

Book of Romans

Translations

Various translations were utilized in preparing this material to help the readers in the English language better grasp the intent. The King James Version was always used as the core translation. Any major variations from the KJV were referenced to the Greek to prevent the inclusion of spurious translations from incomplete manuscripts or discarded fragments. Unless otherwise noted at the end of a quoted passage, the main translation included in the text is the New King James. The primary translations of each verse are quoted in a bold font; alternate translations are within brackets. Whenever the KJV or NKJ is used, in order to identify the words added by translators (words without corresponding words in the Greek text), their font will only be regular font rather than bold. The following abbreviations are used for the corresponding translations:

ASV American Standard Version
CJB Complete Jewish Scriptures
FEN Ferrar Fenton
GSP Goodspeed
JNT Jewish New Testament
KJV King James Version
MOF Moffatt
NAS New American Standard
NEB New English Scriptures
NIV New International Version
NKJ New King James Version
NLT New Living Translation
NRS New Revised Standard
PHL J.B. Phillips
REB Revised English Scriptures
RSV Revised Standard Version
TAN Tanakh

NOTE: *Not to give honor to another, Yahuwah and Amanuwal replaced the names and/or titles as appropriate in all translations. Our purpose is not to continue the farce.*

Introduction

Epistles of Paul

Romans was not Paul's first epistle chronologically. He had written other letters which preceded this letter. Both epistles to the members at Thessalonica, both epistles to the members at Corinth, as well as the letter to the congregations in Galatia, were written prior to Romans (see Appendix E).

We do not have any record of the total number of letters that Paul wrote during his apostleship. We do know that there was one epistle he wrote to the Assembly at Corinth which was not included in the New Testament canon; it is mentioned in the first epistle to the Corinthians as "the former epistle" which he had written.

Although Paul's ministry lasted approximately 30 years, we have only 14 of his letters preserved as part of the scriptures. Obviously, over the course of 30 years, he wrote more than these few epistles since the

main form of communication was by the written word, which means that these 14 letters contain essential information Yahuwah wanted included within the scriptures and which He directly placed within Paul's mind as he composed them.

No doubt, Paul wrote many letters to specific congregations dealing with problems they were personally experiencing and also wrote letters which were general in nature to a number of congregations in a region such as Galatia. In all likelihood, he wrote many, many letters over the course of his ministry. Yahuwah inspired only these 14 to be preserved for us because therein is relevant material which we need to know to better serve and obey Yahuwah.

Placement of the Book

Romans is first in the order that Paul's letters are to be read. This letter lays a solid foundation for everything that Paul discusses in the later epistles, though many of them were written earlier. The order in which his letters have been preserved are progressive in nature. When we understand what he states in Romans, we can move forward. To properly understand what Paul says in the Corinthian letters, we first need to understand what he says in Romans. Before we can correctly understand what Paul is addressing in Galatians, we need to understand what he wrote in Romans and both letters to the Corinthians.

From an Unseen Apostle

This letter is fairly unique from the standpoint that at the time Paul wrote this epistle, he had not yet visited Rome. Generally, he visited congregations prior to sending them letters. For example, Hebrews was the letter to the Yahuwdim converts in Yahuwdah, who Paul had visited long before he wrote the letter which is preserved in scripture. They had seen him, knew what he looked like, and were personally acquainted with him. Although, during his travels elsewhere, he had met some of the brethren who were living in Rome at the time he wrote this letter, Paul had never been to the city.

Founding the Assembly in Rome

Rome was under Paul's jurisdiction; he was the apostle to the Gentiles, as appointed by Yahuwah. It was not in Peter's jurisdiction, nor under the jurisdiction of James or John. Rome was Paul's responsibility. At the time he wrote this letter, there was not a single established congregation in Rome. We are not told of any man officially raising up a congregation there, although it is possible someone did. According to the book of ACT, the initial stage of a Roman congregation came into existence very early: on the Day of Pentecost when the New Testament Assembly began with the coming of the Kadosh Ruwach.

The presence of individuals from Rome in Yahuwdah on the Day of Pentecost reveals that there were some converts in Rome before Paul was ever called. Some were Yahuwdim, some were Yahuwdim proselytes; remember, there were people who were not of the tribe of Yahuwdah who became followers of Judaism. They became that by becoming proselytes, they had to be immersed and circumcised (if male). There were also many Yahuwdim who had been brought to Rome by Pompey when he conquered Jerusalem in 63 BC. Many of these Yahuwdim served as slaves while others served in various capacities due to the skills they had. Although the Emperor Claudius had expelled the Yahuwdim from Rome in AD 52 (ACT 18:2), two years later, in AD 54, Emperor Nero allowed the Yahuwdim to return to Rome and many of them did. So there were thousands of Yahuwdim in Rome at the time Paul wrote this letter.

Evidence from Chapter 16 indicates that there were at least three separate groups of members regularly convening at the time he wrote this letter. In fact, Paul lists the names of two dozen immersed members who he had personally met in other areas but were now living in Rome.

The fact that so many members had come from other areas reveals the fact that vast numbers of people were drawn to that city. Since Rome was the major center of all commerce throughout the entire empire, many Yahuwdim and other ethnic groups had gone there to profit from the commercial ventures to be had

in that city. Rome was the greatest commercial and cultural city of the first century, where the great minds of that day came together and pooled their knowledge. It was that intellectual lure that led many Greeks to Rome, just as many Yahuwdim had gone there because of the lure of commerce. It was some of those Yahuwdim who had been in Jerusalem on the Pentecost after Amanuwal's resurrection and ascension, and had received Yahuwah's Ruwach, then returned to Rome after the festival was over:

ACT 2:5, 10 Now there were dwelling in Jerusalem Yahuwdim, devout men, from every nation under heaven...Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya adjoining Cyrene, visitors from Rome, both Yahuwdim and proselytes.

It is very likely that some of these converts were descendants of the Yahuwdim who had been brought to Rome as slaves by Pompey. It is also plausible that other Yahuwdim, as well as some friends and families of the proselytes, heard about the Pentecost experience from those who returned from Jerusalem, and were eventually converted, possibly immersed by Barnabas or an evangelist sent by him. (There are traditions indicating that Barnabas did travel to Rome.)

By the time Paul wrote his letter, almost a quarter of a century had elapsed since the founding of the New Testament Assembly. Therefore, it was inevitable that a fairly large number of immersed members of the Assembly would be residing in Rome by this time. Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach established His Assembly in Rome by virtue of its first converts returning from Jerusalem and the influx of many other immersed members in the following years—not by the efforts of any man's ministry. Once that was done, He arranged for Paul to arrive in the city and preach the good news.

Paul's Authority

Paul was the authority over the Assembly at Rome, although many of them had never seen him, nor heard him speak. Having the authority therefore, he had every right to point out their problems and instruct them in how to correct those problems. In fact, most of the epistles that Paul wrote were due to problems a particular area was having. In some cases, he wrote to commend a congregation for the good things they had done, such as the epistle to the Philippians. He patted them on the back, acknowledging how well they were doing.

Due to his ordination, Paul was accountable for addressing problems that either existed among the Assembly itself or heresy that was affecting the Assembly. His duty was to straighten out the problems. This amounted to showing them the correct way to view the law of Yahuwah in relation to their problems or the heresy they were receiving from those outside.

Problems in the Assembly in Rome

The problem in Rome is revealed in the first two chapters: a problem between the two groups who composed the majority of the members of the Assembly at Rome—the Yahuwdim and the Greeks. The Yahuwdim tended to be a rather self-righteous, smug people because they had been Yahuwah's chosen ones. They had the Old Testament, the Kadosh Scriptures and had been appointed by Yahuwah to preserve that text. They were very arrogant over their heritage and ancestry. They were descendants of Abraham. Their forefathers had been given the Kadosh Scriptures and they had faithfully preserved them. They, in essence, were telling the Greeks in the congregation, "Look at us, we come from good stock. We were not out there worshipping those pagan idols like you Greeks." That was the attitude.

There was a serious problem with discrimination among the members of the Assembly at Rome. That is what Paul is addressing as we begin. However, the Greeks were not faultless either. They felt that they were the intellectual giants of the ancient world because of their heritage, which they viewed as this great culture they brought to the world; after all, they were a great empire when Rome was nothing more than a small town.

The Greek influence had spread from India to Spain. During the time of their great empire, they enveloped the entirety of the Mediterranean. Their influence was felt in Egypt. Alexandria, Egypt, was the great educational center of the ancient world. The Greeks brought about its development. Wherever one looked in the world prior to Rome, Greece's influence was there. They were a smart people, intellectual giants. They were very cocky, prideful because of the intelligence they and their ancestors had exhibited before the world. These were two unbelievably hardheaded groups of people. They were members of the Assembly, yet they had not purged all of the old man out as far as they lived and treated each other. As a result, there were problems, conflicts. Therefore, the Yahuwdim and Greeks were butting heads with one another, causing division in the Assembly at Rome. Paul had to address the divided Roman group to correct this problem of discrimination.

Additional Groups

The composition of the Assembly in Rome also included other peoples from other nations, who were referred to as "Gentiles", a term that designates all who are not descended from Israel.

Timeframe

The background of the time and place of the writing of this letter can be found in ACT 19 and 20, where it is revealed that Paul was intent on going to Rome after visiting Jerusalem:

ACT 19:21 When these things were accomplished, Paul purposed in the Ruwach, when he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, to go to Jerusalem, saying, "After I have been there,
I must also see Rome."

However, before setting off for Jerusalem, Paul traveled west from Ephesus through Macedonia into Greece. He spent three months (ACT 20:3) in Corinth before heading back east, ultimately arriving in Jerusalem (see Appendix C). It was probably during the three months in Corinth, the last part of the winter of AD 55-56, that Paul wrote the epistle; most probably in late February or early March of AD 56. It was almost two-and-a-half years from the time he wrote this epistle until he was finally able to go to Rome and visit the members of the Assembly personally and officially establish a congregation

Romans: Chapter 1

1:1 Paul, a servant [NAS: "bond-servant"] of Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach,...

Slavery in Rome

The Greek is "doulos". None of Paul's other epistles begin in this manner: stating that he was a servant, a slave in bondage to Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach. Why does he use this particular terminology? The Roman Empire, at that time, extended from Spain to Egypt and into the regions of Babylon around the Tigris & Euphrates rivers. Throughout this territory, approximately one-third of the inhabitants were in slavery. Paul was a Roman citizen and was therefore considered a free man and was allowed to travel anywhere within the Roman Empire. A slave or bondservant could not do that.

Since one-third of the empire was in slavery and Rome was the hub of the Empire, we begin to understand that anywhere from one-half to three-quarters of the people in the Assembly at Rome were slaves. Paul stated in several of his letters that slaves within the Assembly needed to obey their masters. By saying, "*I, Paul, a slave,*" he was creating a bond, building a base, with these people, the majority of whom were probably slaves. Paul operated by the principle he revealed in 1CO 9:22, "*I am made all*

things to all men.” He was creating a rapport with them, and they, in turn, began to relate to Paul. With this newly-created relationship, Paul could more easily correct the problems which were extant among the various factions in the Assembly at Rome.

A Bond-Servant

The other emphasis contained within the word “doulos” is the fact that every individual who has repented and received Yahuwah’s Ruwach has been bought by Amanuwal Ha’Mashyach and is responsible for obeying His instructions as He is now our Sovereign and Master:

1CO 6:20 For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify Yahuwah in your body and in your spirit, which are Yahuwah’s.

Paul recounted to king Agrippa the moment when he was blinded and informed that he would be responsible for fulfilling the purpose of Amanuwal Ha’Mashyach—that he was being taken as a slave to serve Yahuwah:

ACT 26:16-18 “But rise and stand on your feet; for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to make you a minister [servant] and a witness both of the things which you have seen and of the things which I will yet reveal to you. I will deliver you from the Yahuwdim, as well as from the Gentiles, to whom I now send you, to open their eyes and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to Yahuwah, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me.”

1:1 (cont.) ...called to be an apostle, separated [NAS: “set apart”] to the good news of Yahuwah

Set Apart

Paul perceived that he had been set apart to be led to Mashyach from the time of his birth:

GAL 1:15 But when it pleased Yahuwah, who separated me from my mother’s womb and called me through His grace,

Paul was born into a family which lived in the free-city of Tarsus; all who were born into a free-city automatically received Roman citizenship. To fulfill His purpose of taking the good news to the heart of the greatest empire of that time, Yahuwah selected a devout religious family living in circumstances which would provide them and their children citizenship in that empire. Yahuwah also saw to it that Paul was born into a family which insisted that the children receive an excellent education, including in-depth instruction in all of Yahuwah’s laws. In fact, Paul’s education included being taught by Gamaliel, who was considered the greatest scholar of the Kadosh Scriptures at that time. All of this led to Paul becoming an expert in the laws of Yahuwah on a **physical level**.

Despite Yahuwah’s direct dealings regarding the circumstances of Paul’s birth and the formulation of Paul’s religious zeal, Yahuwah allowed Paul to kill Messianic Converts, to be responsible for their deaths. Yahuwah intended to use Paul and made certain that events would occur in such a way that He could knock Paul down, separate him, humble him and use him in spite of himself.

He was also set apart by Yahuwah’s direction to fulfill the role of an apostle:

ACT 13:2 As they ministered to Yahuwah and fasted, the Kadosh Ruwach said, “Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.”

Both Paul and Barnabas were appointed to be apostles. An “apostle” refers to “one sent” who possesses authority from Yahuwah to present the good news to the world and to oversee the spiritual welfare of the Assembly:

MAR 16:14-15 Afterward He appeared to the eleven...And He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the good news to every creature.”

MAT 28:19-20 “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, ...teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you...”

1:2 which He promised before through His prophets in the Kadosh Scriptures,

Prophets of Yahuwah

The good news of Yahuwah’s coming Kingdom was prophesied by Moses, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and numerous other prophets.

Kadosh Scriptures

We should take note that Paul refers to the material recorded by the prophets as the Kadosh Scriptures; he recognized those writings as emanating from Yahuwah. Never at any time does Paul suggest that those scriptures are unnecessary. In fact, Paul constantly uses them to substantiate the teaching and correction contained within this, as well as his other letters.

1:3 concerning His Son Amanuwal Ha’Mashyach our Sovereign, who was born of the seed of Dawid according to the flesh,

The Prophesied Mashyach

The good news included prophecies which identified the Mashyach, who was to come in the flesh (ISA 7:14) from the tribe of Yahuwah (GEN 49:10) as a descendant of Dawid (ISA 11:1), who was to die for the sins of the world (ISA 53). Amanuwal Ha’Mashyach was descended from Dawid through His mother, Mary, who was a direct physical descendant (LUK 3:23-38).

1:4 and declared to be the Son of Yahuwah with power, according to the Ruwach of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead,

Son of Yahuwah

Amanuwal was declared to be the Son of Yahuwah by the resurrection from the dead, which proved that He was literally the Son of Yahuwah because only by the power of Yahuwah does anyone rise from the dead.

2CO 13:4 For though He was crucified in weakness, yet He lives by the power of Yahuwah...

In MAT 12:38, the Pharisees came to Amanuwal and asked Him for a sign to prove His claim of being the Son of Yahuwah. Amanuwal knew that they wanted to see some great miracle occur at that moment, but He refused to accommodate their wishes. Instead, He gave them a sign: the sign of Jonah! He told them the only sign He would give to prove that He was the Son of Yahuwah was that after three days and three nights of being in the heart of the earth, the tomb, He would rise from the dead and come out of the earth, just as Jonah came out of the great fish. No greater proof of the power of Yahuwah can be displayed than imparting life and the resurrection of the dead.

1:5 Through Him we received grace and were given the work of being an emissary [NKJ: “apostleship”] **on His behalf promoting trust-grounded obedience** [NKJ: “obedience to the faith”; NIV: “obedience that comes from faith”] **among all the Gentiles** [NKJ: “nations”], (JNT)

We, the Apostles

The use of “we” is in reference to himself and the other apostles who were given the commission to take the good news to all nations (MAT 28:19; MAR 16:15). The office of apostle cannot be taken or earned by anyone, it can only be obtained by special appointment.

Receiving Grace

Grace is considered unmerited favor, or undeserved pardon from Yahuwah. After consenting to the deaths of many innocent True Followers, Paul certainly understood the scope of Yahuwah’s grace.

Obedience to/by Faith

The desired result of the good news is to help the disobedient see the need to obey Yahuwah and that acceptable obedience requires recognizing, surrendering to and seeking the help of the Mashyach; for without Him, our obedience is as filthy rags (ISA 64:6).

1:6 among whom you also are the called [Greek: “kletos”, meaning “invited”] **of Amanuwal Ha’Mashyach;**

Called of Amanuwal

Paul now includes the recipients of this letter with himself—both they and he had received a special invitation from Amanuwal to be part of a special group. This statement continues to create an affinity with this group of Yahuwah’s people whom Paul had never met.

1:7 To all who are in Rome, beloved of Yahuwah, called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from Yahuwah our Father and the Sovereign Amanuwal Ha’Mashyach.

Those Called to be Saints

Since there was not an established congregation, Paul does not address the “Assembly of Yahuwah” at Rome simply “to all who are in Rome” (1CO 1:2; GAL 1:2). Paul now directly greets the True Followers in Rome, emphasizing his understanding of Yahuwah’s love for them and the reason for their calling. The word “saint” is from the Greek “hagios” which means “kadosh one”; saints are expected to be kadosh...a foundational teaching—to keep the commandments of Yahuwah:

1PE 1:15-16 but as He who called you is kadosh, you also be kadosh in all your conduct, because it is written, “Be kadosh, for I am kadosh.”

Paul expresses his desire for them to continue as the recipients of Yahuwah’s favor and peace. The word for “peace” includes the meaning of “safety”, “comfort”, “well-being”, “health” and “success”.

1:8 First, I thank my Yahuwah through Amanuwal Ha’Mashyach for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world.

Through Amanuwal

He refers to the need to go through Amanuwal Ha’Mashyach when praying. Just as ancient Israel was required to go through the High Priest at the tabernacle and later at the temple to reach Yahuwah, we too must go through our High Priest, Amanuwal Ha’Mashyach, to reach the Father.

Recognized Faith

In commending the people by showing his gratitude concerning their devotion to serving Yahuwah, Paul continues to build an affinity with them.

1:9 For Yahuwah is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit [NIV: “whole heart”] in the good news of His Son, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers,

Serve With My Ruwach

The word “*spirit*” is from the Greek “*pneuma*” which also means “*breath*” or “*life*”. Paul states that his life was totally devoted to serving Yahuwah, as a slave to Amanuwal.

Yahuwah is My Witness

Since the people may have found Paul’s concern for them hard to believe, to emphasize the sincerity of his concern for the Assembly in Rome, Paul states that Yahuwah was his witness and aware of his heart and his many prayers for them. The Greek which is translated “without ceasing” actually means “repeatedly”; Paul revealed that he did not fail to frequently pray about them. He also encouraged the same practice among all of Yahuwah’s people:

1TH 5:17 pray without ceasing

1:10 making request if, by some means, now at last [JNT: “or in the future”] I may find a way in the will of Yahuwah to come to you.

Desire for Meeting

Paul wanted to physically meet these individuals on a personal level and prayed that Yahuwah would shortly make it possible. He was ultimately able to do so, but it was over two years after the time of this statement.

1:11 For I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift, so that you may be established [NIV: “to make you strong”]

Imparting a Gift

Since Paul has already referred to them as saints, it is obvious that he is not referring to imparting the Ruwach of Yahuwah! He goes on in the next verse, inferring that the gift was connected to the faith he possessed due to the working of Yahuwah’s Ruwach in him.

1:12 that is, that you and I may be mutually encouraged by each other’s faith. (NIV)

Encouraging Each Other

It is more difficult to succeed alone:

ECC 4:9-10 Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their labor. For if they fall, one will lift up his companion. But woe to him who is alone when he falls, for he has no one to help him up.

This is one of the reasons that Yahuwah established the need for assembling on the Sabbath (LEV 23:2-3). The tougher that times become, the greater the need for being together, to mutually encourage each other:

HEB 10:24-25 And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.

1:13 I do not want you to be unaware, brothers, that I planned many times to come to you (but have been prevented from doing so until now) in order that I might have a harvest [NKJ: “some fruit”] among you, just as I have had among the other Gentiles. (NIV)

Harvest Among You

Not only was Paul desirous of fellowshiping with the congregation in Rome, but he also wanted to be used of Yahuwah in bringing about the conversion of others who could be added to the Assembly.

1:14 I am a debtor [NIV: “I am obligated”] both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to wise and to unwise.

Debtor to the Gentiles

Paul was obligated to take the good news to all the Gentile areas. Not only the areas educated by the Greeks, but also the areas which had never been influenced by Greek thought.

Barbarians

During Paul’s time, the term “barbaroi” (from which the word “barbarian” is derived) was applied to the peoples who did not speak Greek. Although there were individuals in Rome who fit this classification, Paul’s primary reference was probably to the peoples who lived west of Rome.

Wise & Unwise

Among the Greeks and barbarians were highly intelligent individuals as well as very simple folk. The message that Paul had been given by Amanuwal was for all of them.

1:15 So, as much as is in me, I am ready to preach the good news to you who are in Rome also.

Preach to You Too

He assured those in Rome that they were included in the peoples that he personally wanted to reach with the message of Amanuwal. The good news which he would bring to the saints revolved around a deeper understanding of the doctrines they already knew, to further refine and expand their comprehension of the good news.

Introduction Complete

Paul has concluded building a rapport with the Assembly at Rome. He is now ready to state the main purpose of this letter.

1:16 For I am not ashamed of the good news of Amanuwal, for it is the power of Yahuwah to salvation for everyone who believes [JNT: “keeps on trusting”], for the Yahuwdate first and also for the Greek.

Unashamed

Paul emphasizes that the reason he had not yet arrived in Rome had nothing to do with being embarrassed about the message he would bring. Prior to the time he wrote this letter, preaching the good news had

resulted in his being thrown into prison in Philippi, chased out of Thessalonica, secreted out of Berea and ridiculed in Athens; possibly news of some of his experiences had traveled as far as Rome. Therefore, he is reassuring them that he is not ashamed, he has just not been able to travel to them as of this point in time.

Power of Yahuwah

The word “power” is from the Greek “dunamis”, literally meaning “a pulsating power”. Paul refers to the message of Amanuwal as the instruction necessary to salvation instruction that promises to yield the awesome, incredible infusion of the power of Yahuwah to those who believe the Originator of the good news.

Yahuwdite First, Also for the Greek

Some of the Yahuwdim saints would view this statement as an affirmation that they were better than the saints who were non-Yahuwdim. However, Paul does not state the Yahuwdite is better, but rather that the Yahuwdim were the first ethnic group called to be members of the New Testament Assembly. Paul goes on to show in this letter that regarding salvation, Yahuwdim and non-Yahuwdim are equal in the sight of Yahuwah.

1:17 For in it the righteousness of Yahuwah [JNT: “how Yahuwah makes people righteous in His sight”] is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, “The just shall live by faith.”

