) is to describe a person, place, or thing as set apart for some distinctive role in the purposes of God such that it is no longer ordinary. A spoon used to spoon incense on to the incense altar in the temple is no ordinary spoon. It is holy (*hagios*).

- a. One very common use of the word *hagios* is to describe a follower of Jesus as a *hagios* (a “holy one”). The word is usually translated as “saint” when it is used in this way. The *hagios*, in this sense, is a human being who has been set apart by God for a very distinctive destiny and role. Out of the vast sea of human beings, the *hagios* (holy one) has been chosen to dwell for all eternity in the eternal Kingdom of God rather than go to his destruction. Because God has chosen him for this destiny and, in this sense, he can be said to belong to God, such an individual is “holy.” He deserves

to be afforded the special respect that is owed to anyone or anything that has a special connection with God. This is what is meant by calling him a “holy one” (*hagios*). According to this use of the word, “holiness” is the fact of his having a destiny in the eternal Kingdom of God.

- b. Closely connected with the sense just described is another sense of *hagios*. God could have assigned to an individual the destiny of eternal Life in the eternal Kingdom of God without him or anyone else ever knowing that had had that destiny. God could have left it an invisible reality. But, according to biblical teaching, he did not leave it completely invisible. In the purposes of God, God “marked” or “branded” those who belong to him, those whom he had chosen for a destiny of eternal Life in the eternal Kingdom of God. He “marked” them by transforming their inner being, creating in them a distinctive set of desires, perceptions, values, beliefs, attitudes, and commitments. Paul uses the word *hagios* to describe the inner state of an individual that is characterized by this distinctive set of desires, perceptions, values, beliefs, attitudes, and commitments. The individual who is *hagios* (“holy”) is one who has distinctive desires, distinctive values, distinctive attitudes, and distinctive commitments. He has inner desires, values, attitudes, and commitments that have been divinely created by the Spirit of God. These desires, values, attitudes, and commitments make him a distinctive individual. They “mark” him as an individual who belongs to God. The human being who is subjectively marked with holiness (*hagiosune*) is a human being who is objectively holy in that he is destined for Life in the eternal Kingdom of God. In other words, the individual who is *hagios* (holy) in the subjective sense is *hagios* (holy) in the objective sense. But these two uses of the word are very different. According to this use of the word, to be “holy” (*hagios*) describes the subjective state of a human being, not an objective fact about his destiny.

• ¶6.3

1. By “spiritual gift,” here, Paul means nothing more than a gift that is spiritual in nature. He is not using “spiritual gift” here in the sense that has become commonplace in modern Christendom. It is not a technical term for a divinely-given ability to be used in the service of God. Paul describes explicitly what he means by spiritual gift. The gift is the gift of being “established” by being “fortified in one’s belief.” To impart a spiritual gift to the readers of his letter is to do something to help establish them in their belief by helping to fortify that belief. Paul immediately suggests that it is mutual. They will help establish him in his belief and will help fortify his belief just as he desires to do for them. Paul seems to have in mind a mutual influence on one another through the example of one another’s belief. Hence, setting before them the example of his own belief while he is present with them is the “spiritual gift” that he desires to impart to them.

• ¶7.4

1. If a person is granted *dikaiosune*, then he has been placed in the state or condition of being deemed *dikaios* by God. For an individual to be deemed or decreed *dikaios* by God is to have had God make a judicial decision that that individual will not be condemned to punishment and destruction (as he deserves) but will be given the blessing of eternal Life (which he does not deserve) instead. When God has determined that

that is what he shall do in a particular individual's case, then that individual is said to be *dikaios*. Alternatively, that individual is said to have been granted *dikaiousune* [*dikaiosness*].