Righteousness

Righteousness is the activity which leads to a right relationship with Yahuwah. In the Kadosh Scriptures, Yahuwah defines the conduct that must be maintained by those who can have a right relationship with Him:

PSA 119:172 My tongue shall speak of Your word, for all Your commandments are righteousness.

The good news that Amanuwal brought tells us that righteousness, the conduct necessary for salvation, requires obedience to the Ten Commandments:

MAT 19:16-19 Now behold, one came and said to Him, “Good Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?” So He said to him, “Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, Yahuwah. But if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments.” He said to Him, “Which ones?” Amanuwal said, “You shall not murder, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not steal, you shall not bear false witness, honor your father and your mother, and, you shall love your neighbor as yourself.”

Since no one has perfectly obeyed the commandments, no one has, under his own effort, attained the level of righteousness that Yahuwah requires. Therefore, activity on Yahuwah’s part must be taken in order make the necessary relationship with Him possible. This is where faith enters the picture. When Yahuwah begins calling an individual, He imparts to him a conviction that allows him to see the truth of Yahuwah’s Word and trust what it says.

Faith to Faith

“From faith to faith” refers to moving from the initial trust placed in Yahuwah and His promises to the faith of Amanuwal Ha’Mashyach which is given to those who completely surrender themselves in obedience to Yahuwah—exactly what Amanuwal did throughout His physical life, until the moment He

died (PHI 2:8). His faith was immovable trust in Yahuwah—that His life would be restored by the Father from the dead (JOH 10:17-18; LUK 23:46).

The Righteousness of Yahuwah

The “just” are those who have been justified. Those who are justified are those with whom Yahuwah has taken action in order to make them right with Him; justification is the righteousness of Yahuwah.

The Just Shall Live By Faith

Paul refers to this phrase from HAB 2:4 for two reasons:

- to remain in a right relationship with Yahuwah, this physical life must be lived totally trusting Yahuwah
- eternal life will be given based on living this physical life totally trusting Yahuwah

Those who Yahuwah has made right with Him, shall live by faith—but, not by their faith—rather, by the faith of Amanuwal. If His faith—absolute, unwavering trust in Yahuwah—is present within us, we will live righteously, always yielding to Yahuwah’s Law:

GAL 2:20 I am crucified with Amanuwal: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Amanuwal liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith OF the Son of Yahuwah, who loved me, and gave Himself for me. (KJV)

In It (The Good News)

His reference to HAB 2:4 was to show that the Kadosh Scriptures substantiate that eternal life is tied to faith. Other passages also point to actions taken by Yahuwah so that men could be considered right with Him; such as being blessed by having sins covered and not having iniquity imputed (PSA 32:1-2), and having a corrupt heart replaced with a clean one (PSA 51:10). In addition to these and many other related scriptures are the ones which explain that all of these actions are possible only because of the sacrifice of the Mashyach (for example, ISA 53). Yet, despite all that can be understood from the Old Testament, the exact details of how Yahuwah makes people righteous in His sight is not explained. That explanation is revealed only in the good news.

Shift in Focus

Beginning in verse 18, Paul begins a section addressing primarily the Greek members of the Assembly living in Rome; he shows the terrible consequences which can occur to anyone who rejects Yahuwah.

1:18 For the wrath of Yahuwah is revealed from heaven against all wicked and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness [NIV: “by their wickedness”],

Wrath of Yahuwah

The righteousness of Yahuwah is revealed in the good news which was recorded as it was inspired by Yahuwah in heaven. The wrath of Yahuwah has also been recorded in the same writings which contain the good news; it has also been revealed through the corruption and suffering which have been found throughout the history of man. The use of the phrase “the wrath of Yahuwah” is referring to the repercussions suffered by those who disobey Yahuwah and break His laws; Paul elaborates on those repercussions beginning in verse 24.

Suppress the Truth

Since righteousness involves living in accordance with Yahuwah's law, unrighteousness involves living in opposition to the law of Yahuwah. This means that Yahuwah is against those who live without regard to His law.

Those who suppress the truth do so because the truth condemns their immoral behavior or their deceitful teachings. To purposely suppress the truth implies that those who do so have knowledge of the truth.

1:19 because what may be known of Yahuwah is manifest in [JNT: "plain to"] them, for Yahuwah has shown it to them.

Manifested in Them

Paul earlier referred to divine revelation which Yahuwah communicated through the writings of the prophets. Now, he refers to revelation which can be understood by observing the nature of the Creation:

PSA 19:1-2 The heavens declare the glory of Yahuwah; and the firmament shows His handiwork. Day unto day utters speech, and night unto night reveals knowledge.

The Greek philosophers drew many conclusions based on their observations of nature and history. These were the individuals that Paul had in mind originally when he wrote the letter to the Assembly at Rome. Part of the purpose in writing this section was to show the Greeks within the Assembly at Rome that they should not overestimate the value of human intellect; he goes on to show how their ancestors deviated from the truth which nature plainly reveals.

1:20 For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes [KJV: "the invisible things of Him"] are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and divine-head [Greek: "theiotes", meaning "divinity" or "divine supremacy"], so that they are without excuse,

Invisible Attributes Seen in Creation

Yahuwah actually gives insight into the structure of the Ruwach realm based upon the physical Creation. The invisible things, including Yahuwah Himself, are clearly seen in the Creation. The Creation is orderly because of laws which regulate it, just as there are laws which regulate the realm of spirit. The existence of those laws requires a Creator who set them in motion.

The primary focus Paul makes here is that the entire Creation, whether terrestrial or celestial, is based on law. By observing the Creation, it is clear that there are laws in place which govern the continuation of the Creation. And just as there are laws regulating the Creation, so there are laws which regulate the lives and relationships of mankind. The same Lawgiver who had the power to set in motion the laws in nature, also established the laws which regulate the lives and relationships of men and women.

From the time of Adam, mankind has had the ability to perceive Yahuwah by virtue of the existence and continuation of the physical Creation. In the post-Flood world, the Greeks are generally credited with discovering many of those laws that Yahuwah had established and set in motion.

1:21 Because that, when [NKJ: "although"] they knew Yahuwah, they glorified Him not as Yahuwah, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations [NKJ: "thoughts"], and their foolish heart was darkened. (KJV)

Knowing Yahuwah

The word “*knew*” is from the Greek word “*ginosko*” which means “*perceived through observation.*” Humanity, and the Greeks in particular, perceived Yahuwah through their observation of the laws governing the Creation and how those laws are so perfectly compatible. Yet, they did not give honor to Yahuwah for the laws set in place, nor did they thank Him or show Him respect for what He allowed them to see. Instead, they became puffed up over the knowledge that they accumulated concerning the working of the laws of nature. Pride led them to value human reasoning more than Yahuwah’s revelation. Therefore, they followed a path that led them further away from Yahuwah and the light of the truth, ultimately taking them into total darkness:

JOH 8:12 Then Amanuwal spoke to them again, saying, “I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.”

JOH 3:20-21 For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in Yahuwah.

1:22 Professing to be wise, they became fools,

Wise Fools

Rather than giving Yahuwah the credit, they referred to the greatness of Euclid, Pythagoras and many others. They placed their own names on the laws, elevating themselves to be the fountains of wisdom rather than pointing men to Yahuwah. In the same manner as the ancient Greeks, modern man still attempts to explain the Creation without a Creator. Professors of higher education study cellular biology and proclaim proof of evolution rather than standing in awe of the Creator who designed such complexity. Like the ancient Greeks, they too have become fools while professing to be wise.

1:23 and changed [JNT: “exchanged”] the glory of the incorruptible Yahuwah into an image made like corruptible man and birds and four-footed beasts and creeping things.

Corruptible Images vs. Incorruptible Glory

Rather than submitting to Yahuwah whom they could not destroy, they substituted physical images and idols which they could control. The most obvious thing the Greeks worshiped other than their minds were their bodies, as is attested by the numerous statues of naked men and women which have survived the centuries. The Greeks worshiped Zeus, Poseidon, Hermes, etc. Their mighty ones were in the form of humans, with human passions and steeped in immorality.

The Romans copied, but renamed the pantheon of the Greeks. Earlier peoples, such as the Egyptians, established idols based on the form of animals.

1:24 Therefore Yahuwah gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. (NIV)

Given to Sinful Desires

This verse begins a section which explains how the wrath of Yahuwah is revealed against wicked and unrighteous men (verse 18). Yahuwah “gave them over” by allowing the penalty of broken law to be applied without interference, just as He did with ancient Israel; they reaped the curses which result from disobeying Yahuwah:

PSA 81:11-12 But My people would not heed My voice, and Israel would have none of Me.

So I gave them over to their own stubborn heart, to walk in their own counsels. The sexual impurity mentioned here lies between two verses which refer to idol worship. The inference is that this is referring to prostitution at pagan temples, such as the temple of Aphrodite in Corinth, where Paul probably wrote this letter.

1:25 who exchanged the truth of Yahuwah for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature [NIV: “created things”] rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Aman.

Truth of Yahuwah & the Lie

The “truth of Yahuwah” refers to the revelation of the true Aluhym through the Creation. The “lie” referred to their acceptance of corruptible idols in the place of Yahuwah.

Prophecy reveals that the Anti-Mashyach will claim to be Amanuwal Ha’Mashyach and that he should be worshiped as Yahuwah (2TH 2:4). Because men will be filled with sinful desires at the close of the age, they will succumb to the delusion and accept that lie and receive Yahuwah’s wrath:

2TH 2:11-12 And for this reason Yahuwah will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

1:26 Because of this, Yahuwah gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural ones. (NIV)

Shameful Lusts

The “shameful lusts” refer to the perversion of sexual relations. Just as men are willing to exchange what the nature of Creation reveals about the true Yahuwah for idols conceived by their own minds, so they are willing to exchange natural relations between a man and woman for perverted relations.

1:27 In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed indecent acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their perversion. (NIV)

Today, a due penalty being reaped for practicing the sin of homosexuality is HIV or the AIDS virus. In the Encyclopedia Britannica, 15th Edition, Vol. 16, p. 604: under the topic “Homosexuality”: “Male homosexuality was highly valued in ancient Greece...many Greek writers represented homosexuality as normal. Ancient Greece also exemplifies the more casual or indifferent attitude toward female homosexuality throughout history...The Greeks’ congeniality for homosexuality is said to have influenced such neighbors as the Persians and to have been transmitted, along with other Greek traditions, into the Roman Empire.” The Greeks essentially dug up Sodom and Gomorrah from their culture and passed it on to Rome; this hideous perversion has reared up as a militant presence in our time.

1:28 Furthermore, since they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of Yahuwah [NKJ: “Yahuwah in their knowledge”], *He gave them over to a depraved mind* [KJV margin: “mind void of judgment”], **to do what ought not to be done. (NIV)**

Erasure of Yahuwah

The outcome of suppressing the knowledge of Yahuwah is complete failure in achieving satisfying lives and relationships with others. This is one of the most obvious fulfillments of the wrath of Yahuwah (verse 18).

1:29-32 being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; they are whisperers [NIV, NAS: “gossips”], backbiters [NIV, NAS: “slanderers”], haters of Yahuwah, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving, unmerciful; who, knowing the righteous judgment of Yahuwah, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them.

Things Worthy of Death

Those who know better should refuse to participate in these sins and should do their best to deter others from doing so. However, due to their rejection of Yahuwah, and the resulting aberrations of their minds, they are incapable of making sound moral decisions and approve of those who make such decisions.

Romans: Chapter 2

Speaking to the Yahuwdim

Paul now moves on to address the Yahuwdim members of the Assembly in Rome, although what he says here applies to everyone. He has shown that the Greeks come from an absolutely perverted ancestry because they, like the rest of mankind, had rejected Yahuwah after observing the laws which He set in motion as the Creator and Lawgiver.

2:1 Therefore you are inexcusable, O man, whoever you are who judge, for in whatever you judge another you condemn yourself; for you who judge practice the same things.

Condemnation

The word "judge" is from the Greek "krino" which means to "pass sentence". Some of the Yahuwdim in Rome were so absorbed in finding fault with the Greek members' sinful idolatrous background that they failed to be introspective of their own lives, in which sin could also be found.

MAT 7:1-5 “Judge not, that you be not judged. For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the same measure you use, it will be measured back to you. And why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye, but do not consider the plank in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me remove the speck out of your eye'; and look, a plank is in your own eye? Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck out of your brother's eye.”

Just as those who rejected Yahuwah, after viewing proof of Yahuwah's existence by observing the laws governing nature, were without excuse (1:20), so are those who reject Yahuwah after having seen His laws specifically spelled out in His written revelation.

2:2 But we know that the judgment of Yahuwah is according to [NIV: “based on”] truth against those who practice such things.

Judgment

The Yahuwdim were not guilty of homosexuality. As a people to this day, they have a lower percentage of homosexuality than any other group on the face of the earth because the correct family relationship has been promoted throughout time. Yet while they were not guilty of homosexuality, they were guilty of doing the same things their ancestors and the Greeks had done: they rejected the Creator and the law

which they were shown. The Yahuwdim could not go back and change the way their ancestors rejected the Creator and His laws any more than the Greeks could go back and alter the choices made by their ancestors.

The sentence which Yahuwah passes on an individual is based on truth; and truth is the Word of Yahuwah (JOH 17:17). During the White Throne Judgment, all will be judged according to the truth contained within the Scriptures.

REV 20:12 "And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before Yahuwah, and books were opened...And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books."

2:3 do you think that you, a mere man passing judgment on others who do such things, yet doing them yourself, will escape the judgment of Yahuwah? (JNT)

Only Yahuwah, who established the law and has the ability to reward those who keep it or punish those who break it, has the right to pass sentence.

JAM 4:11-12 Do not speak evil of one another, brethren. He who speaks evil of a brother and judges his brother, speaks evil of the law and judges the law. But if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge. There is one Lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy. Who are you to judge another?

2:4 Or do you despise the riches of His goodness [JNT: "kindness"], *forbearance, and longsuffering* [JNT: "patience"], not knowing that the goodness of Yahuwah leads you to repentance?

Despising the Riches

This statement seems to indicate that part of the reason for the correction Paul gives regarding the problem of judging involves the impatience that some men were exhibiting toward Yahuwah for allowing those who they judged unfit to be included within the congregation as equals. The Yahuwdim in the Assembly had access to the letter of the law from birth and felt they deserved placement in the Assembly. The Gentiles, on the other hand, had practiced shameless paganism all their lives until they were added to the Assembly and therefore were not as "righteous"!

Kindness, Forbearance & Patience

Yahuwah is extremely kind and patient in leading individuals to repentance; He gives them plenty of opportunity to cease from breaking the law. This is the verse to which Peter made reference in his second letter:

2PE 3:15 and account that the longsuffering of our Sovereign is salvation as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has written to you,

Paul understood repentance and obedience, as was clear in ROM 1:5. The Yahuwdim believed that they had found their own way to the Assembly thanks to their ancestry, from having grown up with the law, when in fact it was the goodness of Yahuwah opening their minds to repentance. It was the same goodness of Yahuwah which led the Greeks to repentance.

2:5 But because of your stubbornness and your unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath against yourself for [NKJ: "in"] the day of Yahuwah's wrath, when His righteous judgment will be revealed. (NIV)

Purpose of His Letter

Now it is clear why Paul took so much time building rapport with those who would receive this letter. He now comes out with very strong rebuke against the Yahuwdim who were condemning the non-Yahuwdim members of the congregation. If they continued in their discriminatory condemnation of the converted Greeks, the Yahuwdim were setting themselves up for some major disappointment and retribution.

Day of Yahuwah's Wrath

The "day of Yahuwah's wrath" is the time when Yahuwah will confront each sinner with his sins.

2:6 who "will render [JNT: "pay back"] to each one according to his deeds":

GAL 6:7 Do not be deceived, Yahuwah is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.

JOH 5:28-29 Don't be surprised at this; because the time is coming when all who are in the grave will hear His voice and come out—those who have done good to a resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to a resurrection of judgment. (JNT)

During the resurrection to judgment, each individual will be confronted with the sins he sinned prior to his death and will be given opportunity to repent of them.

2:7 eternal life to those who by patient continuance in doing good seek for glory, honor, and immortality;

Paul connects "deeds" to eternal life in this and the previous verse. He states that the one who desires the glory, honor and immortality which are attached to eternal life must continue doing what is good. This is taken directly from what Amanuwal stated about the basic requirement for eternal life:

MAT 19:16-17 Now behold, one came and said to Him, "Good Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?" So He said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, Yahuwah. But if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments."

2:8-9 but to those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness—indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, on every soul of man who does evil, of the Yahuwdite first and also of the Greek;

Results of Sin

After showing the need to obey Yahuwah's commandments in order to obtain eternal life and all the glory and honor associated with that state, Paul now shows the dishonor and anguish which results from breaking Yahuwah's laws; he reflects back to those who suppress the truth so that they can fulfill their desires which are contrary to righteousness (1:18). Amanuwal indicated this was a serious problem among the religious Yahuwdim who wanted to kill Him:

JOH 5:44 "How can you believe, who receive honor from one another, and do not seek the honor that comes from the only Mighty One?"

Since righteousness is keeping the commandments (PSA 119:172), unrighteousness is breaking the commandments.

Now Paul tells us that tribulation and anguish, indignation and wrath will come to the Yahuwдите first; the reason being that the Yahuwдите has been the keeper of the Kadosh Scriptures which contain instructions transmitted directly from Yahuwah, whereas the Gentiles had not been so privileged.

2:10 but glory, honor, and peace to everyone who works what is good, to the Yahuwдите first and also to the Greek.

Work What is Good

Paul is advocating works, not to earn salvation, but to prove one's faith is fit for salvation. He is building on James' teaching regarding faith.

JAM 2:20 But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead?

It is only those who do good who will be rewarded with the gift of eternal life.

GAL 6:9 And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.

2:11 For there is no partiality [JNT: "favoritism"] with Yahuwah.

Zero Partiality

This was the conclusion reached by Peter after his vision of the sheet containing common and unclean animals:

ACT 10:34-35 Then Peter opened his mouth and said: "In truth I perceive that Yahuwah shows no partiality. But in every nation whoever fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him."

Yahuwah is not impressed with the outward appearance of a man.

ISA 16:7 But Yahuwah said to Samuel, "Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature, because I have refused him. For Yahuwah does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but Yahuwah looks at the heart."

Some of the Yahuwdim in the congregation at Rome thought that Yahuwah did indeed show partiality to them because they had spent their entire lives living according to the law, as well as being the descendants of the people who made the covenant with Yahuwah at Sinai.

2:12 For as many as have sinned without [NIV: "apart from"; JNT: "outside the framework of"] law will also perish without [NIV: "apart from"; JNT: "outside the framework of"] law, and as many as have sinned in [JNT: "within the framework of"] the law will be judged by the law.

"Law" or "The Law"

This is the first place in this letter where virtually all English translations have inserted the definite article "the" before "law". Whenever "law" is combined with the article "the" to form "the law", the combination refers to Yahuwah's law only. Without the definite article, "law" can refer to laws of

Judaism, laws associated with pagan religions, laws of men, as well as Yahuwah's law. Since the context clearly indicates that Yahuwah's law is the focus, the insertion of the definite article in this verse is correct.

Who have Sinned?

Those who sinned "outside the framework of law" referred to the Greeks and the other Gentiles who were not given the law in codified form; they were ignorant of Yahuwah's direct revelation. Yet, those who were, and who are, ignorant of the law will still be judged by the law; they will pay the penalty for their sins (and the wages of sin is death), unless they repent. There is a penalty for sin, whether or not there is knowledge of the law.

The Yahuwdim sinned "within the framework of the law" by disobeying it despite having it in written form.

Amanuwal showed there is a repercussion suffered by those who follow that course:

LUK 12:47-48 "And that servant who knew his master's will, and did not prepare himself or do according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he who did not know, yet committed things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few. For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required; and to whom much has been committed, of him they will ask the more."

The Yahuwdim were more accountable than the Greeks because they had the law. The Yahuwdim should have realized the Greeks had come a long way and should have shown compassion and empathy for someone who had come out of brazen paganism. Paul is putting the judgmental Yahuwdim in their place.

Chapter Inset

Verses 13-15 are a parenthetical insertion and help explain the last couple of verses. Paul continues with his main thought in verse 16.

2:13 (for not the hearers of the law are just in the sight of Yahuwah, but the doers of the law will be justified;

Do, Not Just Hear

James has already emphasized the importance of doing what the law requires, and the danger of taking the law for granted:

JAM 1:21-25 Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls. But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does.

Before Yahuwah will consider us justified, made right with Him, we must first of all be keeping His law. Paul is emphatic that this is required conduct before justification is possible.

2:14-15 For when Gentiles, who do not have the law, do instinctively the things of the law, these, not having the law, are a law to [PHL: "show that they have a law in"]

themselves, in that they show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness, and their thoughts alternately accusing or else defending them. (NAS)

Instinctive Obedience

The Gentiles (and the Greeks in particular) were not given the written law of Yahuwah, but learned of established laws through observation and experience. They saw that there were laws in motion: laws governing certain geometric functions, laws governing chemical reactions, and laws that governed human actions and relationships.

Wherever one goes in the world, he will find that the local community will have instinctively adopted some of Yahuwah's laws to govern that society; that is, they recognize the need for those laws for the maintenance of order. No matter how far away a people have drifted from Yahuwah and His word (they may have never seen a Scriptures), they or their ancestors have discovered certain laws which are essential for the stability of their populace.

"Do not steal" is a good example of one of the laws of Yahuwah which has been discovered and adopted by every governmental structure devised by man. There is not a society on the earth that allows stealing without a penalty. There are laws against murder in virtually every society; it is not allowed to go unpunished. In fact, most of the commandments, upon which the Law of Yahuwah is established, can be perceived by mankind, except for the Sabbath. As to which day of the week is the Sabbath, only through revelation can that be discerned.

Those who "instinctively" obey the laws governing human conduct and relationships do so without being directed to do so by Yahuwah's written code. Hence, Paul points out that they are obeying those laws based on the good fruits that have been witnessed due to their occurrence—not because they are told to obey them. This is how they are a "law to themselves". The conscience is the awareness of the moral goodness or blameworthiness of one's conduct. Their "conscience bearing witness" refers to how their mind reacts to the obedience or disobedience they exhibit toward the laws they have come to see "instinctively".

Continuance of Thought

Verse 16 continues from verse 12, where Paul stated that Yahuwah will judge all by the law. For every one that is self-seeking, the judgment is condemnation. For those who are trying to obey Yahuwah in continuing to do well, there is a certain judgment that awaits them.

2:16 in the day when Yahuwah will judge the secrets of men by Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach, according to my good news.

Judging Secrets

The "secrets of men" refers to what is in the heart of men that motivates them to action—whether good or bad! In the case of most people who have ever lived, this judgment occurs, as REV 20:11 shows, during the period after the second resurrection.

2:17-18 But if you call yourself a Yahuwdite and rely on the law and boast of your relation to Yahuwah and know His will and determine what is best because you are instructed in the law. (NRS)

Yahuwdim Boasting

Paul now speaks very frankly with the members of the congregation who came out of Judaism regarding the influence that Judaism had had over them. He was drawing on his own background of being a Pharisee with a lot of misdirected zeal.

ACT 22:3-4 I am indeed a Yahuwdite, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, taught according to the strictness of our fathers' law, and was zealous toward Yahuwah as you all are today. I persecuted this Way to the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women,

GAL 1:13-14 For you have heard of my former conduct in Judaism, how I persecuted the Assembly of Yahuwah beyond measure and tried to destroy it. And I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries in my own nation, being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers.

PHI 3:6 concerning zeal, persecuting the Assembly; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.

Paul knew how arrogant the Yahuwdim could become over their descent and the strictness they exhibited toward keeping the law and their own traditions.

2:19-20 and if you are sure that you are a guide to the blind, a light to those who are in darkness, a corrector of the foolish [JNT: "an instructor for the spiritually unaware"], a teacher of children [NAS: "the immature"], having in the law the embodiment of knowledge and truth, (NRS)

Paul used heavy sarcasm as he addressed the Yahuwdim members who were claiming to be authorities of the meaning of the law. Due to their arrogance, they boasted that they could correctly direct all segments of those with whom Yahuwah will work or was already working.

2:21-22 You, therefore, who teach another, do you not teach yourself? You who preach that a man should not steal, do you steal? You who say, "Do not commit adultery," do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples [JNT: "commit idolatrous acts"]?

Paul asks them if they are telling the Gentiles that repentance applies only to the Gentiles? Those who teach are expected to practice what they instruct others to do.

2:23-24 You who make your boast in the law, do you dishonor Yahuwah through breaking the law? For "The name of Yahuwah is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you," as it is written.

Those who were behaving in such a pompous manner were misrepresenting Yahuwah. They claimed to be the "elite" of the Assembly of Yahuwah, but their actions were not righteous, in fact they were repulsive to Yahuwah. Their actions were inconsistent with their claims of being the "praisers of Yahuwah". Paul connects the impact of their behavior to the impact of the conduct of the physical nation of Israel among the people with whom they were exiled:

EZE 36:21-23 "But I had concern for My kadosh name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the nations wherever they went. Therefore say to the house of Israel, 'Thus

says the Sovereign YAHUWAH: "I do not do this for your sake, O house of Israel, but for My kadosh name's sake, which you have profaned among the nations wherever you went. And I will sanctify My great name, which has been profaned among the nations, which you have profaned in their midst; and the nations shall know that I am Yahuwah," says the Sovereign YAHUWAH, "when I am hallowed in you before their eyes.""

Now the Yahuwdim in the Assembly were blaspheming the name of Yahuwah by their conduct and manner of life by the way that they were treating their fellow True Followers.

2:25 For circumcision is indeed profitable if you keep the law; but if you are a breaker of the law, your circumcision has become uncircumcision.

Boasting of Physical Circumcision

The Yahuwdim viewed their circumcisions as guarantees of inclusion in the covenant promises. Yet, if the Yahuwdite broke the law, Yahuwah looked at them like any other Gentile, as though the Yahuwdite had never had that physical operation.

ICO 7:19 Circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing, but keeping the commandments of Yahuwah is what matters.

2:26 Therefore, if an uncircumcised man keeps the righteous requirements of the law, will not his uncircumcision be counted as circumcision?

Paul reiterates that the circumcised will be seen as uncircumcised upon breaking the law, and the uncircumcised who keeps the law is viewed by Yahuwah as being circumcised. The keeping of the written law, once it is revealed, is the first step in faith, and Yahuwah counts that faith as righteousness (GEN 15:6).

ACT 10:35 But in every nation whoever fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him.

2:27 And will not the physically uncircumcised, if he fulfills the law, judge you [JNT: "stand as a judgment on you"] **who, even with your written code** [NAS: "though having the letter of the law"] **and circumcision, are a transgressor of the law?**

Transgressors

Amanuwal warned the self-righteous Yahuwdim who condemned Him during His ministry that in the resurrection to judgment, the Gentiles would condemn them for failing to repent of their arrogance:

MAT 12:41-42 "The men of Nineveh will rise in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and indeed a greater than Jonah is here. The queen of the South will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and indeed a greater than Solomon is here."

2:28 For a person is not a Yahuwdite who is one outwardly, nor is true circumcision something external and physical. (NRS)

Spiritual Yahuwdim

Amanuwal stated in JOH 4:22 that salvation is of the Yahuwdim. It is necessary to be a Yahuwdite, one who is inwardly centered on Amanuwal, to be saved.

2:29 Rather, a person is a Yahuwdim who is one inwardly, and real circumcision is a matter of the heart—it is spiritual and not literal. Such a person receives praise not from others but from Yahuwah. (NRS)

Yahuwah looks on the heart; the circumcision that is important to Yahuwah is circumcision of the heart, spiritual and not literal circumcision.

Even Moses understood that:

DEU 10:16 “Therefore circumcise the foreskin of your heart, and be stiff-necked no longer.”

COL 2:11 “In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Amanuwal,”

GAL 6:15-16 For in Amanuwal Mashyach neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but a new creation. And as many as walk according to this rule, peace and mercy be upon them, and upon the Israel of Yahuwah.

Amanuwal circumcises the heart through immersion and the washing away of sins. The one who is a Yahuwdite inwardly is one who has had his heart circumcised, whether or not he has been literally circumcised in the flesh.

All physical Yahuwdim were descended from the tribe of Yahuwdah. The name "Yahuwdah" means "praise" (GEN 29:35). Praise is not to be from men, but from Yahuwah. The praise should not be in the cut flesh which men can see; the praise should originate in the inner man, and be displayed by our actions and words, in the way we treat our fellow man, which includes our brothers and sisters in the Assembly.

Romans: Chapter 3

3:1 Then what advantage has the Yahuwdite? Or what is the benefit [NIV: “value”] of circumcision? (NAS)

Physical Yahuwdim

Now that he has shown the value of being a Yahuwdite inwardly, Paul now asks if being a Yahuwdite outwardly (born a physical Yahuwdite or a Yahuwdim convert) provides a Yahuwdite with any advantage or superiority over non-Yahuwdim.

3:2 Much in every way! Chiefly because to them were committed the oracles [JNT: “very words”] of Yahuwah.

The primary advantage the Yahuwdite has over all non-Yahuwdim is the possession of Yahuwah's instructions; they were entrusted with the duty of preserving His revelations. The word "oracles" is from the Greek "logia" which was used to refer to divine utterances or communications that were passed from generation to generation.

There is no other scripture which specifically states that Yahuwah committed this responsibility to the tribe of Yahuwdah. However, there are two scriptures which support Paul's statement: the first is the statement that Amanuwal made to the woman at the well in Samaria:

JOH 4:22 "You worship what you do not know; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Yahuwdim."

Amanuwal told her that the Yahuwdim were the ones who possessed the revelation from Yahuwah which was necessary for the attainment of a relationship with Yahuwah. The second scripture reference is found in the prophecy about Yahuwdah among the prophecies the patriarch Jacob made concerning his sons:

GEN 49:10 "The scepter shall not depart from Yahuwdah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh (Mashyach) comes; and to Him [him] shall be the obedience of the people."

The "scepter" refers to rule or governance; "lawgiver" is one who disseminates the standard used for governing. The Yahuwdim were given the responsibility to watch over and protect the scriptures which compose the Old Testament. They have faithfully preserved the Tanach and taught which is the correct day of the week for the Sabbath.

These are the oracles which Yahuwah committed to the Yahuwdim until the coming of Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach and the establishment of the Kingdom of Yahuwah over all nations.

3:3 For what if some did not believe? Will their unbelief make the faithfulness of Yahuwah without effect?

3:3 Even supposing that some of them have proved untrustworthy, is their faithlessness to cancel the faithfulness of Yahuwah? (MOF)

Faithfulness

Beginning here, Paul begins to explain his concern for the way the Yahuwdim had treated this fantastic advantage they had been given. Through verse 8, he elaborates on the point that although the Yahuwdim had an advantage, *they had not used it*. They had been faithless toward being obedient to the covenant that their ancestors had made with Yahuwah. Although the Yahuwdim had not lived up to their end of the contract initially made between Yahuwah and Israel at Mt. Sinai, Yahuwah will be faithful to fulfill what He has promised to do! He promised Abraham that he and his seed would be heirs of the world. That means despite the failure of Israel and Yahuwdah to be faithful, resulting in their exile from the Promised Land, Yahuwah will uphold His promise to Abraham.

Paul elaborates on the certainty of Yahuwah's faithfulness to that promise in Chapters 9-11. The certainty of that promise is another advantage which the Yahuwdite, as well as the other tribes of Israel, have over non- Israelites.

Paul now answers the question: Will Yahuwah not do what He promised because the Yahuwdim failed to fulfill their promise?

3:4 Certainly not! Indeed, let Yahuwah be true but every man a liar. As it is written: "That You may be justified in Your words, and may overcome [NAS: "prevail"] when You are judged."

Regardless of man's failure to do all he promises, Yahuwah can never be accused of failing to keep His word. Paul quoted from Dawid's confession of sin in:

PSA 51:4 Against You, You only, have I sinned, and done this evil in Your sight—that You may be found just when You speak, and blameless when You judge.

Referencing Scripture

The practice of the rabbis was to refer to a larger passage of scripture by quoting only part of it. As the next verse shows, Although he only quoted the last part of the passage, Paul intended the reader to include the previous part as well.

3:5 But if our unrighteousness demonstrates [NIV: “brings out...more clearly”] **the righteousness of Yahuwah, what shall we say? Is Yahuwah** [JNT: “That Yahuwah is”] **unjust who inflicts wrath? (I speak as a man.)** [NIV: “(I am using a human argument.)”].

The Righteousness of Yahuwah

Just as Dawid referred to his personal sin amplifying Yahuwah's righteousness, so Paul referred to the collective sins of the Yahuwdim ("our unrighteousness") from verse 3 doing the same. Yahuwah's righteousness is demonstrated through His willingness to forgive human failure in order to establish divine will. Since this is the case, is Yahuwah wrong to inflict His wrath (1:18) on the disobedient? Is it fair that sin requires a penalty if Yahuwah's righteousness is shown to be greater through His forgiveness? If Yahuwah knew that man could not possibly fulfill all of His requirements, yet established punishment for failure to keep them, is He not unjust and unfair? Paul adds the last phrase to clarify that only a carnal mind would infer that Yahuwah could be unjust.

Punishment for Sin

He now answers the question: Is Yahuwah unjust for punishing the disobedient?

3:6 Certainly not! For then how will [JNT: “could”] **Yahuwah judge the world?**

If there is not a penalty to be paid when a law is broken, how would one learn the need to obey?

ECC 8:11 Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.

Without an established standard of conduct and a penalty required for failing to follow that standard, there would be no basis for judgment! Judgment requires evaluation of conduct—whether people obey or disobey the standard.

3:7 But if through my lie the truth of Yahuwah abounded to His glory, why am I also still being judged as a sinner? (NAS)

Glory to Yahuwah through Sin?

Paul states a ridiculous, hypothetical case: the more I lie, the more Yahuwah can forgive, and then the greater Yahuwah's righteousness can be. It is a great Yahuwah who can overlook and forgive a particular sin or problem; so the more I sin, the greater Yahuwah is.

3:8 And why not say (as we are slanderously reported and as some affirm that we say), "Let us do evil that good may come"? Their condemnation is just [NIV: “deserved”]. (NAS)

Leading up to the time he wrote this letter, Paul was being accused of teaching disobedience to the law.

ACT 18:12-13 Now when Gallio was proconsul of Achaia, the Yahuwdim with one accord rose up against Paul and brought him to the judgment seat, saying, "This fellow persuades men to worship Yahuwah contrary to the law."

This is what Paul was being accused of saying. The Yahuwdim accused Paul of telling the people to sin so that good would come from it; sinning would make Yahuwah greater than He already was because He would show greater mercy toward them. Although Paul did no such thing, Jude warned that there would be unrighteous men who would come along turning the grace of Yahuwah into a license to disobey (verse 4). Paul stated that the wrath Yahuwah has in store for those who slandered him, by twisting and perverting the things he taught, would be well deserved.

3:9 What then? Are we better than they? Not at all. [JNT: “are we Yahuwdim better off? Not entirely.”] **For we have previously charged** [KJV: “proved”] **both Yahuwdim and Greeks that they are all under** [JNT: “controlled by”] **sin.**

Better Off?

This verse picks up the thought from verse 2, where Paul stated that the Yahuwdite had an advantage due to the possession of divine revelation. Here, he states that possession of that revelation is of no benefit if it is not being used to transform one's life.

The reference to his previous charge is to 2:12, where he showed that both the Yahuwdite and the Greek had sinned. He stated that both began their relationships with Yahuwah on an equal footing because both had sinned. Being guilty of sin meant that possession of the law was irrelevant. The Yahuwdim were claiming to be better than the Greeks because they had the law; they had the covenant; they had the contact with Yahuwah. They had the Kadosh Scriptures, which had been preserved by their ancestors and passed down from the cradle to the grave. Every Yahuwdite had this background and so thought they were much better than all of the non-Yahuwdim. Paul told the Yahuwdim that they and the Greeks started off on an equal footing with Yahuwah, although one group had the law in their possession and the other one did not, because they were all under sin.

To make his point, Paul quotes several Old Testament passages:

3:10 As it is written: "There is none righteous, no, not one;"

Equal Footing

The emphasis in this verse and the next two are taken from PSA 14:1-3. This includes all Yahuwdim and all Gentiles. There is none righteous, not even those who do good works.

ISA 64:6 But we are all like an unclean thing, and all our righteousness are like filthy rags...

Deeds done by human effort alone are not acceptable righteousness. There were Yahuwdim who claimed they had faithfully worn their phylacteries and had the law written on their doorposts; they had attended Sabbath assemblies every week and had gone to Jerusalem for the feasts. They had been faithful to the law. Yahuwah told them that all of that was fine, but was not enough!

Paul will elaborate on this point more thoroughly later, especially in Chapter 7.

3:11-12 “there is none who understands; there is none who seeks after Yahuwah. They have all gone out of the way; they have together become unprofitable [NRS: “worthless”]; there is none who does good, no, not one.”

The requirement for understanding is obedience.

PSA 111:10 The fear of Yahuwah is the beginning of wisdom; a good understanding have all those who do His commandments...

Even those who have attained understanding can, and will, lose it if they practice disobedience.

3:13-14 “Their throats are open graves, they use their tongues to deceive. Vipers' venom is under their lips. Their mouths are full of curses and bitterness.” (JNT)

Throats of Open Graves

The word "throat" is from the Greek word “larugx” which refers to the part of the body where the vocal cords are located; the reference is to speech. The comparison of speech to open graves is clear—the words spoken are a stench in the air—profanity unto Yahuwah. Lies are told to deceive as well as to hurt and destroy others by gossip and slander.

JAM 3:8 But no man can tame the tongue. It is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.

The point is that everyone has sinned by words they have uttered.

3:15 “Their feet are swift [JNT: “rush”] to shed blood;”

Swift to Shed Blood

This refers to how quickly men are willing to go to war, as well as be busybodies in the affairs of others with a destructive intent.

PRO 6:18 a heart that devises wicked plans, feet that are swift in running to evil,

3:16-17 “destruction and misery are in their ways; and the way [NAS: “path”] of peace they have not known.”

Verse 17 is from ISA 59:8. There have been attempts by great empires to bring peace to the world; each of them thought that the way to bring peace was to launch war against others. They have never been able to come to peace by this method. Mankind hoped that peace could be achieved by humanly devised organizations—the League of Nations, then the United Nations—but to no avail. The word "known" is from the Greek word "ginosko", which means "to perceive by observation". Mankind has never been able to observe the way to peace in the world because real peace must come from Yahuwah and comes to those who cherish Yahuwah's law and obey Him.

PSA 119:165 Great peace have those who love Your law, and nothing causes them to stumble.

3:18 “There is no fear of Yahuwah before their eyes.”

Why?

The root cause of mankind's sinful state, as summarized in verses 10-17, is the absence of the fear of Yahuwah:

PRO 1:7 The fear of Yahuwah is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction.

PRO 9:10 The fear of Yahuwah is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Kadosh One is understanding.

Whether they are Yahuwdite, Greek or whoever, there is no fear of Yahuwah in their eyes. If there is no fear of Yahuwah in them, then wisdom and knowledge are unattainable because it is impossible to come to knowledge or wisdom without the fear of Yahuwah.

3:19 Now we know that whatever the Law says, it speaks to those who are under the Law, that every mouth may be closed, and all the world may become accountable to Yahuwah. (NAS)

We Know

The use of "we" refers to those in the Assembly. Paul included himself with the Greeks and Yahuwdim who were in the Assembly at Rome. The word "know" is from the Greek word "eido", which means "to comprehend intuitively". That is, it automatically makes sense to us without the need to experiment to determine if it is true.

The Law Speaks

Paul says that those in the Assembly are aware that the law defines the standard of conduct which pleases Yahuwah, and that a penalty occurs whenever one's conduct is inappropriate. Those in the Assembly comprehend that their obligation is to bridle their conduct by that law because the need has been brought to their attention. Those who are made aware of the law come under its jurisdiction and are judged based on its requirements.

Those who come under the jurisdiction of the law know that it reveals Yahuwah's desire and that they cannot argue against its requirements, but must yield to them. Since the majority of mankind still argues against the need to yield to the law, they are not yet under its jurisdiction in relation to their day of judgment and accountability to Yahuwah. Only those who compose the Assembly are now experiencing their day of accountability and judgment.

IPE 4:17 For the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of Yahuwah; and if it begins with us first...

The day of salvation for most people will be later, in the White Throne Judgment. Every human being that has ever lived, or is yet to live will, at some time, come under the jurisdiction of the law and be accountable before Yahuwah to live according to its requirements.

3:20 Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

3:20 For no human being can be made upright in the sight of Yahuwah by observing the Law. All that the Law can do is to make men conscious of sin. (GSP)

Deeds of Law

This is the first time Paul uses the term "ergon nomos" (**ERGON NOMOU**) in this letter. Unfortunately, the translators erred by translating this term "the deeds of the law" since the Greek, literally translated,

means “deeds of law”. Without the definite article “the”, the term encompasses laws ranging from the laws of Yahuwah to the laws connected with Judaism and pagan systems of worship. It refers to the use of physical effort.

None are Justified By Deeds

Even Dawid understood that it was impossible for a man to justify himself by his own effort:

PSA 143:2 Do not enter into judgment with Your servant, for in Your sight no one living is righteous.

He clearly states that justification (being declared forgiven) is not earned through keeping the requirements of law. We cannot earn a right relationship with Yahuwah through our physical efforts. However, Paul is not implying that there is no need to keep the law. He has already established that only those who keep the law will be justified (2:13). He is making the point that righteousness requires Yahuwah's involvement; it is not something achievable by human effort alone.

Conscious of Sin

The Greek word translated "sin" is "hamartia" which means "to miss the mark". Yahuwah has revealed the proper standard of conduct through the law; those who fail to attain that standard "miss the mark". The law simply defines what sin is so that those who come under the law know what conduct is, or is not allowable.

3:21 But now the righteousness of Yahuwah apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets,

Righteousness Revealed

Paul refers back to 1:17, where he stated that the righteousness of Yahuwah is revealed in the good news. Here, he adds that there is a righteousness that does not directly involve the keeping of the law; that does not involve physical effort or works. There are two types of righteousness: the righteousness of faith that he discusses here, and the righteousness of the law, upon which he expounds in Chapter 8.

By the Law & the Prophets

Paul said that he substantiated this claim from both the law and the prophets, and will give some examples in the next chapter.

3:22 Even the righteousness of Yahuwah which is by faith of Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach unto all and upon all them that believe [JNT: “who continue trusting”]; for there is no difference [NAS: “distinction”]; (KJV)

Amanuwal's Faith

The emphasis is that the righteousness of Yahuwah originates from the faith of Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach. This is literally the faith that Amanuwal exhibited toward the Father during His time in the flesh, and it comes into us as we allow Him to live in us through His Ruwach. Paul says that the righteousness of Yahuwah comes by the indwelling of Yahuwah's Ruwach due to the faith of Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach dwelling in us.

Upon All Without Distinction

There is no distinction between Yahuwdim and Greeks regarding Yahuwah's righteousness. The Yahuwdite is in no better shape than the Greek when it comes to the righteousness of faith. The

Yahuwdim understood the righteousness of the law, but they had no comprehension of the righteousness of faith until Yahuwah began to deal with them.

3:23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of Yahuwah,

Fallen Short of Yahuwah's Glory

Paul is summarizing several passages from the Kadosh Scriptures:

ECC 7:20 For there is not a just man on earth who does good and does not sin.

IKI 8:46 When they sin against You (for there is no one who does not sin)...

The importance of the righteousness of Yahuwah apart from the law is brought out with this truth. No one has lived without missing the mark: without sin! If one is relying solely on the righteousness of the law for receiving justification, he will be sorely disappointed. Sin separates man from Yahuwah and the glory of His presence:

ISA 59:2 But your iniquities have separated you from your Yahuwah; and your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He will not hear.

3:24 being justified freely [NAS: "as a gift"] by His grace through the redemption that is in Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach,

Freely Justified

The ones who are justified are those who believe (verse 22). Being justified means to be declared just or acquitted from sin by a judge. Yahuwah is the Judge and His act of justifying is performed solely at His discretion as a free gift: not because someone earned the right to be justified.

The Yahuwdim, no matter how many years they had kept the Sabbath, did not earn justification from Yahuwah; although they were convinced that what they had done all of their lives certainly deserved some recognition from Yahuwah.

Redemption Through Amanuwal

Although justification is offered freely, acquittal requires that someone has earned the right to drop the charges against the guilty. This is where redemption enters the picture. Redemption refers to deliverance from bondage after a ransom is paid:

LEV 25:48 after he is sold he may be redeemed again. One of his brothers may redeem him;

Amanuwal paid the ransom to deliver those who believe from the bondage created by their sins:

EPH 1:7 In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace

3:25 whom Yahuwah set forth to be a propitiation [NIV: "sacrifice of atonement"] by His blood, through faith [JNT: "through His faithfulness in respect to His bloody sacrificial death"], to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance Yahuwah had passed over the sins that were previously committed,

Qualifying as Judge & Acquitter of Sins

Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach is the one whom Yahuwah has presented to be the propitiation, or atoning sacrifice. The word "propitiation" comes from the Greek word "hilasterion" and is usually translated "mercy seat", which is the way it is translated in HEB 9:5 (it is used only in these two places in the New Testament). It was upon the mercy seat that the high priest, on the Day of Atonement, sprinkled the blood of the goat which represented Amanuwal. It is through the shed blood of Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach that reconciliation is made with Yahuwah.