- a. Typically, *dikaios* is translated “righteous” and *dikaiousune* is translated “righteousness.” Both of these translations are misleading when these words are used in the sense they are being used here. The individual who is being forgiven his moral depravity and blessed with eternal Life by the mercy of God [that is, the one who is being granted *dikaiousune*] is not “righteous” in any sense in which we normally use that word. Rather, such an individual is being “pardoned.” Paul is certainly not saying that such an individual is good. Rather, he is a fortunate recipient of a blessing that he does not deserve. Certain theological traditions argue that such an individual is blessed by God because a righteousness (or goodness) that does not inherently belong to him is imputed to him by God, and that it is on the basis of that imputed righteousness (or goodness) [*dikaiousune*] that God will bless him. This is a misunderstanding of how Paul is using the words *dikaios* and *dikaiousune*. Paul does not intend to attribute any kind of “righteousness” to the individual who finds mercy and acceptance from God. He is not “righteous.” He is “accepted by” [*dikaios* in the eyes of] God. And that acceptance is an act of mercy [it is forgiveness and pardon], not an acknowledgment that the person deserves to be blessed.
 - b. The “*dikaiousune* of God” is the *dikaiousune* that has its origin in God and comes from him. Eventually, Paul will contrast a *dikaiousune* of one's own making that a person falsely believes exists and can be attained, and a *dikaiousune* of God's making. The latter—a *dikaiousune* of God's making—is what Paul describes as “the *dikaiousune* of God.” The *dikaiousune* of God's making [the *dikaiousune* of God] is a **gift** of God's grace and mercy that is intimately connected with God's Messiah and what he has done on mankind's behalf.
2. Paul's language here is that “the *dikaiousune* of God is granted [*apokaluptetai*] to those who believe [*eis pistin*] by reason of their belief [*ek pisteos*].
- a. The verb *apokalupto* means “to unveil” something. It is typically translated “to reveal.” In this context, it seems to be used in a sense that makes it synonymous with “to grant.” The way that God “unveils” his *dikaiousune* is by granting it to whomever he will.
 - b. The prepositional phrase *eis pistin* means, literally, “*eis* belief.” Here, the noun “belief” is used as a metonymy of action for agent. It literally denotes the act of belief, but what Paul intends is to denote those individuals who perform the act of belief. Hence, “*eis* belief” means “*eis* those individuals who perform the act of belief.” Paul is identifying who it is to [*eis*] whom the *dikaiousune* of God is granted. It is granted to [*eis*] those individuals who believe, that is, to those who have belief.
 - c. The prepositional phrase *ek pisteos* means, literally, “*ek* belief.” Here, the noun “belief” denotes the act of believing which is performed by those to [*eis*] whom the *dikaiousune* of God is granted. Hence, “*ek* belief” means “*ek* the act of their believing.” The preposition *ek* introduces the reason why these individuals are being granted the

dikaiosune of God. They are being granted the *dikaiosune* of God by reason of (or by virtue of) [*ek*] their belief. In other words, it is precisely **because** they believe that the *dikaiosune* of God is granted to those who believe.

- ¶7.5

1. In *Habakkuk*, God instructs the prophet Habakkuk to inscribe a message on a tablet for the people to read. The book of *Habakkuk* gives no clear indication what the content of that message is. However, given all that we can know of the prophets, their message, and God's purposes for prophecy, it stands to reason that the message or "vision" that Habakkuk is instructed to inscribe on the tablets is a message of hope with regard to the distant future. Specifically, although the Babylonians are being predicted to come and devastate the land of Judah, their coming in judgment does not spell the end of God's promises. It does not nullify them. God is still committed to keeping each and every promise that he has made to the people of Israel, even if—in the short term—it is going to look as if he has forsaken Israel. There will be two kinds of responses to this message of hope, God predicts. Some will withhold their trust and belief in the message of God's reassurance. They will draw back from placing any hope in it. Others will believe the message and place their hope in it. The latter, the ones who *believe*, are those who will be deemed *dikaios* by God and thereby will be granted eternal Life. The former, the ones who do not believe, are displeasing to God and will not be deemed *dikaios* by him. Their destiny is destruction. Note, then, that the person in *Habakkuk* 2:4 who is described as *dikaios* by reason of [*ek*] his belief is the one who believes the promise of God's Kingdom and all that that implies. [The promise of God's Kingdom is the primary focus of all the prophetic predictions.] Hence, among other things, this individual is one who believes in the coming of the appointed King, the Messiah. Hence, in effect, this individual believes many of the same things that a Jesus-believer who believes the gospel taught by Jesus believes.