The stress Paul is making is that Amanuwal exhibited faithfulness to the fulfillment of Yahuwah's promise, that all nations would ultimately be blessed through Abraham, by offering His life in sacrifice for the sins of humanity despite the fact that those sins had not been repented of at that time.

3:26 to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Amanuwal [JNT: "and is also the One who makes people righteous on the ground of Amanuwal's faithfulness"].

Demonstration of Yahuwah's Righteousness

Just as Yahuwah's righteousness was exemplified by what Amanuwal did prior to any change in the conduct of humanity, so His righteousness is revealed when He justifies those He calls based on faith rather than works.

3:27 Where is boasting then? It is excluded [MOF: "ruled out absolutely"]. **By what law? Of works? No, but by the law of faith.**

Where is Your Boasting?

With the understanding that Yahuwah justifies based on faith and not works, what reason did the Yahuwdim in Rome have for boasting? They felt that the Greeks were second-rate True Followers, and they were first-rate. Yet, both the Yahuwdim and the Greeks started at the same place, they were all under sin; they had all come short of the glory of Yahuwah. The only advantage the Yahuwdim had was that they already knew Yahuwah's law, but even that was based on Yahuwah's decision, not theirs. Yahuwah justifies those whom He chooses to justify, not because of racial background or because of whom their relatives or ancestors were.

What law rules out any and all boasting? If justification came from keeping the law, then the Yahuwdite would have something of which to boast. But justification comes because of faith: the trust and belief that Yahuwah is who He is, and will do what He says He will do. Faith that Yahuwah will act erases all reasons for bragging about personal achievement.

3:28 Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law.

Deeds of Law

This is the second time (3:20) translators erred in translating "ergon nomou"; there is no definite article before "deeds" or "law", so this should read: "from deeds of law". Since 2:13 showed that a prerequisite to justification is keeping the law, it is clear that one must be keeping the law in order to be considered a candidate for justification. Justification is a gift, not an obligation required of Yahuwah due to man's effort.

3:29-30 Or is He the mighty one of the Yahuwdim only? Is He not also the mighty one of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also, since there is one Yahuwah who [NRS: "since

Yahuwah is one; and He”] **will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through** [NRS: “that same”] **faith.**

Mighty One of All

Since Yahuwah is one, it is logical that the process of justification is the same for every individual no matter what their ancestry or nationality.

3:31 Do we then make void the law through faith? Certainly not! On the contrary, we establish [JNT: “confirm”; NRS: “uphold”] **the law.**

Voidance of the Law

Since he had been accused of teaching against the need to keep the law, Paul emphasizes the ridiculousness of thinking that the law was no longer necessary. The same Greek word translated "establish" is translated "make to stand" in other places; we make the law to stand because we have the faith of Amanuwal. Faith compels us to obey Yahuwah. Justification is the process of being forgiven for breaking the law; it is therefore illogical to think Yahuwah would approve of anyone committing the same infractions that made justification necessary in the first place. With this verse, Paul assures the Yahuwdim in Rome that faith does not remove the need for the law, but rather establishes its importance.

Example of Justification

After using numerous Old Testament scriptures to show that no one is righteous or without sin, Paul has concluded that justification is granted based on faith—not on works! To support his point he now uses the example of Abraham.

Romans: Chapter 4

4:1 What shall we say then that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found? (KJV)

4:1 Then what should we say Avraham, our forefather, obtained by his own efforts? (JNT)

What was Abraham's experience in entering into a right relationship with Yahuwah?

4:2 For if Abraham was justified by works [JNT: “came to be considered righteous by Yahuwah because of legalistic observances”], **he has** something of which **to boast, but not** [JNT: “*this is not how it is*”] **before Yahuwah.**

Abraham could not boast about what he had done because it was Yahuwah who gave him the power, ability and the insight to do the things he did. It was not any works that he did that caused Yahuwah to justify him.

4:3 For what does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed Yahuwah, and it was accounted to him for righteousness."

Paul quotes GEN 15:6, and emphasized that it was Abraham's faith that led to Yahuwah's declaration of righteousness—not the works that he had done. Abraham had already proven his obedience by leaving his homeland when Yahuwah instructed him to do so.

4:4 Now when a man works, his wages are not credited to him as a gift, but as an obligation. (NIV)

We all know that if we work for an employer, we, as an employee, first make a contract with the employer to give him so many hours of labor for a certain amount of payment. He pays us for our labor, we earn it, it is ours and we have a claim on it.

4:5-6 But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the wicked, his faith is accounted for righteousness, just as Dawid also describes the blessedness of the man to whom Yahuwah imputes righteousness apart from works:

To further substantiate his conclusions regarding justification apart from works, Paul quotes Dawid, who was considered the third most important figure in Yahuwdim heritage after Abraham and Moses.

4:7-8 "Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, and whose sins are covered; blessed is the man to whom Yahuwah shall not impute sin."

This is quoted from PSA 32:1-2. Those whose sins are forgiven and covered are those who have the sacrifice of Amanuwal applied to them so that they are justified. Those to whom Yahuwah will not impute sin are those who come under the grace which is extended to those who are justified. Those who receive these blessings are the ones who fulfill the requirements in:

ACT 2:38 Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be immersed in the name of Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Kadosh Ruwach".

Paul develops this point further in Chapter 6.

4:9 Does this blessedness then come upon the circumcised only, or upon the uncircumcised also? For we say that faith was accounted to Abraham for righteousness.

Is justification possible only for those who have been physically circumcised? If so, why is the focus of Abraham's righteousness on a mental, spiritual state rather than his outward state?

4:10 How then was it accounted? While he was circumcised, or uncircumcised? Not while circumcised, but while uncircumcised.

Prior to the birth of Ishmael, Yahuwah attributed righteousness to Abraham when he believed Yahuwah's promise of descendants which could only be numbered like the stars of heaven for multitude.

GEN 15:6 And he believed in Yahuwah, and He accounted it to him for righteousness.

When, in the course of Abraham's life did Yahuwah make this statement? **When he was uncircumcised!**

4:11 And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had while still uncircumcised, that he might be the father of all those who believe, though they are uncircumcised, that righteousness might be imputed to them also,

Abraham's state of righteousness existed for about 14 years prior to the time that he was circumcised in the flesh (GEN 17:23-26). Circumcision was a sign, revealing the state of mind that Abraham had at the time Yahuwah accounted his faith to him for righteousness. Physical circumcision was an outward sign of the circumcised heart that Abraham already possessed. It then became the sign of the kind of heart all are to have in order to receive the promise made to Abraham.

If Abraham had righteousness credited to him while in the state of uncircumcision, then those who are uncircumcised can also receive that same blessing. There were Greeks in the Assembly at Rome who had not been physically circumcised, but they had faith just like Abraham had before Yahuwah told him to be circumcised.

4:12 and the father of circumcision to those who not only are of the circumcision, but who also walk in the steps of the faith which our father Abraham had while still uncircumcised.

Abraham was also the father of the Yahuwdim members based on their acquisition of the faith he had prior to his physical cutting—not because of the length of time they had physically observed the law.

4:13 For the promise that he would be the heir of the world was not to Abraham or to his seed through the law, but through the righteousness of faith.

The original promise that Yahuwah made to Abraham was made at the time Yahuwah called him from his homeland, while he was still uncircumcised.

GEN 12:2 "I will make you a great nation; I will bless you and make your name great; and you shall be a blessing."

It was not Abraham's past deeds that caused Yahuwah to make the promise; it was the faith he exhibited.

4:14 For if those who are of the law are heirs, faith is made void [JNT: "pointless"] and the promise made of no effect [JNT: "worthless"],

If salvation can be earned through works, then faith is unnecessary.

GAL 3:18 For if the inheritance is of the law, it is no longer of promise; but Yahuwah gave it to Abraham by promise.

The promise of inheritance is worthless because there is no way that a person could ever become an heir of the world through works apart from faith, as the next verse reveals.

4:15 because the law brings about wrath; for where there is no law there is no transgression [JNT: "violation"].

This is a reference to the physical effort in keeping the law, which the Yahuwdim were attempting to do. There is no room for error. If a person thought salvation could be earned through works, then he would be required to live a life without error, without making a mistake—one mistake, all the works would be nullified and eternal life would be cancelled out. All that the works would have accomplished would be nothing, because there is nothing that can undo the mistake. The promise of eternal salvation would be worthless because no human being can live a life without making mistakes. This is the result of the decision that Adam made in the Garden of Eden. Paul will go into this in more detail in Chapter 5. The

only way a person could earn salvation by works is if there was no law, that way they would have no sin to cancel out their works.

4:16 Therefore it is of [JNT: "The reason the promise is based on"] faith that it might be according to grace, so that the promise might be sure to all the seed, not only to those who are of the law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all

This promise of salvation, to be an heir of the world, is of faith. It is not based upon works; it is based upon faith, belief, a spiritual state of mind. It is not limited only to the ones who have a certain physical ability because of heredity or environment; but to all who have the same faith of Abraham.

4:17 (as it is written, "I have made you a father of many nations" [GEN 17:5]) in the presence of Him whom he believed, even Yahuwah, who gives life to the dead and calls those things which do not exist as though they did;

The primary reference in the latter part of this verse is not to the resurrection from the dead, but rather to making it possible for Abraham and Sarah to produce a child.

4:18 For he was past hope, yet in hope he trusted [NKJ: "believed"] that he would indeed become a father to many nations, in keeping with what he had been told, "So many will your seed be." (JNT)

Abraham had no reason to hope, not when it came to looking realistically at the situation and then drawing a conclusion. It was contrary to hope, there was no way, physically, that he and Sarah could have a child.

4:19 And not being weak in faith, he did not consider his own body, already dead [PHL: "his own impotence"] (since he was about a hundred years old), and the deadness of Sarah's womb.

Abraham was impotent, he could not sire children, his body was incapable of producing life. Added to this, Sarah was beyond childbearing age; she had gone through menopause. Both were physically incapable of producing children. So, Abraham had hope when all physical circumstances indicated Yahuwah's promise would require the impossible.

4:20-22 He did not waver at the promise of Yahuwah through unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to Yahuwah [JNT: "On the contrary, by trust he was given power as he gave glory to Yahuwah"], and being fully convinced that what He had promised He was also able to perform. And therefore "it was accounted to him for righteousness."

The faith possessed by Abraham originated as an act of grace from Yahuwah (HEB 12:2), causing Abraham to be totally convinced and convicted that Yahuwah had the power to do what He had promised. It was that state of mind that was credited as righteousness to Abraham.

4:23-24 Now it was not written for his sake alone that it was imputed to him, but also for us. It shall be imputed to us who believe in [KJV: "on"] Him who raised up Amanuwal our Sovereign from the dead,

Just as Yahuwah gave life to Abraham and Sarah's bodies so they could have Isaac, so Yahuwah gave life to Amanuwal by resurrecting Him from the dead.

4:25 Who was delivered for our offences [NIV: “sins”], and was raised again for our justification [MOF: “that we might be justified”]. (KJV)

The word "offences" is from the Greek word "paraptoma", which means "to fall aside". Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach was put to death because we have fallen aside from keeping the law. He was put to death for our offences. He was the offering and sacrifice for all sins.

EPH 5:2 And walk in love, as Amanuwal also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to Yahuwah for a sweet-smelling aroma.

Paul states in *1CO 15:17*, that: “*If Amanuwal has not risen, then our faith is in vain*”. We would still be in our sins—unjustified—if Amanuwal had not been resurrected. Justification requires a risen Mashyach who can live in the repentant and grant them His faith.

Romans: Chapter 5

5:1 Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with Yahuwah through our Sovereign Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach,

Justification Through Amanuwal

As Paul has just concluded proving, it is by the faith of Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach that our justification is made possible—not by our works!

Once we are justified and have the penalty of sin removed, a state of peaceful harmony is established between Yahuwah and us.

COL 1:20 and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross.

5:2 through whom also we have access by faith into this grace [GSP: “the favor of Yahuwah”] in which we stand, and rejoice in [JNT: “so let us boast about the”] hope of the glory of Yahuwah [REB: “divine glory that is to be ours”].

Boast of Yahuwah's Glory

After having addressed the emptiness of boasting about human accomplishment earlier, Paul now states that the only allowable boasting concerns either Yahuwah's greatness, or what Yahuwah will do for us.

JER 9:23-24 Thus says Yahuwah: "Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, let not the mighty man glory in his might, nor let the rich man glory in his riches; but let him who glories glory in this, that he understands and knows Me, that I am Yahuwah, exercising loving kindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth. For in these I delight," says Yahuwah.

Paul emphasizes that we can boast about the hope of salvation and the glory of eternal life that awaits us because of the faithfulness of Yahuwah's promise.

5:3 And not only that, but we also glory in [JNT: “let us also boast in our”] **tribulations** [NRS: “sufferings”]...

Tribulations

In order to receive the divine glory, we must go through a process of preparation. Paul says if we want to rejoice about any physical endeavor, then let it be concerning this process.

5:3-4 ...knowing that tribulation [NRS: “suffering”] **produces perseverance** [NRS, JNT: “endurance”; KJV: “patience”]; **and perseverance, character** [NAS: “proven character”; KJV: “experience”]; **and character, hope.**

Suffering produces perseverance or patience, and perseverance produces character. The word "character" is from the Greek "dokime" which means "proven trustworthy through testing". Patiently enduring through suffering is the test which proves one's faithfulness to one's belief. The outcome of this procedure is hope!

The apostle Peter also emphasized the importance of this procedure for testing the depth of a follower's conviction.

IPE 1:6-7 ...you have been grieved by various trials, that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach, Peter goes on to explain the need to rejoice when these trials come.

IPE 4:12-13 Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Amanuwal's sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy.

5:5 Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of Yahuwah has been poured out in our hearts by the Kadosh Ruwach who [KJV: “which”] **was given to us.**

Once hope is established, there is no question in the believer's mind that Yahuwah will fulfill His promise. This is due to the recognition provided by the Ruwach of Yahuwah that Yahuwah is totally focused on providing for His children; His concern is completely outgoing. The primary focus of hope is on the resurrection to life.

Gift of the Kadosh Ruwach

The Kadosh Ruwach comes to us as a gift; we are told it is given to those who obey Yahuwah.

ACT 5:32 And we are His witnesses to these things, and so also is the Kadosh Ruwach whom Yahuwah has given to those who obey Him.

Once the Kadosh Ruwach is given, obedience is still required.

5:6 For when we were still without strength [JNT, NAS: “helpless”; NIV: “powerless”; NRS: “weak”], **in due** [REB: “at the appointed”] **time Amanuwal died for the wicked.**

Amanuwal, Our Strength

We were without strength when we were apart from Yahuwah, without Amanuwal, cut off from the power He possesses.

PHI 4:13 I can do all things through Amanuwal who strengthens me.

Our strength, the ability to do the works, the ability to have this righteousness that Yahuwah wants us to have, must come through Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach. He is the one that does the works!

When we were oblivious to our shortcomings and sins, before we were called, while we were wicked, the sacrifice required for our justification had already been made. That sacrifice came at a predetermined time in human history—at the appointed time!

GAL 4:4-5 But when the fullness of the time had come, Yahuwah sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.

5:7 Now it is a rare event when someone gives up his life for the sake of somebody righteous, although possibly for a truly good person one might have the courage to die.
(JNT)

A Rare Event

Paul says that it is hard to conceive that any human being would lay down his life for another, even if that person possesses righteous qualities! It is not logical, and it is hard to conceive of, but it is possible that there would be someone who would lay down his or her life for another person who is considered "good" by human standards. However, no human would be motivated to give his life for someone who was evil.

5:8 But Yahuwah demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Amanuwal died for us.

We, as Sinners

By using the pronoun "we" Paul amplifies the point he has been making for those who self-righteously thought their physical obedience was earning them justification. It was while we (each and every one of us) were not good, while we were not righteous, when we were wicked scum that Amanuwal gave His righteous, sinless life for us.

5:9 Much more then [GSP: "it is far more certain that"], having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him.

Justification by Blood

Paul again repeats that forgiveness is made possible by the death that Amanuwal suffered through the loss of His blood, not because we earned it through our efforts.

Salvation from His Wrath

We are saved from the wrath that Paul mentioned in 1:18—the wrath of Yahuwah which is the punishment on the wicked. Justification, the forgiveness of sins, is accomplished by Amanuwal's death through His shed blood; salvation, or deliverance from the wrath which results from sin, requires the Savior to live.

5:10 For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to Yahuwah through the death of His Son, much more [GSP: “it is far more certain that”], having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.

Enemies of Yahuwah

An enemy of Yahuwah is one who opposes Him and His truth.

COL 1:21 And you, who once were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled

If Amanuwal was willing to reconcile us when we were in opposition to Him, it is only logical that He will be even more attentive now that we have responded by surrendering to Him. In fact, due to our inability to perfectly keep Yahuwah's law, we require His constant attention.

IJO 2:1 My little children, these things I write to you, that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach the righteous.

Amanuwal, Our Advocate

Amanuwal acts as our High Priest, our Advocate in heaven before the throne of Yahuwah. Without His presence, there would be no one to intercede for us when we miss the mark and fail to uphold the standard defined by Yahuwah's law. We must have a living, active Intercessor in order to remain under Yahuwah's grace. It is in this manner, in addition to His presence in us (GAL 2:20), that we are saved by Him, or through Him. Paul further elaborates on this point in the latter part of Chapter 8.

5:11 And not only that, but we also rejoice [NRS: “boast”] in Yahuwah through our Sovereign Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.

Boasting

Paul comes back to the rejoicing or boasting which is allowable for a follower in verses 2-4; boasting can only be made in respect to what Yahuwah is doing in us now, or the hope He has promised for the future. That hope, which is the outcome of the process of enduring suffering, has been made possible because Amanuwal was resurrected from the dead.

IPE 1:3-6 Blessed be the mighty one and Father of our Sovereign Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you...In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials,

5:12 Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned

Sin

Here, "sin" is translated from "hamartia", meaning "to miss the mark"; "world" is from "kosmos", which refers to the arrangement of life and civilization in the creation. Notice, this does not state that sin entered into the earth, but sin entered into the kosmos. It was Adam that brought sin into the kosmos, the arrangement of life that Yahuwah established during the week recorded in GEN 1-2. Satan the devil had already brought sin into the earth, years before; so sin had already been on the earth, but as far as the

kosmos with the presence of man, sin was absent until Adam disobeyed. Yahuwah was very clear when He revealed the consequences of disobedience and the resulting sin.

GEN 2:17 but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.

Sin and the subsequent penalty of death entered the world when Adam failed to obey Yahuwah. His decision to sin set a precedent, which all of his descendants followed; he chose to take of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, which resulted in the whole world being cut off from the tree of life. Adam chose a way of life for all of his descendants, a way of life based upon trial and error. The process of trial and error has the inherent inevitability of generating mistakes, of missing the mark, of sin. Therefore, every descendant of Adam until Amanuwal committed sin and acquired the penalty of death due to each one's personal sins.

EZE 18:20 The soul who sins shall die. The son shall not bear the guilt of the father, nor the father bear the guilt of the son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself.

Verses 13-17 are a parenthetical insertion elaborating on the impact of Adam's sin.

5:13 For until the law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law.

Law & Sin

Before the law was ever delivered by Yahuwah from Mount Sinai, both verbally and on stone tablets in codified form, it was in effect! People were breaking it, committing sin. However, Yahuwah did not approach the nations of men in their ignorance and point out their guilt to them (ACT 17:30). The laws of Yahuwah which govern the relationships of man-to-man and man-to-Yahuwah operate just as surely as the physical laws which He set in motion to govern His creation. If a law is broken, the penalty will be enacted whether or not a person has had the law brought to his attention. A prime example is the law of gravity; it is in effect whether a person knows about it or not. If it is broken, injury or even death could be the required penalty.

5:14 Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who had not sinned according to the likeness of the transgression of Adam, who is a type of [JNT: “prefigured”; GSP: “foreshadowed”; NIV: “was a pattern of”] Him who was to come.

Death Reigned

The specific sin of Adam was not duplicated by his descendants because they were totally cut off from the Garden of Eden where the two trees were located. However, they still broke laws and as a result they died. Death reigned; death had the preeminence over man from Adam to Moses—from the time that Adam sinned and set the precedent for the kosmos, until Moses, when the law was at last delivered in codified form at Mount Sinai.

Adam's Type

Adam was a figure or type, of Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach. One manner in which Adam was a type of Amanuwal involves each of them being the first in their respective positions.

1CO 15:45-49 And so it is written, "The first man Adam became a living being." The last Adam became a life-giving spirit. However, the spiritual is not first, but the natural, and afterward the spiritual. The first man was of the earth, made of dust; the second Man is the

Sovereign from heaven. As was the man of dust, so also are those who are made of dust; and as is the heavenly Man, so also are those who are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly Man.

The manner of comparison that Paul makes here is that each of them performed actions which have affected the whole of humanity. Paul goes on to expound and magnify this point.

5:15 But the free gift is not like the offense. For if by the one man's offense many died, much more the grace of Yahuwah and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach, abounded to many.

Free Gift of Grace

The "free gift" of Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach refers to the forgiveness of sins, or the act of justification. The outcome of justification is completely opposite the outcome of Adam's sin. Adam's action consigned humanity to a kosmos and way of life that meant certain death. Amanuwal's action provides for the removal of sins and the extension of grace which yields eternal life.

5:16 Again, the gift of Yahuwah is not like the result of the one man's sin: The judgment followed one sin and brought condemnation, but the gift followed many trespasses and brought justification. (NIV)

Timing of the Judgment & Gift

Adam's decision to disobey Yahuwah came before any human sin had been committed; that choice led to the first sin and resulted in his descendants coming under the penalty of death because they were cut off from Yahuwah. Amanuwal's action of granting forgiveness does not occur until after an individual commits many sins.

5:17 If, by the wrongdoing of one man, death established its reign through that one man, much more shall those who in far greater measure receive grace and the gift of righteousness live and reign through the one man, Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach. (REB)

Just as sin and death have origin with the first man Adam, so justification and life originate from Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach.

Change of Focus

This verse ends the parenthetical insertion dealing with the impact of Adam's sin. Paul now focuses on the impact of Amanuwal's faithfulness in making justification possible.

5:18 Consequently, just as the result of one trespass was condemnation for all men, so also the result of one act of righteousness [NKJ: "one Man's righteous act"] was justification that brings life for all men. (NIV)

One Trespass, One Righteous Act

Paul now shows how each performed one action which bears on all of humanity. The "one act of righteousness" was Amanuwal offering Himself as the ransom for all who are enslaved to sin. It was that one act that made justification possible (3:24-26).

5:19 For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man's obedience many will be made righteous.

Adam's disobedient action is recorded as past tense, yet the impact of that action is still being felt as every new generation born becomes sinners.

The obedience of Amanuwal refers to His perfectly keeping the law as He yielded to the established plan of Yahuwah in providing the payment for sins.

REV 13:8 ...the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

PHI 2:8 And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.

The result of Amanuwal's action of living without sin is recorded in the future tense. This signifies that Amanuwal will extend the gift of forgiveness of sins to those who respond to His call to repentance as each period of judgment (day of salvation) comes upon different groups of humanity.

5:20 Moreover the law entered that the offense might abound [NIV: "increase"]....

Increase of Offense

The Greek "paraptoma" is used again here translated "offense" and refers to sin caused by falling aside. The law was written when it was given by Yahuwah in the form of ten commandments from Mount Sinai. Yahuwah codified the law for Israel so that the nation would know exactly what constituted sin (3:20 "by the law is the knowledge of sin"). It would prove to Israel, and ultimately to all of mankind that the law could not be fully kept without help; they could not keep the law under their own power.

5:20-21 ...But where sin abounded [NIV: "increased"], grace abounded much more, so that as sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach our Sovereign.

Grace Abounds

To the justified, the law continues to reveal more of their previously hidden sins which, if left unrepented of, lead to death. Thankfully, Yahuwah's free gift also includes grace which extends Yahuwah's forgiveness for the repentant so that all sin is covered, giving assurance of everlasting life.

Romans: Chapter 6

6:1 So then, are we to say, "Let's keep on sinning, so that there can be more grace"?
(JNT)

More Grace?

Paul poses this question because he does not want anyone to misconstrue the availability of grace.

6:2 Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it?

Living in Sin

Paul has shown earlier in this letter that: only those who keep the law can be justified (2:13); yet it is faith, not the keeping of the law, that makes forgiveness possible (3:20, 28); faith compels those who are justified to keep the law (3:31). These points reveal that all who are justified understand the need to avoid further sin through keeping the law.

Paul now expounds the thrust of these opening verses through Chapter 8.

6:3 Or do you not know that as many of us as were immersed into Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach were immersed into His death?

The ordinance of immersion symbolically pictures a severance from life through death and burial.

6:4 Therefore we were buried with Him through immersion into death, that just as Amanuwal was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life [JNT: "live a new life"; REB: "set out on a new life"].

Buried via Immersion

The word "immersion" is from the Greek word "baptisma", which refers to being immersed and pictures being buried (COL 2:12). To be buried in water means to be completely submerged in it; immersion requires a pool of water.

JOH 3:23 Now John also was immersing in Aenon near Salim, because there was much water there. And they came and were immersed.

Burial is the most obvious confirmation of death. Immersion confirms our commitment to put to death our desire to sin. Those who are immersed are severed from the world by water.

Amanuwal was severed from the world by death and then sealed in a tomb for three days and nights. Exactly three days after He died on the stake, while still in the tomb, Amanuwal was resurrected by the power of the Father; this is the meaning of the term "by the glory of the Father", which was used in reference to the resurrection of Lazarus in:

JOH 11:39-40 Amanuwal said, "Take away the stone." Martha, the sister of him who was dead, said to Him, "Sovereign, by this time there is a stench, for he has been dead four days." Amanuwal said to her, "Did I not say to you that if you would believe you would see the glory of Yahuwah?"

Amanuwal was resurrected to eternal life—not the same life He lived in the flesh from His conception until His death over 34 years later. In like fashion, those who come out of the waters of the immersion al grave have been raised up to live different lives than the ones they lived prior to immersion. Amanuwal was raised up as a glorified spirit being; we are raised up from the waters to walk the same path that He walked while in the flesh. It is a new path, a new direction, totally different from the direction we were going prior to Yahuwah's call, and our subsequent repentance and immersion.

6:5 For if we have been united [REB: "identified"] **with Him in a death like His, we will also be united** [REB: "identified"] **with Him in a resurrection like His.** (JNT)

Not only does coming out of the immersion al grave represent the beginning of a new sin-free life in the flesh, it also symbolizes the fact that those who faithfully follow the example set by Amanuwal while He was in the flesh will be resurrected and given eternal life just as the Father gave it to Amanuwal.

COL 3:1-4 If then you were raised with Amanuwal, seek those things which are above, where Amanuwal is, sitting at the right hand of Yahuwah. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. For you died, and your life is hidden with Amanuwal in Yahuwah. When Amanuwal who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.

6:6 We know that our old self was put to death on the execution stake with Him, so that the entire body of our sinful propensities [NKJ: “body of sin”] might be destroyed [REB: “for the destruction of the sinful self”], and we might no longer be enslaved to sin. (JNT)

Death of the Old Self

What made possible the death of “our old self” occurred at the time Amanuwal died while hanging from the crucifixion pole.

GAL 2:20 I have been crucified with Amanuwal; it is no longer I who live, but Amanuwal lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of Yahuwah, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

Entire Body of Sin

The "body of sin" refers to all of the sinful inclinations which result from yielding to the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life. Amanuwal specified that those propensities originate out of the heart of man.

MAR 7:21-23 "For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, licentiousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within and defile a man."

Just as the "body of sin" is connected to defilement from the heart, so the destruction of the "body of sin" is compared to the circumcision of the heart.

COL 2:11 In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Amanuwal,

When the heart has been relieved of its calloused covering, a new relationship is to exist between Yahuwah and us. The whole way of life we lived, up to the time we were led to repentance, has been put into a watery grave. That sinful way of life remains there; it did not follow us up out of the water, and should no longer be a part of us.

COL 3:5-9 Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. Because of these things the wrath of Yahuwah is coming upon the sons of disobedience, in which you also once walked when you lived in them. But now you must also put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth.

Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds, Paul does not say that we will not sin, but that we should no longer be enslaved by it. We are no longer under its authority or jurisdiction and should not bow down to it nor serve it!

6:7 For he who has died has been freed [KJV marg: “justified”] from [GSP: “is free from the claims of”] sin.

Freedom

Those who have surrendered their lives through repentance and immersion have put to death the sinful lives they previously lived. Their former lives died through repentance and were buried in immersion. When this is done their sins are forgiven and they are justified—released from the penalty of sin.

ACT 2:38 Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be immersed in the name of Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Kadosh Ruwach."

6:8 Now if we died with Amanuwal, we believe that we shall also live with Him,

With Amanuwal

Faith led us to see the necessity of putting to death the old manner of life we lived; it also helps us to understand our need for Amanuwal's involvement in the new manner of life we now must live (GAL 2:20).

6:9 knowing that Amanuwal, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion [JNT: "authority"] over Him.

One Physical Death

It will never be required of Amanuwal to die again. He died once. Even if Yahuwah chooses billions of years from now to increase the size of His Family and creates another physical universe and puts more human beings on one or more planets somewhere, offering them salvation—forgiveness will be possible for them then because Amanuwal has died for them long, long ago. He is the only Savior. His death, that one single death, is all that is required forever.

Death has no more control over Him; in fact, the only claim death ever had on Him was when He voluntarily took humanity's sins upon Himself. Death took His life for those sins, but once He surrendered

His life on behalf of the sins of mankind, death was required to release Him because He had never sinned.

6:10 For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all [JNT: "For His death was a unique event that need not be repeated"]; but the life that He lives, He lives to Yahuwah.

The Life Lived

His whole approach is to live unto Yahuwah; to do what the Father would have Him to do—to live by the law, and reflect the character and the mind of Yahuwah.

6:11 Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to Yahuwah in [KJV: "through"] Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach our Sovereign.

Alive Through Amanuwal

Just as death now has absolutely no mastery over Amanuwal, so sin should have no mastery over us. While being no more responsive to sin than a dead man is to life, we must be keenly responsive to following the obedient example of Amanuwal (1PE 2:21-22). This is the way our lives should be lived!

6:12 Therefore sin must no longer reign in your mortal body, exacting obedience to the body's desires [NKJ: "lusts"; GSP: "cravings"]. (REB)

Extract Obedience

After explaining the state of mind a True follower should have, Paul now exhorts us to take defensive action to prevent sin from having its way with us. We must not give in to the sinful lusts and desires of this flesh.

6:13 and do not offer any part of yourselves to sin as an instrument for wickedness. On the contrary, offer yourselves to Yahuwah as people alive from the dead, and your various parts to Yahuwah as instruments for righteousness. (JNT)

Offering to Sin

The Greek word for "offer" refers to making a conscious decision to voluntarily surrender. The word "instrument" is from the Greek "hoplon" which is also translated "weapon". A weapon is generally used to fight against an opponent. We are cautioned to take care and not surrender to sin because in so doing we fight against Yahuwah's law. In contrast to offering ourselves as the weapons of sin, we should yield ourselves to Yahuwah as weapons against sin.

2CO 10:4-5 For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in Yahuwah for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of Yahuwah, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Amanuwal.

We are to fight against our sinful desires by doing what Yahuwah commands us to do—to be instruments of righteousness. Since all of Yahuwah's commandments are righteousness (PSA 119:172), we are to keep His commands, to live by the law.

Paul describes the approach that we should have when yielding ourselves to Yahuwah to be used as His weapons: as those that have returned from the dead! In other words, we should offer ourselves wholeheartedly with joy and gratitude! Although the primary emphasis refers to literally being brought back from the dead, we must not overlook the attitude we should have based on our resurrection from death and the grave pictured by rising from the immersional waters which was covered earlier in this chapter.

6:14 For sin shall not have dominion over you [GSP: "must no longer control you"; NIV: "shall not be your master"], for you are not under law but under grace.

No Longer a Slave to Sin

As Paul has repeatedly emphasized, we have died to sin. A slave is released from the control of his master when he dies. Having come back from the dead we must not put ourselves again under the evil master of sin.

Under the Law/Grace

Those "under the law" are those who continue to sin and remain under the penalty of the law. Those who are not "under the law" are those who have repented of their transgressions against the law, and turned from disobedience to obedience because of faith; after having accepted the sacrifice of Amanuwal as payment for the penalty they incurred by disobeying the law, they are pardoned and come "under grace"!

6:15 What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? Certainly not!

Sin?

Paul asks this outlandish question about having freedom to disobey the law and do whatever we want since we are no longer under the law. As we saw in the last verse, not being under the law does not mean we are not to keep the law, rather it means that we are no longer under the penalty incurred by disobeying the law because we have died to sin.

Under Grace

He also includes in this question whether or not being under grace grants freedom to sin. Anyone who would draw this conclusion is ignorant of what grace is. Grace is an undeserved gift; grace is similar to a pardon granted to a criminal. A criminal which is granted a pardon is released from the sentence imposed upon him for his crimes. He is then never again held responsible for those particular crimes. But, is he then free to go out and do anything he wants to do? Does the pardon grant him a license to go out and commit those same crimes again? Of course not! The pardon only released him from the penalty imposed for his former crimes. Coming “under grace” means Yahuwah does not impute sin (which would require the penalty for sin) to those who have buried the “old self” and are now walking in newness of life. Those under grace understand the importance of keeping the Ten Commandments and not committing the infractions that required a pardon from Yahuwah in the first place.

6:16 Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin to [JNT: “which leads to”] death, or of obedience to righteousness [JNT: “which leads to being made righteous”]?

To show the fallacy of the idea that transgressing the law is permissible for those under grace, Paul points to the relationship of a slave to his master. We are slaves—we are possessions of whatever we submit ourselves to. Paul shows there are two choices:

1. sin, which is disobedience to Yahuwah's commandments (1JO 3:4), or
2. obedience to righteousness, which is keeping Yahuwah's commandments (PSA 119:172).

There is no middle ground; we can serve only one master.

MAT 6:24 “No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve Yahuwah and mammon.”

Any who think that grace allows them to disobey Yahuwah's law have chosen sin as their master and will find themselves back under the law and its penalty, which is death. Amanuwal clearly stated that those who sin are slaves of sin:

JOH 8:34 Amanuwal answered them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin.”

6:17 By Yahuwah's grace, you, who were once slaves to sin, obeyed from your heart the pattern of teaching [NKJ: “form of doctrine”] to which you were exposed [NIV: “entrusted”; GSP: “that you received”]. (JNT)

By Yahuwah's Grace

One aspect of Yahuwah's grace or favor is the extension of His calling to a privileged few during the present day of salvation (JOH 6:44); this is to what Paul alludes in the opening phrase of this verse. Those who deeply comprehend the magnitude of Yahuwah's invitation respond by repenting of pursuing their ways, choosing rather to put Yahuwah first and follow the example of Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach (LUK 14:26-33).

6:18 And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.

Freedom into Slavery

Repentance for disobeying Yahuwah's law, burial of the old self and coming under the blood of Amanuwal sets one free from the master of sin; this makes possible the procurement of a new master. In fact, the only way to come under the blood of Amanuwal is to agree to submit to Amanuwal and His directions, and He directs those who have repented of the way of life which leads to death—because they desire eternal life to keep the commandments (MAT 19:17) which are righteousness (PSA 119:172).

6:19 I speak in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh [NRS: “because of your natural limitations”]. **For just as you presented your members as slaves of uncleanness, and of lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves of righteousness for holiness.**

Paul points out that his comparison of the new way of life to slavery emphasizes the inability of those in the flesh to function completely on their own; all people will yield themselves to influences outside of themselves. He will develop this thought further in Chapters 7 and 8.

Presented as Slaves

He exhorts us to pursue obedience to the law (righteousness) just as diligently as we once pursued the way of disregarding Yahuwah's law (lawlessness).

6:20 For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard [PHL: “owed no duty”] **to righteousness.**

When sin was your master, you owed no allegiance to righteousness as a master. When you were the servants of sin, you were free from the control of righteousness; you did what your master, sin, told you to do.

6:21 but what benefit did you derive from the things of which you are now ashamed? The end result of those things was death. (JNT)

What did you earn from all of the time that you spent under this master we call sin? What do you have that you can look to and say, this is what I have earned? The outcome of the way you lived, when sin was your master, was death. Death is the only thing you have been able to produce after all the years you have served the master of sin.

6:22 But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves to Yahuwah, the benefit you reap leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life. (NIV)

Being set free from sin as our master, so that we can serve Yahuwah as our master, allows us to enter a state of holiness. We are, in fact, required to be kadosh—to be separate from anything polluted or profane. Peter emphasized this point in his first letter.

1PE 1:15-16 but as He who called you is kadosh, you also be kadosh in all your conduct, because it is written, "Be kadosh, for I am kadosh."

Being kadosh requires obedience to all ten of Yahuwah's commandments (LEV 19:3-20:10). The application of the law sanctifies or sets us apart from the world which has given itself over to sin; the outcome of sanctification is eternal life.

6:23 For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of Yahuwah is eternal life through Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach our Sovereign. (KJV)

Wages & The Gift

These are the facts! If we were paid what we deserve—what we have earned on our own—the payment would be death! Fortunately, Yahuwah is willing to forgive us and substitute the death of the Savior for what we have earned.

GAL 6:7-8 Do not be deceived, Yahuwah is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Ruwach will of the Ruwach reap everlasting life.

Since eternal life is a gift, a legalistic approach to the law will not earn anyone eternal life. Individual effort alone is hopeless. Eternal life can be attained no other way than through Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach, and comes as Yahuwah's gift!

Romans: Chapter 7

Chapter Focus

Within this chapter, Paul emphasizes that although the Law is spiritual, it cannot release anyone from the grip and penalty of sin.

7:1 Or do you not know, brethren (for I speak to those who know [Greek: "ginosko", meaning "perceive"] the law), that the law has dominion over a man as long as he lives?

Law's Dominion

Paul emphasizes a point which he says was common understanding in the Assembly: that the law of Yahuwah which regulates all relationships between man and man, and between man and Yahuwah, is always in force. He now gives an example of the only time when the power of the law ceases to have force on a person.

7:2 For the woman who has a husband is bound [Greek: "deo", meaning "knit," or "tied together"] by the law to her husband as long as he lives. But if the husband dies, she is released from the law of her husband.

Example of the Law

In order to explain the binding force of law, Paul uses the example of the law which regulates marriage within the Assembly.

1CO 7:39 A wife is bound by law as long as her husband lives; but if her husband dies, she is at liberty to be married to whom she wishes, only in Yahuwah.

Death ends the binding force of the law.

7:3 So then if, while her husband lives, she marries another man, she will be called an adulteress; but if her husband dies, she is free from that law, so that she is no adulteress, though she has married another man.

This conclusion is reached based on what Amanuwal taught regarding the law regulating marriage.

MAT 19:5-6, 9 “and said, 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'? So then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what Yahuwah has joined together, let not man separate...And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery.”

Once her husband dies, the law that bound them as one flesh ceases to have force. Remarriage is possible because she is no longer under the binding force of the law of marriage.

7:4 Therefore, my brethren, you also have become dead to the law through the body of Amanuwal, that you may be married [NAS: “might be joined”; NIV: “might belong”] to another, even to Him who was raised from the dead, that we should bear fruit to Yahuwah.

Dead to the Law

The woman who was bound to her husband was released from the law which bound her when he died, permitting her to be married again. In like manner, we who were bound to sin, were released from what the law required for having sin as our master—the penalty of death—when we died with Amanuwal upon repentance and immersion (6:2-7)! This permits us to enter into a new binding relationship: a marriage to Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach.

It is important to note that the law did not die—we did! Becoming dead to the law does not mean that we must no longer keep it. It simply means that the penalty of the law no longer has authority over us; we are no longer condemned by the law!

Now that we have been released from the penalty required by the law for our failure to keep it flawlessly, we are joined to Amanuwal, so that by His presence we produce fruit acceptable to Yahuwah.

JOH 15:4-5 “Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.”

7:5 For when we were in the flesh [NIV: “controlled by the sinful nature”], the motions [Greek: pathema”, meaning "sufferings"] of sins [LAM: “pains of sin”; NAS, NRS: “sinful passions”], which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death. (KJV)

Pains of Sin

Prior to repentance and immersion, before putting to death the old self, we experienced sufferings due to the failure of keeping the law. Any time the law is transgressed a penalty must be paid, and suffering is part of the penalty.

Bringing Forth Fruit Unto Death

When sin was our master, the total production of our efforts (our fruit) was death. We had a track record of missing the mark—of failing to keep the law.

7:6 But now we have been delivered from the law, having died to what we were held by, so that we should serve [Greek: “douleuo”, meaning “be in bondage to”] in the newness of the Ruwach and not in the oldness of the letter.

Delivered From the Law

This does not say that we are released from the need to keep the law any longer; it does say that we have been released from the penalties the law requires for disobedience. We have been released from the death penalty.

Serving in the oldness of the letter is the reference to a legalistic approach in keeping the law, referring to keeping the law by human effort alone, with the thought that salvation can be earned. But we are to serve in newness of the spirit, referring to serving the requirements of the law after a change in heart (JER 31:30-33) and acknowledging that salvation can only come as a gift.

7:7 What shall we say then? Is the law sin? Certainly not! On the contrary, I would not have known sin except through the law. For I would not have known covetousness [JNT: “what greed is”] unless the law had said, “You shall not covet.”

Questions

Is the law identical with sin? Is the law evil? Absolutely not. The law does not cause anyone to sin; it only identifies sin. The law uncovers hidden sin so that it can be dealt with—repented of and forgiven.

Coveting

Paul said there was no way he could perceive that coveting was a sin on his own. He had no problem perceiving that putting non-gods before Yahuwah was a sin; the same with idolatry, dishonoring parents, murder, adultery, stealing, and lying! All of these things can be discerned as sin from the repercussions which follow their perpetration: others are being hurt or harmed. However, when considering coveting, others are not being harmed. Paul did not see that coveting was hurting him; he did not perceive that desiring something in the wrong way was sin. So, he said the only way he could have known the truth about coveting is that the law defined it as sin.

7:8 But sin, taking opportunity by [JNT: “afforded by”] the commandment, produced in me all manner of evil desire. For apart from the law sin was dead.

Once Paul realized that covetous thoughts were sinful, he saw himself in a totally new light: he had far more imperfections than he thought he had. Prior to the law revealing this understanding, Paul was in blissful ignorance: the sin of coveting was dead to his comprehension.

7:9 And I was once alive apart from [JNT: “outside the framework of”] the Law; but when the commandment came, sin became alive, and I died; (NAS)

Life & Death

Prior to Yahuwah's calling, Paul was meticulous in his legalistic approach to the law (PHI 3:6). Under legalism, the goal was to physically fulfill the law. During that time, Paul says he was alive because he did not understand the internal requirement of the law. In his ignorance he did not know his practice was wrong and could not see that death was hanging over his head.

However, after Yahuwah's calling, when the internal application finally dawned upon Paul, he saw he was wrong—that sin was alive in his life—and understood he needed to die with Amanuwal (6:6).

7:10 And the commandment, which was to bring life, I found to bring death.

7:10 The commandment, which was meant to be a direction to life, I found was a sentence to death. (PHL)

All of the commandments are ordained to life based upon Amanuwal's statement: "If you want to enter into life, keep the commandments" in MAT 19:17. Paul is still making reference to the 10th commandment. Why did he find it to be unto death? Because he found he could not keep it perfectly; it was difficult to always keep his desires under control. Coveting, desiring something wrongly, illicitly, is sin—and sin requires death. So Paul found that he did not have the same control over his mind that he had over his body. He could keep his foot from defiling the Sabbath; he could hold his hand back from murder and stealing; and he could bite his tongue and not bear false witness. But when it came to controlling his mind, he found he was having a difficult time. The commandment was ordained to life all right, but he found he could not keep it under his own power.

7:11 For sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, deceived me; and through the commandment, sin killed me. (JNT)

This verse explains how the commandment brought death to Paul. It was not the commandment itself that brought death—it was the sin which the commandment identified that required the penalty of death. Paul emphasized that sin deceived him—that sin has a way of trapping a man unawares.

HEB 3:13 but exhort one another daily, while it is called "Today," lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.

7:12 Therefore the law is kadosh, and the commandment kadosh and just [NAS: "righteous"] and good.

Kadosh & Good

This summation is the answer to the question Paul posed in verse 7: "Is the law sin?" The ten commandments which are the foundation of the law are kadosh; "the commandment" refers to the 10th, the one he has been discussing. Sin is not kadosh, unjust and evil. Since the law, composed of the ten commandments, is kadosh, just and good, it is clear the law cannot be identical to sin. Yet, the law is necessary in order to identify sin.

7:13 Has then what is good become death to me? Certainly not! But sin, that it might appear sin, was producing death in me through what is good, so that sin through the commandment might become exceedingly sinful.

7:13 Can it be that something that is intrinsically good could mean death to me? No, what happened was this. Sin, at the touch of the Law, was forced to show itself as sin, and that meant death for me. The contact of the Law showed the utterly sinful nature of sin. (PHL)

Sin = Death

The law, which is good, did not necessitate death—sin did! It was sinning—doing what is contrary to the law—that made death necessary.

7:14 For we know that the law is spiritual [JNT: “of the spirit”; PHL: “concerned with the spiritual”], **but I am carnal** [JNT: “bound to the old nature”; GSP: “physical”; NRS: “of the flesh”], **sold under** [NAS: “into bondage to”] **sin.**

Law = Spiritual

The law is on a spiritual plane; human beings are on a physical plane. Paul stated that he was carnal, which meant that he continued to be subject to the pulls of the flesh (1JO 2:16).

7:15 I don't understand my own behavior—I don't do what I want [NKJ: “will”] **to do; instead, I do the very thing I hate!** (JNT)

I Don't

Paul now goes on to explain the True follower's dilemma: the ability to discern what is right, but unable to do it; and the ability to recognize what is wrong, but unable to resist doing it.

MAT 26:41 “Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The Ruwach indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.”

7:16-17 If, then, I do what I will not to do, I agree with the law that it is good. But now, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me.

Sin Dwells in Me

By establishing his determination to resist sin, even when he failed to do so, Paul confirmed his agreement with the righteous requirements of the law. When he failed to keep the law, it was not because he disagreed with it or rebelled against it; rather it was because sin overpowered him.

7:18 For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh [JNT: “old nature”]) **nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but how to perform what is good I do not find** [REB: “the ability to effect it is not”].

The nature of every human is influenced by the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life; all exert pressure to be satisfied. Paul had the determination to resist the lusts which lead to sin, but found that by his own power he was incapable of resisting sin.

7:19-20 For the good that I will to do, I do not do; but the evil I will not to do, that I practice. Now if I do what I will not to do, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me.

These verses repeat verses 15 and 17. Paul says that knowing that the law is spiritual, kadosh, just and good does not mean the law has the ability to erase the power sin has over us. Something more than the law is needed in order to defeat sin.

7:21 I find then a law [NAS: “the principle”], **that evil is present with me, the one who wills to do good.**

The law he found was: Although he had made up his mind to do what was right, evil was still there.

This is similar to the warning Yahuwah gave Cain when He told him to consider his attitude before doing something rash.

GEN 4:7 “If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must master it.” (NIV)

Notice, sin is like an animal crouching at the door, and we are the prey on the other side of the door. Sin is waiting for us to open the door of our minds wide enough so that it can spring through the opening and devour us.

7:22 For I delight in the law of Yahuwah according to the inward man [NIV: “in my inner being”].

The converted mind recognizes the beauty and necessity of the law, and wants to do it. The desire of the converted mind is to live up to the standard Yahuwah has established in the law.

7:23 But then I find another [JNT, NAS: “a different”] **law in my bodily members** [REB: “outward actions”], **which is in continual conflict with** [NKJ: “warring against”] **the Law which my mind approves** [NKJ: “law of my mind”], **and makes me a prisoner to the law of sin which is inherent in my mortal body.** (PHL)

He referred to having the law of Yahuwah in his inner being, or mind, in the previous verse. But a different law was at work in his flesh—that law he calls the law of sin; it drives the body to fulfill its desires. The desires inherent in a man—the lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes and the pride of life— influenced by hormones and emotions, irrationally conflict with the serenity and logic contained within the Law of Yahuwah.

7:24 O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death [GSP: “Who can save me from this doomed body”]?

Deliverance from Death

All who live have the law of sin at work in their bodies, and each is doomed to death because as long as they draw breath they succumb to the law of sin and make mistakes, miss the mark, and fall by the wayside. Since the law does not have power over sin, and sin overpowers us, Who has the power to step in and rescue us from power sin has over our mortal bodies?

7:25 I thank Yahuwah—through Amanuwal Ha’Mashyach our Sovereign! So then, with the mind [GSP: “mentally”] **I myself serve the law of Yahuwah, but with the flesh** [GSP: “physically”] **the law of sin.**

Serve the Law of Yahuwah

Paul is very clear that he understood the need to keep the law when he says "with the mind I myself serve the law of Yahuwah"! At no time does he infer that Yahuwah has set aside the requirement to keep the commandments.

With the Flesh

The problem we have is—whenever we let down and fail to stay spiritually alert—we fall short, miss the mark and the sinful nature overcomes us.

The mind should rule over the flesh. The mind which serves the law of Yahuwah should keep the flesh under control at all times; it should keep the flesh tightly reined whenever the desires of the flesh go contrary to what the mind knows is the will of Yahuwah. However, the human mind alone does not have the capability to do this. This is the reason Paul states that Amanuwal Ha’Mashyach is the only one who

can rescue us from the power of sin. The details of how Amanuwal accomplishes this rescue are given in the next chapter; the power of Amanuwal must be in us through the extension of the Kadosh Ruwach.

Romans: Chapter 8

8:1 There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Ruwach.

No Condemnation

Although a True follower does inadvertently give in to the pulls of the flesh and sin, he does not come under the penalty of the law because he has been justified and come under grace. Those who are in Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach have willed to put to death the old man; they have died and been immersed; they have been forgiven of sins and pardoned so that they are no longer under the condemnation of the law. Grace has been extended to them so that they do not have their failures imputed to them.

To remain free of condemnation requires living a way of life of consciously avoiding the pulls of the flesh by utilizing the power provided by Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach.

8:2 For the law of the Ruwach of life in Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach has made me free from the law of sin and death.

Laws

Once again Paul's reference to "law" revolves around a binding rule which regulates the outcome of an action. The "law of the Ruwach of life in Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach" refers to the point made in verse 1: there is no condemnation of those who walk according to the Ruwach because Amanuwal is present in their lives! The "law of sin and death" refers to the certainty of the death penalty as the outcome of living a way of life of surrendering to the pulls of the flesh, of walking according to the flesh!

8:3 For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh [JNT: "because it lacked the power to make the old nature cooperate"], **Yahuwah did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin** [JNT: "in order to deal with sin"; GSP: "as a sin offering"]; **He condemned sin in the flesh** [REB: "within that very nature"],

Condemnation of Sin in the Flesh

Here, "the law" refers to the law of Yahuwah. That law defines conduct that is kadosh, righteous and good (7:12)! However, the law contains no inherent power to help achieve that conduct. Therefore, Yahuwah took action to remedy this problem of a lack of power: He sent the other being who inhabited eternity with Him (1JO 1:1-2) into the physical realm as a mortal man. Yahuwah the Word emptied Himself of inherent life (PHI 2:6-8) so that He could become mortal (JOH 1:14). As a mortal man He experienced the pulls of the flesh, but did not yield to them.

HEB 4:15 For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.

He was tempted in the three areas which compose human nature—lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes and pride of life. Although His body was flesh, His mind was totally filled with the Ruwach of Yahuwah. He condemned sin by using the power supplied by Yahuwah's Ruwach to keep the law and never give in to the pulls of the flesh.

He never allowed sin to spring through the door of His mind!

8:4 that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh [JNT: “our old nature”] but according to the Ruwach.

Righteous Requirement

The "righteous requirement" of the law is obedience to the commandments (PSA 119:172). Amanuwal fulfills the righteous requirements of the law in us through the power of the Kadosh Ruwach which emanates from Him and resides in us. It is through the power of this spirit that we are to subjugate the pulls of the flesh. Amanuwal is to live in us (GAL 2:20) and conquer sin in us just as He did while in the flesh. We have the duty to yield to His presence.

1PE 2:21-22 For to this you were called, because Amanuwal also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps: Who committed no sin...

In walking according to the Ruwach, we are to walk in the footsteps of Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach.

8:5 For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Ruwach, the things of the Ruwach.

According to the Flesh

Those who live according to the flesh are always focused on the material, on satisfying the pulls of the flesh. Setting the mind on the things of the flesh has nothing to do with taking care of the necessities of life. We must take care of providing food, shelter, clothing, etc. or we would die. Paul is talking about an approach to living: of being absorbed with material things, the things that bring temporary pleasure to the self without regard to others.

According to the Ruwach

Those who set their minds on the things of the Ruwach are those whose approach to living revolves around satisfying the requirements of the law in order to express their concern for the good of others. They do not willingly give in to the base drives, or carnal desires.

8:6 For to be carnally minded [NRS: “to set the mind on the flesh”] is death, but to be spiritually minded [NRS: “to set the mind on the spirit”] is life and peace.

The outcome of gratifying the self by giving into the pulls of the flesh will be death, whereas the result of keeping the mind focused on the things which Yahuwah defines as kadosh, righteous and good is peace now and life forever.

8:7 Because the carnal mind is enmity against [NAS: “hostile toward”] Yahuwah; for it is not subject [JNT: “does not submit itself”] to the law of Yahuwah, nor indeed can be.

Enmity Toward Yahuwah

The carnal mind is a mind devoid of the Ruwach of Yahuwah and is completely focused on satisfying the desires of the flesh. The mind without the Ruwach will yield itself to lusts, selfish ambition, and pride. By virtue of its selfish, self-seeking focus the carnal mind is opposed to the selfless, outgoing concern contained within obedience to the law.

8:8 So then, those who are in the flesh [NIV: “controlled by the sinful nature”] **cannot please Yahuwah.**

Only those who walk after the Ruwach can please Yahuwah.

1TH 4:1 Finally then, brethren, we urge and exhort in the Sovereign Amanuwal that you should abound more and more, just as you received from us how you ought to walk and to please Yahuwah;

8:9 But you are not in the flesh [NIV: “controlled by the sinful nature”] **but in** [NIV: “by”] **the Ruwach, if indeed the Ruwach of Yahuwah dwells** [Greek: “oiko”, meaning “inhabits as one’s home”] **in you. Now if anyone does not have the Ruwach of Amanuwal, he is not His.**

Ruwach of Yahuwah

If the Ruwach of Yahuwah has made its home in us, we will resist the pulls of the flesh rather than voluntarily submitting to them.

The "Ruwach of Amanuwal" is the same as the "Ruwach of Yahuwah".

JOH 14:16-17, 23 “And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever, even the Ruwach of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you...If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him.”

GAL 4:6 And because you are sons, Yahuwah has sent forth the Ruwach of His Son into your hearts, crying out, "Abba, Father!"

8:10 And if Amanuwal is in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Ruwach is life [JNT: “giving life”] **because of righteousness.**

Ruwach of Life

Amanuwal is not physically, bodily among His disciples now; His presence is in them by His Ruwach! This is possible only if we have put to death the old man through the repentance of our sins and been buried in immersion. The promise of the coming of Yahuwah’s Ruwach requires this procedure.

ACT 2:38 Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be immersed in the name of Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Kadosh Ruwach."

Death of the Body

The old carnal self is to remain dead, having no power over the life we are to live after immersion. From immersion until the end of our lives in the physical realm, Amanuwal is to have power over our lives, living His righteous life in us.

GAL 2:20 I have been crucified with Amanuwal; it is no longer I who live, but Amanuwal lives in me; As long as we submit to Amanuwal and use the power His Ruwach affords us to grow in His righteousness, we will enter into eternal life.

8:11 But if the Ruwach of Him who raised Amanuwal from the dead dwells in you,...

Ruwach's Indwelling

Yahuwah the Father is the one who raised Amanuwal from the dead (ACT 4:10; 5:30). Since the Ruwach of the Father and Amanuwal is the same, both the Father and Amanuwal live in a True follower (JOH 14:23).

8:11 ...He who raised Amanuwal from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Ruwach who [KJV: "that"] dwells in you.

The control of our mortal bodies by the sinful nature of the old self ended at immersion, from that point on we surrendered control to Yahuwah. The presence of Amanuwal's Ruwach has given us new life in our mortal bodies, as Paul stated in the latter part of:

GAL 2:20 and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in [KJV: "of"] the Son of Yahuwah, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

8:12 Therefore, brothers, we have an obligation—but it is not to the sinful nature, to live according to it. (NIV)

An Obligation

In the new life we live after immersion, we are committed, by virtue of the vow we took at immersion, to never turn back to the life we buried in immersion.

8:13 For if you live according to the flesh [NIV: "sinful nature"] you will die; but if by the Ruwach you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

If we ignore our vow of unconditional surrender to Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach and begin living the way we lived prior to repentance and immersion we will again come under the penalty of sin. Our obligation is to continue on the path of the new life on this side of the immersion al grave. That requires allowing Amanuwal to live in us, but also requires effort on our part ("you put to death"). By the power of the Kadosh Ruwach working in our minds we must reject all of our carnal cravings—that old sinful nature. We must come to the point that we, with the help of Yahuwah's Ruwach, rule over our bodies rather than allowing them to rule over us by satisfying the pulls of the flesh. This is the only approach which will yield eternal life.

8:14 For as many as are led by the Ruwach of Yahuwah, these are sons of Yahuwah.

Led by the Ruwach

Paul now begins to explain how the Kadosh Ruwach operates within a True follower. Yahuwah does not use it to force us to obey Him. He has revealed the standard of conduct He expects of us and has established an example for us to follow (1PE 2:21). Yet, He leaves it up to us to be willing subjects—to follow His lead by using His Ruwach.

Those who are willingly led by Yahuwah's Ruwach are now the sons of Yahuwah. Yahuwah accepts them as sons because they have been begotten by His Ruwach and yield themselves to the transforming power of that spirit rather than allowing the power of sin to have its way (1JO 3:9).

Adoption

Paul now begins to incorporate the analogy of the Roman adoption procedure to the status of True Followers as the sons of Yahuwah. In a Roman adoption, the adopted son lost all rights in his old family but obtained all the rights which belonged to a natural son in his new family. He became a co-heir with all the other sons of his new father. Legally, he was regarded as a new person, all of his accrued debts were canceled.

Paul has previously shown that Yahuwah reached out to us when we were slaves, owned by sin. He led us to repentance, to desire to destroy the life we lived under sin. Our old life ended at immersion and we were justified: all our debts were canceled and we became begotten sons of Yahuwah the Father.

8:15 The Ruwach you have received is not a spirit of slavery, leading you back into a life of fear, but a spirit of adoption, enabling us to cry 'Abba! Father!' (REB)

Ruwach of Adoption

As he continues to describe the working of the Kadosh Ruwach, Paul emphasizes that the Ruwach does not take possession of a True follower and coerce obedience due to fear of a disinterested, wrathful Yahuwah; that was the approach of the Yahuwdim who were attempting to earn salvation through a legalistic regimen.

Contrary to inciting fear, Yahuwah uses His Ruwach to provide assurance to the recipient. The Ruwach is used by Yahuwah to communicate understanding via an emotional connection with Him. This is one aspect of the role the Ruwach performs as our helper (Greek: "parakletos"). The Ruwach helps us to comprehend our correct relationship with Yahuwah—one founded on such great love that He has taken us as His own. Paul here alludes to the Roman adoption ceremony in which a child or slave was given full legal status and inheritance rights; to be legally binding, the ceremony was required to be witnessed and announced publicly. With the coming of Yahuwah's Ruwach, we become witnesses of and acknowledge the completion of the adoption process.

The emotional assurance granted by the Ruwach surfaces when we discern our relationship to Yahuwah. "Abba" is an Aramaic word which was used by children in reference to their fathers. A young child does not perceive the biological relationship of its "father". What they perceive is a man who is dear to them. The term "Abba" referred to the person who received affectionate trust from his children. It was the word used in the culture of the eastern Mediterranean then like "dad" or "daddy" or "papa" is used in the English speaking culture today. The word "Father" is derived from the Greek word "pater", which refers to the biological relationship between a child and the one whose seed produced that child. The use of the term "father" reflects one's understanding that that individual was responsible for making his life possible.

Combining the two words expresses the love and confidence of a child toward, not only the one who he knows has given him life, but also to the one who has exhibited a tremendous amount of love and attention for the child. Amanuwal used this designation when He spoke to the Father (MAR 14:36), and it was taken up by the early Assembly (GAL 4:5-6).

8:16 The Ruwach itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of Yahuwah: (KJV)

Another way the Kadosh Ruwach works is to convict us intellectually concerning our present and future status with Yahuwah. The Ruwach-in-Man ("our spirit") contains the essence which adds mind-power to the human brain.

The Kadosh Ruwach opens our minds to rationally fathom the extent of the relationship that exists between Yahuwah and us.

1CO 2:9-12 But as it is written: "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which Yahuwah has prepared for those who love Him." But Yahuwah has revealed them to us through His Ruwach. For the Ruwach searches all things, yes, the deep things of Yahuwah. For what man knows the things of a man except the Ruwach of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of Yahuwah except the Ruwach of Yahuwah. Now we have received, not the Ruwach of the world, but the Ruwach who is from Yahuwah, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by Yahuwah."

The reference to "bearing witness" also alludes to another aspect of Roman adoption. The actual adoption ceremony was required to be carried out with seven witnesses present, so that they could confirm the legitimacy of the inheritance of the new son should anyone question that right.

8:17 and if children, then heirs—heirs of Yahuwah and joint heirs with Amanuwal, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together [REB: "but we must share His sufferings if we are also to share His glory"].

Heirs

Like an adopted son, we have been promised a share of the inheritance Yahuwah has committed to His Son. Whatever Amanuwal has received for being the Son of Yahuwah, we should expect nothing less. He was required to suffer prior to His death and subsequent resurrection to life. Therefore we should not consider ourselves immune to the sufferings created by the pulls of the flesh, or the hatred exhibited by the present evil world (JOH 15:19-20).

HEB 2:18 For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted.

IPE 4:12-13 Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Amanuwal's sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy.

Like Amanuwal did while in the flesh, with the help He gives us by His Ruwach, we must win the battles with the pulls of the flesh and overcome the trials and temptations.

8:18 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

Sufferings Not Worthy to the Glory

No matter what sufferings we are required to endure, no matter how long they may last, there is no basis for comparison to eternal life clothed with the glory of Yahuwah.

2CO 4:17 For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory,

8:19 The creation waits eagerly for the sons of Yahuwah to be revealed; (JNT)

This physical earth was formed to serve as a womb for the children of Yahuwah; it has long anticipated the culmination of the purpose for its existence: the birth of Yahuwah's children into the realm of spirit.

8:20 for the creation was made subject to frustration [NKJ: “subjected to futility”] not willingly, but because of the one who subjected it. But it was given a reliable hope (JNT)

Creation

The original created state of the earth was defiled by the rebellion of the angel who became its adversary (EZE 28:15-18). Shortly after the earth was reordered and life reestablished (GEN 1), the decision of Adam to surrender to the adversary left the creation subject to the devil's desires. Under Satan's sinful management, the creation has not yet seen the fulfillment of the purpose for its existence. Despite the fact that the world has been on a track of futility for almost 6000 years, Yahuwah prophesied the hope that eventually a Mashyach would come and undo all of the futility which resulted from the decision Adam made.

GEN 3:15 “And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.”

8:21 that it too would be set free from its bondage to decay [NKJ: “of corruption”] and would enjoy the freedom accompanying the glory that Yahuwah's children will have. (JNT)

The creation has been promised that the time will come when it too will be relieved of Satan's presence (REV 20:10) and all of the curses which have come on the earth will be removed.

ACT 3:19-21 Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of Yahuwah, and that He may send Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach, who was preached to you before, whom heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things, which Yahuwah has spoken by the mouth of all His kadosh prophets since the world began.

8:22 For we know that the whole creation [KJV marg: “every creature”] groans and labors with birth pangs together until now.

Groaning & Laboring

Presently, all creatures suffer from the influence Satan has over life on this planet. Survival of the fittest, built around a food chain that includes carnivores, is part of the reason for the groaning in the present corrupted state of life on earth. The creation is straining to give birth to Yahuwah's children so that the reason for its existence can be achieved and it can at last experience freedom from its pains. A totally new creation and new relationships among its creatures will be the outcome of that birth. The structure of the animal kingdom will be drastically changed.

ISA 11:6-9 The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall graze; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The nursing child shall play by the cobra's hole, and the weaned child shall put his hand in the viper's den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My kadosh mountain, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of Yahuwah as the waters cover the sea.

8:23 And not only they [JNT: “it”], **but we also who have the firstfruits of the Ruwach, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption** [NAS: “our adoption as sons”], **the redemption of our body** [MOF: “as we wait for the redemption of the body that means our full sonship”].

Firstfruits

We in the Assembly of Yahuwah have the firstfruits of the Ruwach—the down payment of the eternal life that we are promised:

EPH 1:13-14 In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the good news of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Kadosh Ruwach of promise, who [KJV: “which”] is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession...

Yahuwah has given us the earnest but He has not given us the totality of spirit as yet; that comes at the resurrection, as Paul goes on to show here. Not just the earnest, not just the firstfruits, but the completion of the hope of eternal life: to become spirit!

2CO 5:1-2, 4-5 For we know that if our earthly house, this tent, is destroyed, we have a building from Yahuwah, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed with our habitation which is from heaven...For we who are in this tent groan, being burdened, not because we want to be unclothed, but further clothed, that mortality may be swallowed up by life. Now He who has prepared us for this very thing is Yahuwah, who also has given us the Ruwach as a guarantee.

8:24 It was in this hope that we were [KJV: “are”] **saved. But if we see what we hope for, it isn't hope—after all, who hopes for what he already sees?** (JNT)

Saved in Hope

The hope that makes us fully sons is the resurrection to eternal life. It was that hope that led us to see the need to rid ourselves of the old self and thereby be released from the certain outcome of the way we once lived: death. It was that same hope which inspired us to set out on a new way of life and fortified us to persevere through all trials and sufferings, so that now we wait for life, not death. In preparation for his next thought, Paul states that it is impossible to have both hope and possession of what is hoped for at the same time.

8:25 But if we continue hoping for something we don't see, then we still wait eagerly for it, with perseverance [KJV: “patience”]. (JNT)

Hope gives us great expectations; it keeps us excited and focused on the future! John expands this thought in:

1JO 3:2-3 Beloved, now we are children of Yahuwah; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.

And everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as He is pure. Everyone who has the hope of one day being resurrected or changed and made immortal like Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach, works on overcoming the pulls of his old self, the pulls of the world, and the spiritual forces of darkness emanating from Satan.

8:26 Likewise the Ruwach also helps our weaknesses; for we do not know what is right and proper for us to pray for; but the Ruwach prays [NKJ: “makes intercession”] for us with that earnestness which cannot be described. (LAM)

Spiritual Aid

Paul now concludes with the list of the ways the Kadosh Ruwach works in those who live according to the spirit: it connects the mind of the converted to the spiritual awareness of the Father and Amanuwal which allows the attainment of understanding impossible to the human mind alone (1CO 2:9-16).

JOH 16:14-15 “He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you. All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Ruwach will take from what is mine and make it known to you.” (NIV)

The Greek word translated "helps" literally means "to take hold with". With the power of His Ruwach, Amanuwal assists us in our daily lives; He takes hold and provides whatever help we need to be successful in our spiritual endeavors. The assistance He provides with His Ruwach extends even to help with our prayers. In addition to stimulating and guiding us in what we pray, Amanuwal acts as our Intercessor (verse 34) who takes our prayers to the Father; His presentation of our prayers goes beyond our words and includes the empathy, mercy and compassion He has for us.

HEB 7:25 Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to Yahuwah through Him, since He ever lives to make intercession for them.

8:27 And He who searches the hearts knows what is the mind of the Ruwach, for the Ruwach prays [NKJ: “makes intercession”] for the saints according to the will of Yahuwah. (LAM)

He Who Searches

Yahuwah is the one who searches the heart and knows every motive and intention.

1CH 28:9 As for you, my son Solomon, know the mighty one of your father, and serve Him with a loyal heart and with a willing mind; for Yahuwah searches all hearts and understands all the intent of the thoughts. If you seek Him, He will be found by you; but if you forsake Him, He will cast you off forever.

Since it is the Ruwach which emanates from Amanuwal that is the Ruwach which dwells in the children of Yahuwah (verse 9), and since Amanuwal is the only mediator which intercedes for men before Yahuwah (1TI 2:5), the reference to the “mind of the Ruwach” is required to be the mind of Amanuwal Ha’Mashyach.

Condemnation

Paul has now shown how Amanuwal Ha’Mashyach delivers all who walk after the Ruwach from the power of sin. He has outlined the ways Amanuwal works in their lives through His Ruwach. Now, Paul begins concluding the topic of the absence of condemnation of all those who are in Amanuwal Ha’Mashyach.

8:28 And we know that all things work together for good to those who love Yahuwah, to those who are the called according to His purpose [PHL: “plan”].

We Know

Despite the suffering of trials and temptations in the lives of those who walk after the Ruwach, they know, based upon the hope Yahuwah has given them, that they will realize the object of that hope. They are the ones who love Yahuwah.

JOH 14:21 "He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him."

The few individuals in the world who have been called and who no longer walk after the flesh, but rather walk after the Ruwach have a special place in the plan Yahuwah is working out during this time when the creation is in a state of futility and corruption. It is much more difficult on them than it will be on those who are called later in Yahuwah's plan. Paul is emphasizing the need for those who walk after the Ruwach to keep in mind the privilege Yahuwah has granted them.

8:29 For whom He foreknew [GSP: "had marked out from the first"], **He also predestined** [JNT: "determined in advance"] to be **conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.**

8:29 For Yahuwah, in His foreknowledge, chose them to bear the family likeness of His Son, that He might be the eldest of a family of many brothers. (PHL)

Foreordained

Peter, John and other disciples understood that, as part of His plan, Yahuwah predetermined specific events which would occur throughout history; the fulfillment of those events required roles to be filled by individuals living at those specific times:

ACT 4:27-28 For truly against Your kadosh Servant Amanuwal, whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together to do whatever Your hand and Your purpose determined before to be done.

Yahuwah determined from the beginning that, in His plan of reconciling humanity to Himself, He would have an initial group of children that He would bring to Amanuwal prior to the majority of mankind.

EPH 1:4-5, 11-12 just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be kadosh and without blame before Him in love, having predestined us to adoption as sons by Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will...in whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will, that we who first trusted in Amanuwal should be to the praise of His glory.

Yahuwah did not predetermine specific individuals; He only planned a specific **group** which would be composed of the first individuals to receive eternal life; He designated them as the firstfruits (JAM 1:18; REV 14:4). To become firstfruits requires that each one conforms to the image of Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach; the procedure is given in the next verse.

8:30 Moreover whom He predestined [REB: "foreordained"; JNT: "determined in advance"], **these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.**

The group foreordained to be the first to be conformed to the image of Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach have been invited by Yahuwah's choice (JOH 6:44). They have been justified, forgiven of all their sins due to Yahuwah's mercy. They have been glorified by the presence of Amanuwal in them through His Ruwach. The point Paul is making is that no one can take any credit for being part of this special group; the formation of the group has been Yahuwah's doing.

8:31 What then shall we say to these things? If Yahuwah is for us, who can be against us?

Too Much?

When we honestly evaluate our present situation—part of the first group who will experience entrance into eternal life—and the fact that Yahuwah has worked intimately with each of us to bring us to this point, how could we ever allow ourselves to think the present trials and sufferings are more than we can bear? Why would Yahuwah condemn those He chose to compose His predetermined group?

8:32 He who did not spare even His own Son, but gave Him up on behalf of us all—is it possible that, having given us His Son, He would not give us everything else too? (JNT)

There is no greater example of loyalty to Yahuwah than the willingness of Abraham to sacrifice his son (GEN 22:12). Likewise, there is no greater example of Yahuwah's loyalty to mankind than that of Yahuwah sacrificing His Son to provide the way for humanity's reconciliation to Him. There is absolutely nothing which should cause us to ever doubt Yahuwah's promises to us.

8:33 Who shall bring a charge against Yahuwah's elect? It is Yahuwah who justifies [JNT: "Certainly not Yahuwah—He is the one who causes them to be considered righteous!"].

Charges Against Us

Satan the devil is the accuser of Yahuwah's chosen ones (REV 12:10). However, Yahuwah has justified His elect; He has forgiven them of their sins. Therefore, there is no basis to any charge the devil may bring.

8:34 Who is he who condemns? It is [JNT: "Certainly not"] Amanuwal who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of Yahuwah, who also makes intercession for us.

Condemnation

The only one who has the right to condemn is a judge, and Amanuwal is the judge (2TI 4:1). However, rather than condemning those who are continuing to walk after the Ruwach, yet who occasionally stumble, Amanuwal, who paid the penalty for every sin through His death, now lives acting as their intercessor before the throne of Yahuwah (HEB 4:14-16).

8:35-36 Who shall separate us from the love of Amanuwal? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written: "For Your sake we are killed all day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter."

Separation

Nothing can sever those who are walking after the Ruwach from the loving concern of Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach. Even if Yahuwah allowed any of these means of suffering to come upon us, we should not

conclude that He no longer loves us, but rather that we may need to experience that affliction in order to conform more closely to the image of Amanuwal.

8:37 No, in all these things we win an overwhelming victory through Him who has proved His love for us. (PHL)

The fact is that the calamities which bring on suffering help bring us closer to Him.

8:38-39 I have become absolutely convinced that neither death nor life, neither messenger of heaven nor monarch of earth, neither what happens today nor what may happen tomorrow, neither a power from on high nor a power from below, nor anything else in Yahuwah's whole world has any power to separate us from the love of Yahuwah in Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach our Sovereign! (PHL)

No matter what the crisis or power, whether real or imagined, it does not have the power to break the relationship which those who “walk after the Ruwach” have with Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach.

Romans: Chapter 9

Introduction

Paul stresses Yahuwah's power to see His plan through to the end as a lead-in to the next three chapters, which show that no matter how things may seem, Yahuwah has not altered His plan; everything is still proceeding as Yahuwah established long ago. Chapter 9 focuses on the fact that Yahuwah chooses and rejects people and nations as He decides.

9:1 Before Amanuwal and my own conscience in [JNT: “governed by”] the Kadosh Ruwach I assure you that I am speaking the plain truth when I say (PHL)

Witnesses

Paul points out that there are two witnesses which can verify the statement he is about to make (MAT 18:16): Amanuwal and his conscience. The conscience of a man is his awareness of the moral goodness or blameworthiness of his conduct or intentions. Paul reveals that the Kadosh Ruwach affects the conscience of one who walks after the Ruwach; part of walking in newness of life (6:4) requires the reshaping of the conscience so that it is based entirely on Yahuwah's standard of morality—not on a morality acceptable to the carnal mind.

9:2-3 my grief is so great, the pain in my heart so constant, that I could wish myself actually under Yahuwah's curse and separated from the Mashyach [NKJ: “accursed from Amanuwal”], if it would help my brothers, my own flesh and blood, (JNT)

Separation

The Greek word "anathema" referred to things devoted to utter destruction, such as the city of Jericho and everything in it (JOS 6:17, 7:1). Instead of Israel or the Yahuwdim being cut off, or being under a curse and not having direct access to Yahuwah, Paul wished that he could switch places with them. He was willing to lay his life down for them, just as Moses was for Israel.

EXO 32:32 “Yet now, if You will forgive their sin—but if not, I pray, blot me out of Your book which You have written.”

Yahuwah's answer to Moses was that He only blots out those who sin against Him. As Paul showed in 8:38-39, nothing can separate or cut us off from Yahuwah if we are walking after the Ruwach. Therefore, he could only wish to trade places, but it was impossible!

Advantages

Paul now lists the many advantages Israel has had over all other nations.

9:4 who are Israelites, to whom pertain the adoption, the glory [JNT: “Sh'khinah”; PHL: “experience of the glory of Yahuwah”], **the covenants, the giving of the law, the service of Yahuwah, and the promises;**

Yahuwah adopted Israel as the first of the nations which He would ultimately claim as His people.

EXO 4:22 “Then you shall say to Pharaoh, Thus says Yahuwah: "Israel is My son, My firstborn.””

Israel also had the presence of Yahuwah's glory among them throughout the 40 years wandering (EXO 16:10); no other nation ever experienced that. It was to Israel that Yahuwah confirmed the covenants at Sinai and later in Moab before crossing the Jordan and entering the Promised Land (DEU 29:1). It was only to Israel that Yahuwah gave the law in codified form from Mt. Sinai. The only priesthood in all the world that was serving the true Yahuwah was the one in Israel. The promises made only to Israel pertained to ownership of the land between the Nile and Euphrates rivers, the Mashyach coming out of one of the tribes of the nation and to national greatness.

9:5 of whom are the fathers [JNT: “Patriarchs”] **and from whom, according to the flesh** [PHL: “as far as human descent goes”], **Amanuwal came, who is over all, the eternally blessed Yahuwah. Aman.**

Fathers

Israel descended from the patriarchs: Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. The lineage of Amanuwal is traced from Yahuwdah, one of the sons of Jacob.

The latter part of this verse can be understood in at least two ways:

1. it establishes Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach as Yahuwah who will be blessed forever;
2. it establishes Amanuwal as over all, then Yahuwah is separately blessed forever for all the things previously listed that He has done for Israel.

9:6 But the present condition of Israel does not mean that the Word of Yahuwah has failed.... (JNT)

The fact that Israel has presently been cut off as Yahuwah's people does not mean that Yahuwah's purpose has failed. Paul will proceed in this chapter and the next two chapters to show how Israel's present condition was necessary for Yahuwah's purpose to be fulfilled.

9:6 ...For not everyone from [GSP: “descended from”] **Israel is truly part of Israel;** (JNT)

Israel

The name “Israel” means “prevailer with Aluah (Al)”; not everyone associated with that name actually prevails with Yahuwah.

9:7 nor are they all children because they are the seed of Abraham; but, "In Isaac your seed shall be called."

The Word of Yahuwah does not state that physical descent is a requirement to be classified as children of Yahuwah. In fact, the recorded Word of Yahuwah pointed to another requirement in order to be considered the children of Yahuwah; Paul quotes GEN 21:12 to prove this point.

In Isaac

Isaac was born because of the faith that Abraham had in the promise of Yahuwah. Isaac was a type of all who become the children of Yahuwah; their relationship with Yahuwah is based on faith!

9:8 That is, those who are the children of the flesh [PHL: “natural descendants”], **these are not the children of Yahuwah; but the children of the promise are counted as the seed** [LAM: “reckoned as descendants”].

Yahuwah's Design

Yahuwah does not consider the children of the flesh, the physical descendants of the patriarchs of Israel as His children. Here, "the seed" refers to the children of Yahuwah. He now gives examples of how Yahuwah's purpose revolves completely around what Yahuwah chooses to do—not what man desires or does!

9:9 For this is what the promise said: "At the time set, I will come; and Sarah will have a son." (JNT)

Example of Abraham

Several years previous to this, Abraham attempted to figure out how Yahuwah's promise to him—that his descendants would be as the stars of heaven—could be fulfilled; he thought maybe Eliezer of Damascus could be adopted and produce offspring for him (GEN 15:2-3), yet Yahuwah told him his descendant would come from his own body. With that added insight, Abraham attempted to fulfill the requirement and Ishmael was the outcome; Yahuwah then informed him that Ishmael would not do—that his descendant would be born from his wife, Sarah (GEN 17:19).

It was Yahuwah who decided when Abraham's son of promise was to be born. At the time Yahuwah decided, He came and caused the miracle to take place so Sarah could become pregnant. Isaac was not the result of his parents' planning; he was the result of Yahuwah's decision and selection.

9:10 And not only this, but there was Rebekah also, when she had conceived twins by one man, our father [PHL: “forefather”] **Isaac;** (NAS)

In this case, both sons were conceived at the same time as the result of the same event by the same parents. They were both sons of the promised son of Abraham.

9:11 for though the twins were not yet born, and had not done anything good or bad, in order that Yahuwah's purpose according to His choice might stand, not because of works [JNT: “not dependent on what they did”], **but because of Him who calls** [PHL: “but is entirely a matter of His will”], (NAS)

Yahuwah selected only one of the two sons before birth, Although they were of the same parents and had not been exposed to any influence which might shape their thinking or character. There was nothing they

had done that could be used as a basis for Yahuwah's decision. This shows that Yahuwah's calling does not result from physical ancestry or deeds done. Yahuwah simply chooses whoever He wants; no one can qualify himself.

9:12 it was said to her, "The older shall serve the younger."

Prior to the twins' births, Yahuwah determined which son would receive the promises made to Abraham. Rebekah was informed of Yahuwah's decision when she inquired about the unusual movement occurring within her body during her pregnancy (GEN 25:22-23).

9:13 As it is written, "Jacob I have loved, but Esau I have loved less."

This was quoted from MAL 1:3. In the context, Yahuwah "loved" Jacob by selecting him; He "hated" Esau by rejecting him, not for any animosity toward him. The Greek word for "hated" is "miseo" which means to "love in a lesser degree". Amanuwal was very clear that there are varying degrees of love:

MAT 10:37 "He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me."

LUK 14:26 "If anyone comes to Me and does not hate [miseo] his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple."

Yahuwah loved Esau less because He was choosing Jacob over Esau.

9:14 So are we to say, "It is unjust for Yahuwah to do this"? Heaven forbid! (JNT)

Yahuwah = Unjust?

Yahuwah's selective process seems unfair from the human viewpoint. Our physically-focused perspective revolves around making decisions based on actions and attitudes which we observe. Yet Yahuwah's perspective is based on completing His plan in such a way that no human can ever say he deserved what Yahuwah has done for him.

9:15 For He says to Moses, "I will have mercy on whomever I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whomever I will have compassion."

Mercy & Compassion

This quote from EXO 33:19 reflected the reason that Yahuwah did not destroy Israel after the sin with the golden calf. Yahuwah told Moses that it did not matter what he wanted or what anybody else desired because Yahuwah decides to which individuals He will extend His mercy. Amanuwal confirmed that this principle remains in effect until the end of the present day of salvation:

JOH 6:44 "No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day."

9:16 It does not, therefore, depend on man's desire or effort, but on Yahuwah's mercy. (NIV)

The decision is totally up to Yahuwah. No one influences Yahuwah's decision.

9:17-18 For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, "Even for this same purpose I have raised you up, that I might show My power in [REB: "My dealings with"] you, and that My name might be declared in all the earth." Therefore He has mercy on whom He wills, and whom He wills He hardens [NRS: "hardens the heart"; REB: "makes stubborn"].

A Lack of Comprehension

Just before the seventh plague of hail and fire, Moses was instructed to tell Pharaoh that Yahuwah had selected him to help establish an example of what happens to those who resist Yahuwah (EXO 9:16). Moses was warned before ever returning to Egypt that Yahuwah intended to use Pharaoh in this manner.

EXO 4:21 And Yahuwah said to Moses, "When you go back to Egypt, see that you do all those wonders before Pharaoh which I have put in your hand. But I will harden his heart, so that he will not let the people go."

Yahuwah's plan clearly reveals that His intention is to keep the vast majority of humanity in ignorance until the present age of Satan's rule comes to an end. This means that Yahuwah prevents most from comprehending the truth.

MAT 13:11-15 He answered and said to them, "Because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given. For whoever has, to him more will be given, and he will have abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him. Therefore I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. And in them the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled, which says: 'Hearing you will hear and shall not understand, and seeing you will see and not perceive; for the heart of this people has grown dull. Their ears are hard of hearing, and their eyes they have closed, lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, lest they should understand with their heart and turn, so that I should heal them.'"

9:19 You will say to me then, "Why does He still find fault [PHL: "blame men for what they do"]? For who has resisted His will?"

If Yahuwah has not allowed the majority the ability to have a relationship with Him, how can He blame men for not doing what He says? If Yahuwah has willed not to show His compassion to everyone during the present age, how can humanity be at fault?

9:20 But indeed, O man, who are you to reply against [LAM: "to question"] Yahuwah? Will the thing formed say to him who formed it, "Why have you made me like this?"

Backtalk?

When considering the vast gap between Yahuwah and men, clearly it is inappropriate for a man to question Yahuwah's motives. To amplify the absurdness of asking Yahuwah to give account, Paul refers back to the analogy used by both Isaiah (ISA 29:16) and Jeremiah (JER 18:6) of the potter and his clay. The potter is the one who determines what he will do with his clay. Men have no more right to question Yahuwah than clay has to question the potter who fashions it.

9:21 Does not the potter have power over the clay, from the same lump to make one vessel for honor and another for dishonor [REB: "one to be treasured, the other for common use"]?

Power over the Clay

With one part of the clay, the potter may form a beautiful vase which may be worth thousands of dollars. Yet, out of the rest of the clay he may make a bowl for washing feet. He has done the same with humanity. All of mankind is of the same material and yet some He has chosen now to be vessels of honor, to be treasured, while others are given no special attention.

9:22 Now what if Yahuwah, Although He was quite willing to demonstrate His anger and make known His power, patiently put up with people who deserved punishment and were ripe for destruction [NKJ: “vessels of wrath prepared for destruction”]? (JNT)

Patience & Israel

Although all of humanity has deserved punishment, the specific group of people to which Paul refers is the nation of Israel. Yahuwah tolerated their continued rebellions and disobedience for centuries rather than exacting the punishment they deserved. He had the power, and the right to use that power, yet He restrained Himself so that His plan would be fulfilled as He had willed from the first. That plan included the removal of Israel from the unique relationship the nation once had with Yahuwah.

AMO 3:2 You only have I known of all the families of the earth...

It was necessary for Yahuwah to tolerate the sins of Israel, especially those of the tribe of Yahuwdah, until after the coming of the Mashyach so that prophecy would be fulfilled. However, once Amanuwal fulfilled them, the vessels of wrath could be removed and a unique relationship with the vessels of mercy could be established.

9:23-24 What if He did this in order to make known the riches of His glory to those who are the objects [NKJ: “vessels”] of His mercy, whom He prepared in advance for glory—that is, to us, whom He called not only from among the Yahuwdim but also from among the Gentiles? (JNT)

Vessels of His Mercy

Paul has earlier shown that Yahuwah predetermined a group that would receive special favor earlier than the majority of humanity (8:28-30). Here, he links the vessels of mercy to that predetermined group, the members of the Assembly—composed of both Yahuwdim and Gentiles.

9:25 As He says also in Hosea: "I will call them My people, who were not My people, and her beloved, who was not beloved."

My People

To substantiate his claim that the group Yahuwah predetermined to receive mercy included some from among the Gentiles, Paul now begins to quote from several of the prophets. This passage is HOS 2:23 and in its original context was a prophecy about the future time when Yahuwah will take Israel back as His people. It is during the time Israel is not His people—when they have been removed as vessels of wrath—that Yahuwah begins calling some from other nations. Peter alludes to this verse when he writes about the composition of the Assembly.

1PE 2:9-10 But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a kadosh nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; who once were not a people but are now the people of Yahuwah, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.

9:26 "And it shall come to pass in the place where it was said to them, 'You are not My people,' there they will be called sons of the living Yahuwah."

This quote is from HOS 1:10 where Yahuwah prophesied the future restoration of Israel's relationship to Him. Once again Paul implies that the Gentiles would be called during the time when the physical nation of Israel would not be the people of Yahuwah.

9:27-28 Isaiah also cries out concerning Israel: "Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, the remnant will be saved. For He will finish the work and cut it short in righteousness, because Yahuwah will make a short work upon the earth [NRS: "will execute His sentence on the earth quickly and decisively"]."

Paul quotes ISA 10:22-23 to emphasize that Israel will be destroyed as vessels of wrath, leaving only a small percentage of the nation. This passage also confirms the time when Yahuwah takes Israel back as His people—at the close of this age!

9:29 And as Isaiah said before: "Unless the Sovereign of Sabaoth [NRS: "hosts"] had left us a seed, we would have become like Sodom, and we would have been made like Gomorrah."

Paul connects this quote from ISA 1:9 with the previous passage in ISA to stress the fact that although Israel deserved to be completely destroyed because they had become corrupt vessels of wrath, Yahuwah showed compassion to a few "vessels of mercy", who would ultimately be considered the seed of Isaac (verses 6-8).

9:30 What shall we say then? That Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness of [GSP: "produced by"; NAS: "which is by"] faith;

Righteousness

Righteousness involves keeping the commandments (PSA 119:172). Earlier in Chapter 2, Paul pointed out that the Greeks discovered, through trial and error, what some of the laws of Yahuwah were, but were never given the law in codified form. Since Yahuwah had not shown them the same favor He had shown to Israel, they did not understand the need of keeping the law and therefore did not pursue obedience to it. Those Yahuwah called from among the Gentiles through the preaching of the good news were led to see the importance of the law which defined righteous conduct. They were then led to see the need to repent of disobeying that law. The result of their repentance led to their being immersed in the name of Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach. They were taught from the beginning of their relationship with Yahuwah of their need to rely on Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach in order to achieve the righteousness revealed in the law (3:20).

9:31 but Israel, pursuing the law of [JNT: "that offers"] righteousness, has not attained to the law of righteousness.

Unlike the Gentiles, the physical descendants of Israel had been given the law and understood the importance of keeping it—especially the tribe of Yahuwdah. However, they mistakenly thought they could attain the righteousness of the law without the need of any outside help.

9:32-33 Why? Because they did not seek it by faith, but as it were, by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumbling stone. As it is written: "Behold, I lay in Zion a stumbling stone and rock of offense, and whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame."

The Yahuwdim' failure at achieving the righteousness of the law, which is revealed by the Ten Commandments, stemmed from their belief that they could achieve what the law required by their own efforts, without any assistance from Yahuwah. This misconception led them to reject the Mashyach—the One who could forgive them of their failures in keeping the law, the One who could extend grace to them so that any further failures would not be imputed to them, and the One who could supply them with power enabling them to achieve the righteousness defined by the law. Paul combined two separate scriptures from Isaiah in order to show the effect Amanuwal would have on Israel.

ISA 8:14 He will be as a sanctuary, but a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense to both the houses of Israel, as a trap and a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

ISA 28:16 Therefore thus says the Sovereign YAHUWAH: "Behold, I lay in Zion a stone for a foundation, a tried stone, a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation; whoever believes will not act hastily.

Not By Faith

The combination that Paul formed reveals that Amanuwal strengthens those who trust Him as the foundation of their salvation, yet He has become an obstacle to those who thought salvation could be achieved strictly by their own efforts.

Amanuwal was rejected by the vast majority of the Yahuwdim as the Mashyach because they were looking for a world-conquering king. They should have been looking for a Savior who would assist them in conquering their sinful nature.

Romans: Chapter 10

10:1 Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to Yahuwah for Israel is that they may be saved.

Salvation

Paul is beginning to point out to the Yahuwdim element in the Assembly at Rome, that he is not against Israel or the Yahuwdim people. He was very thankful that he had descended from Israel. He looked forward to the day indicated by the prophets Hosea and Isaiah when Yahuwah would once again claim Israel as His people.

10:2 for I can testify to their zeal for Yahuwah. But it is not based on correct understanding; (JNT)

Zeal

Paul had been there; he was zealous to an extreme (GAL 1:14; PHI 3:6; ACT 22:3). An example of their zeal in trying to please Yahuwah can be found in the Talmud. They established many traditions which were to prevent them from failing to keep the law.

However, their zeal was a misguided zeal, it was not according to correct understanding, or knowledge. Knowledge would require admission of the inability to keep the righteousness of the law perfectly under human effort alone. Knowledge would indicate the need for the payment of the penalty for whatever mistakes are made. Knowledge would demand the need for a Mashyach in order to attain salvation.

10:3 For they being ignorant of Yahuwah's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of Yahuwah.

10:3 for, since they are unaware of Yahuwah's way of making people righteous and instead seek to set up their own, they have not submitted themselves to Yahuwah's way of making people righteous.(JNT)

Making One Righteous

The JNT gives the more accurate sense of the point Paul is making. Yahuwah's manner of making one righteous requires reliance on Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach. It is Amanuwal living His righteous life in an individual that produces the righteousness of Yahuwah.

The Yahuwdim righteousness revolved around a legalistic regimen which incorporated numerous traditions devised by men. For example, they have misconstrued the prohibition against kindling a fire on the Sabbath, so they can't turn on a light after the sun sets on Friday; the "kosher lamp", with its rotating shade, solves the problem. Also, rabbinic ruling established what activities or items could or could not be carried outside a Yahuwdite's home on the Sabbath. Since the carrying of books, keys, babies, etc. outside the home is considered work on the Sabbath, it became necessary to extend the area which is considered "home". The "eruv" was created by rabbinic ruling; this is an inconspicuous fence which encloses huge neighborhoods so that devout Yahuwdim can carry books, briefcases, keys, etc. plus push strollers, etc. to synagogue or to a park on the Sabbath. Most major cities and many smaller towns have eruvs. For example, all of downtown Washington, DC, including the mall, memorials, White House, Capitol, the Smithsonian museums, and the National Gallery of Art, are inside the DC eruv.

10:4 For Amanuwal is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

10:4 For the goal at which the Torah aims is the Mashyach, who offers righteousness to everyone who trusts. (JNT)

End/Goal

Being spiritual (7:14), the law cannot come to an end. Therefore, every translation, except the JNT, has erred in its rendering of the Greek word "telos" as "end". The JNT more accurately has "goal" for "telos" and gives the proper translation of the verse.

Righteousness

Not only does the law define righteous conduct by identifying sin, it also points to the need of Amanuwal's help in order to fulfill its required righteousness (8:4). Those who comprehend their need for Him, surrender to Him and trust Him to achieve the goal of the law in them have His righteousness imputed to them.

10:5 For Moses writes about the righteousness which is of [JNT: "grounded in"] the law, "The man who does those things shall live by [JNT: "attain life through"] them."

This verse emphasizes the importance of attaining righteousness. Paul uses LEV 18:5 to substantiate that eternal life requires the attainment of the righteousness which is defined in the law. Remember,

Amanuwal told the man, who asked Him what was required for eternal life, to keep the commandments (MAT 19:16-17); then He told the man to sell all he had and follow Him: i.e., trust Him with his life.

10:6 But [JNT: “Moreover”] the righteousness of [JNT: “grounded in”; NAS: “based on”] faith speaks in this way,...

This verse begins with the Greek conjunction "de". It can be used to indicate a contrast with what preceded it, to qualify what preceded it, or to add to what preceded it. The JNT correctly uses it to continue discussing the subject of Yahuwah's way of making people righteous. The righteousness of faith is the same righteousness which the law defines, but is based on trusting Amanuwal to produce that righteousness in us, as we follow His sinless example.

10:6-7 ..."Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?'" (that is, to bring Amanuwal down from above) or, "'Who will descend into the abyss?'" (that is, to bring Amanuwal up from the dead).

Ascend & Descend

Paul paraphrases the passage written by Moses about the accessibility of the law in DEU 30:11-13 and applies it to how accessibility to Amanuwal has been achieved. It was not man's effort which drew Amanuwal from His eternal state of immortality to become a mortal who died for the sins of the world, nor was it man's effort which raised Amanuwal from death back to immortality.

These actions were done for man! The righteousness of faith requires believing Yahuwah has done these things so that the righteousness defined by the law can be established in us through the access we have been given to Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach.

10:8-9 But what does it (the righteousness of faith) say? "The word is near you, even in your mouth and in your heart" (that is, the word [GSP: “message”] of [GSP, JNT: “about”] faith which we preach): that if you confess with your mouth the Sovereign Amanuwal and believe in your heart that Yahuwah has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved [REB: “you will find salvation”].

Confession & Belief

Paul quotes from DEU 30:14, but omits the final phrase “that you may do it”. Yahuwah touches the minds of those He chooses to select and imparts the faith of Amanuwal to them. The recipient of that faith is compelled to act. The confession of the mouth refers to the acknowledgment of Amanuwal as Sovereign and Savior, which is required of those who have repented and desire immersion . Yet, more than confession is necessary in order to be saved: an inner, life-changing conviction must also be occurring. Paul gives further explanation to confession and belief in the following verses.

10:10 For with the heart one believes to [JNT: “goes on trusting and thus continues toward”] righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made to [JNT: “and thus continues toward”] salvation.

10:10 For faith in the heart leads to righteousness, and confession on the lips leads to salvation. (REB)

The one who is convicted that Amanuwal is Sovereign and Savior continues walking according to the Ruwach, following the example of Amanuwal: living without sin. If one is totally convicted, his life is consumed with doing things Yahuwah's way and he cannot help but to speak of those things with others.

10:11 For the Scripture says, "Whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame."

Whoever

Paul again refers to ISA 28:16. This time he puts stress on "whoever" rather than on the effect of belief, as the next verse shows.

10:12-13 For there is no distinction between Yahuwдите and Greek, for the same Sovereign over all is rich to all who call upon Him. For "whoever calls upon the name of Yahuwah shall be saved."

Paul uses this quote is from JOE 2:32, which is a prophecy of the time after Amanuwal returns, to show that Yahuwah accepts those who are from nations other than Israel.

This verse is transitional and introduces a series of arguments some may use in an attempt to claim Israel and the Yahuwdim people as a whole have been unfairly treated.

10:14-15 But how can they call on someone if they haven't trusted in him? And how can they trust in someone if they haven't heard about him? And how can they hear about someone if no one is proclaiming him [NKJ: "without a preacher"]? And how can people proclaim him unless Yahuwah sends them? [NKJ: "And how shall they preach unless they are sent?"]... (JNT)

Preemptive Strike

After pointing out Israel's flawed concept of how righteousness is attained, Paul now begins responding to the inevitable questions which the Yahuwdim would have in attempting to defend the position of their people. The first question springs from the prophecy of Joel quoted in verse 13. You do not call on someone for help if you do not know whether or not he can be trusted. You cannot trust someone if you are completely unaware of his existence. And you will never know about someone if nothing is ever said about him so that he is brought to your attention.

Due to the magnitude of who Amanuwal is and what He can and does do, those who announce Him must be granted divine help: they must be sent by Yahuwah. All who truly represent Yahuwah are sent by Him—they cannot come by their own authority. Even Amanuwal revealed that He was sending His apostles just as the Father had sent Him (JOH 20:21).

10:15 ...As it is written: "How beautiful [REB: "welcome"] are the feet of those who preach the good news of peace, who bring glad tidings of good things!"

Glad Tidings

The Yahuwdim claimed that if Yahuwah had only sent someone to tell Israel about Amanuwal, they would have welcomed it as good news. Paul quotes ISA 52:7 as the response to their defensive position for not accepting Amanuwal as the Sovereign. He pointed out that Isaiah referred to messengers sent by Yahuwah hundreds of years earlier. In fact, many prophets were sent bringing that message.

10:16 But they have not all obeyed [JNT: "paid attention to"; PHL: "responded to"; GSP: "accepted"] the good news. For Isaiah says, "Yahuwah, who has believed our report?"

Who Has Believed?

Paul continues his response by pointing out that the messengers Yahuwah sent were ignored. To prove that they were ignored even in his day, he quotes ISA 53:1 which begins the most detailed prophecy in the Scriptures of the first coming of Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach. Any Yahuwdite living during that time and privy to the circumstances of Amanuwal's death and burial could not deny the incredible "coincidences" with the prophecy of Isaiah. By stating "not all paid attention" Paul emphasizes that some did.

10:17 So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of Yahuwah.

10:17 So trust comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes through a word proclaimed about the Mashyach. (JNT)

Faith & the Word Proclaimed

The faith which is necessary for the attainment of righteousness depends on hearing the message about the Savior, accepting it and acting on it. Israel, as a nation, did none of these things.

10:18 But I say, have they not heard? Yes indeed: "Their sound [JNT: "voice"] has gone out to all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world."

Is it possible that, although messengers were sent, Israel never heard the message? Paul responds to this Yahuwdim objection by quoting PSA 19:4—the messages of the prophets have been heard throughout the world.

10:19 But I say, did Israel not know [JNT: "understand"]? First Moses says: "I will provoke you to jealousy by those who are not a nation, I will anger you by a foolish nation [JNT: "a nation void of understanding"]."

Void of Understanding

The Yahuwdim objection continues: maybe Israel did hear, but simply did not understand what they heard. Rather than voice objection to this conclusion, Paul quotes DEU 32:21, where Moses indicated that just as Yahuwah was jealous of their worship of the golden calf, so Yahuwah would make them jealous of the worship given Yahuwah by those who were not Israelites. Those who lacked understanding would replace Israel in the special relationship with Yahuwah that Israel had been offered.

10:20 And then Isaiah dares to say, "I have been found by those who never sought Me, I have shown Myself to those who never inquired of Me." (MOF)

To further substantiate the temporary replacement of Israel with some Gentiles, Paul goes on to quote ISA 65:1.

10:21 But to Israel he says: "All day long I have stretched out My hands to a disobedient and contrary [REB: "defiant"; NAS: "obstinate"] people."

Paul continues quoting from ISA 65:2 to show why the Gentiles were allowed to gain His favor: Israel failed to understand the impact of the message that Yahuwah had given them. They were obstinate, they wanted to do things their way—which made it impossible for them to attain the righteousness of faith.

Romans: Chapter 11

11:1 I say then, has Yahuwah cast away [JNT, MOF: “repudiated”; NAS, NRS: “rejected”] His people? Certainly not! For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin.

Cast Away?

After showing that Yahuwah had broken off His unique relationship with Israel, as the prophets had prophesied He would, the obvious question is: "Is this condition permanent?" Has Yahuwah given up on them and washed His hands of them forever—never to take them back again? Paul responds by saying, "since I am an Israelite, obviously Yahuwah has not forsaken all of Israel!" Yahuwah continues to deal with a few of Jacob's descendants.

Paul points out he was not a Yahuwdite, but a Benjamite. He was considered a Yahuwdite, just as many of the descendants of Levi and Benjamin were. At the time of the rebellion of Jeroboam from Rehoboam the Northern Kingdom of Israel and the Southern Kingdom of Yahuwdah were formed. As a whole, the tribes of Benjamin and Levi remained with Yahuwdah; there were also some individuals from other tribes who migrated south and became incorporated into Yahuwdah. Over time they all became identified as Yahuwdim, rather than by their original tribal names.

11:2 Yahuwah has not cast away His people whom He foreknew [REB: “acknowledged of old as His own”; JNT: “chose in advance”]....

As Paul has already proven from prophecies of Hosea and Isaiah, Yahuwah will reestablish His relationship with Israel at the close of the age. So, the point he is making is that Yahuwah has not severed His relationship with every single descendant of Israel at this time.

11:2-3 ...Or do you not know what the Scripture says of Elijah, how he pleads with Yahuwah against Israel, saying, "Yahuwah, they have killed Your prophets and torn down Your altars, and I alone am left, and they seek my life"?

I Alone

Paul quotes Elijah's response to Yahuwah's question to Elijah of why he had fled into the wilderness (1KI 19:10); Elijah assumed he was the last Israelite alive who was actually trusting Yahuwah.

11:4 But what does the divine response say to him? "I have reserved for Myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal."

Yahuwah's response in 1KI 19:18 revealed that Yahuwah had preserved a remnant of the nation which refused to abandon Him. Elijah did not realize that so many had rejected the blatant idolatry introduced by Jezebel to the Northern Kingdom of Israel. The number seemed large to him, but out of a population of possibly four million, it was a very small percentage of the nation.

11:5 Even so then, at this present time there is a remnant according to the election of [JNT: “chosen by”] grace.

Just as in Elijah's day, so it was in Paul's day—Yahuwah had preserved a small percentage of Israel which He selected to be part of the special group which had been predetermined from the beginning.

11:6 And if by grace, then it is no longer of works [JNT: “based on legalistic works”]; otherwise grace is no longer grace. But if it is of works, it is no longer grace; otherwise work is no longer work.

The Israelites of the remnant are specifically chosen by Yahuwah. There is nothing which they have done that warranted Yahuwah's selection. Yahuwah's choice of them is no different than Yahuwah's choice of Jacob instead of Esau.

Works & Grace

Paul stresses that the extension of Yahuwah's favor in choosing the individuals who compose the predetermined group has absolutely no connection to the physical efforts they have previously put forth. He also states the antithesis: that if Yahuwah's selection were based on physical efforts, then it would be based on obligation, not on Yahuwah's choice.

11:7 What then? Israel has not obtained what it seeks [JNT: “the goal for which she is striving”]; but the elect [JNT: “ones chosen”] have obtained it, and the rest were hardened [KJV: “blinded”; JNT: “made stone-like”; MOF: “rendered insensitive to it”].

Obtaining Yahuwah's Favor

The nation of Israel anciently, and especially the Yahuwdim during Paul's time, attempted to establish themselves as Yahuwah's most favored people through physical efforts without faith. They failed to achieve that goal. However, Yahuwah did select a few out of the nation to reveal the need for faith. Those who Yahuwah did not select for the extension of His mercy were left to their own carnal nature and the environmental influences of the present evil world. Their hearts became hardened; they became stubborn, just as Pharaoh had been made stubborn!

11:8 Just as it is written: "Yahuwah has given them a spirit of stupor, eyes that they should not see and ears that they should not hear, to this very day."

To prove his point, Paul combines quotes from both the Law and Prophets divisions of the Kadosh Scriptures: DEU 29:4 and ISA 29:10.

DEU 29:2-4 Now Moses called all Israel and said to them: "You have seen all that Yahuwah did before your eyes in the land of Egypt, to Pharaoh and to all his servants and to all his land--the great trials which your eyes have seen, the signs, and those great wonders. Yet Yahuwah has not given you a heart to perceive and eyes to see and ears to hear, to this very day."

ISA 29:10 For Yahuwah has poured out on you the Ruwach of deep sleep...

By connecting these two passages, Paul shows that from the early period of Israel's history until the time Yahuwah removed them from His land, they were never selected by Yahuwah to have a relationship with Him through faith.

It is Written

This verse is a good example of how Paul combines related material from different passages without claiming he is quoting a particular prophet; he simply states: “it is written”.

11:9-10 And Dawid says: "Let their table [GSP: “feasting”] become a snare and a trap, a stumbling block and a recompense to them; let their eyes be darkened, that they may not see,

and bow down their back always [JNT: “continually”; GSP: “make their backs bend forever under their burden”].”

Snares, Stumbling Blocks

To further substantiate Israel's inability to come to Yahuwah in faith, Paul now refers to PSA 69:22-23. By doing this, he shows that the entirety of the Kadosh Scriptures—the Law, the Prophets and the Writings—agree with the point he has been making.

Their Table

To better understand the meaning of the term "their table" it is important to note how one of the Hebrew Targums interprets verse 22: "Let their table which they had prepared before Me be for a snare, and their sacrifices be for an offence." The sacrificial altar before the tabernacle, and later the temple, was referred to as the "table of Yahuwah" (MAL 1:7,12). That altar became a snare to the Israelites when the ceremonies and sacrifices at the altar became the primary focus of their religion. They lost sight of the mighty one to which these sacrifices pointed, so that when the Mashyach did come, they simply could not recognize Him. The sacrifices were intended to teach them about their need for the Mashyach—their need to trust in Him. Yet, the sacrifices and ceremonies became an end in themselves. It was because Israel failed to perceive the true purpose of the altar ceremonies that Yahuwah reprimanded the priests through Malachi; He stated that by their actions they were saying "the table of Yahuwah is contemptible"! When they showed disrespect to Yahuwah by the offerings they made, Yahuwah responded by leaving the table; they were then alone, left to serving only themselves at the altar, thereby turning Yahuwah's table into their table.

11:11 I say then, have they stumbled that they should fall [NIV: “so as to fall beyond recovery”; JNT: “with the result that they have permanently fallen away”]? **Certainly not! But through their fall, to provoke them to jealousy, salvation has come to the Gentiles.**

They Have Stumbled

Those who "stumbled" refers to all those of Israel who were not selected by Yahuwah ("the rest", who were hardened, from verse 7). The reference to stumbling connects this verse to the prophecy used by Paul in 9:32-33 of ISA 8:14 about Amanuwal becoming a stumbling stone to Israel.

Provoked?

To "provoke them to jealousy" means to stimulate them to desire the same for themselves. When an Israelite sees the positive change in a Gentile who Yahuwah selects to be part of His predetermined group, that

Israelite should be stimulated to want the same change in his life.

11:12 Now if their fall [JNT: “stumbling”] **is riches for the world, and their failure** [JNT: “being placed temporarily in a condition less favored than that of the Gentiles is bringing”] **riches for the Gentiles, how much more their fullness!**

Great Fullness

During the period when Israel is severed from their original relationship with Yahuwah, some from among the other nations of the earth are granted the blessing of Yahuwah's selection; this leads to the greatest riches attainable: a relationship with the one true Yahuwah, the promise of eternal life and the inheritance of all things (8:17).

Yahuwah has revealed in prophecy that, once Israel is selected as His model nation after Amanuwal returns, all—not just a small sampling—of the Gentiles will be stimulated to desire for themselves what they witness

Israel receiving; this is what Paul means when he refers to “how much more their fullness”!

ISA 44:5 “One will say, 'I am Yahuwah's'; another will call himself by the name of Jacob; another will write with his hand, 'The LORD's,' and name himself by the name of Israel.”

ISA 62:1-3, 12 For Zion's sake I will not hold My peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until her righteousness goes forth as brightness, and her salvation as a lamp that burns. The Gentiles shall see your righteousness, and all kings your glory. You shall be called by a new name, which the mouth of Yahuwah will name. You shall also be a crown of glory in the hand of Yahuwah, and a royal diadem in the hand of your Yahuwah...And they shall call them The Kadosh People, the Redeemed of Yahuwah; and you shall be called Sought Out, a City Not Forsaken.

ISA 61:9, 11 Their descendants shall be known among the Gentiles, and their offspring among the people. All who see them shall acknowledge them, that they are the posterity whom Yahuwah has blessed...For as the earth brings forth its bud, as the garden causes the things that are sown in it to spring forth, so the Sovereign YAHUWAH will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations.

ZEC 8:22-23 Yes, many peoples and strong nations shall come to seek Yahuwah of hosts in Jerusalem, and to pray before Yahuwah.' Thus says Yahuwah of hosts: 'In those days ten men from every language of the nations shall grasp the sleeve of a Yahuwdim man, saying, "Let us go with you, for we have heard that Yahuwah is with you."

ISA 2:2-3 Now it shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of Yahuwah's house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow to it. Many people shall come and say, "Come, and let us go up to the mountain of Yahuwah, to the house of the mighty one of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, and we shall walk in His paths." For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of Yahuwah from Jerusalem.

11:13 For I speak to you Gentiles; inasmuch as I am an apostle to the Gentiles,...

Gentiles

From this verse through verse 32, Paul directs his comments to the non-Yahuwdim members of the congregation in Rome. He reminds them of his appointment as one of Yahuwah's primary spokesmen to the non-Israelites.

ACT 26:15-18 “So I said, 'Who are You, Master?' And He said, 'I am Amanuwal, whom you are persecuting. But rise and stand on your feet; for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to make you a minister and a witness both of the things which you have seen and of the things which I will yet reveal to you. I will deliver you from the Yahuwdim people, as well as from the Gentiles, to whom I now send you, to open their eyes and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to Yahuwah, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me.'”

11:13-14 ...I make known the importance of my work, in the hope that somehow I may provoke some of my own people [NKJ: “those who are my flesh”] to jealousy and save some of them! (JNT)

Paul says his reference to being an apostle to the Gentiles would hopefully stimulate fellow-Israelites to listen to the things he would be addressing specifically to the Gentiles. He hoped that some of those things might cause some of the Yahuwdim to realize what they were losing because of their hard-heartedness and be stimulated to reconsider their rejection of Amanuwah as the Mashyach.

11:15 For if their being cast away is the reconciling of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead?

During the time that Israel has been temporarily removed as Yahuwah's people, the door has been opened so that Gentiles could be selected from among other nations and be added to Yahuwah's predetermined group (8:28-29). This activity has restored a link between Yahuwah and descendants of Adam, other than Israel. When Yahuwah takes Israel back as His people again, He will also accept the other nations as His people. All whose relationships to Yahuwah had been dead will be made alive.

Life from Death

The phrase “life from the dead” anticipates an upcoming analogy Paul uses for the Israelites who are now cut off from Yahuwah—who are dead to Him.

11:16 For if the firstfruit is kadosh, the lump is also kadosh; and if the root is kadosh, so are the branches.

Firstfruit & Root

Paul uses two examples to emphasize the ultimate relationship of Israel to Yahuwah: the status of being Yahuwah's people. The "firstfruit" refers to the first portion of the whole mass, or produce of the land, which is offered to Yahuwah; once accepted by Yahuwah, that offering consecrated the rest of the mass. The "root" refers to the part of the tree which provides the foundation for the rest of the tree. If the root is kadosh, the branches would naturally be kadosh as well because the branches are nourished by the sap, which is produced by the root.

In this particular case, Paul is connecting the Patriarchs—Abraham, Isaac and Jacob—to the firstfruit and the root. The nation of Israel sprang from those three. Since Yahuwah had set them apart for Himself, and through His process of selection (9:9-13) chose Jacob to be the progenitor of His chosen nation, whatever descendants came from Jacob, by virtue of coming from him, were also set apart for Yahuwah and became Yahuwah's people.

11:17 And if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive tree, were grafted in among them, and with them became a partaker of the root and fatness [NIV: “the nourishing sap”] of the olive tree,

Olive Trees

Paul is comparing Israel to a good, or cultivated olive tree and the Gentiles to a wild olive tree. Yahuwah cultivated Israel, He worked with them, and He established them as His tree which sprang from the Patriarchs.

JER 11:16-17 The LORD called your name, green Olive Tree, Lovely and of Good Fruit. With the noise of a great tumult He has kindled fire on it, and its branches are broken. For

Yahuwah of hosts, who planted you, has pronounced doom against you for the evil of the house of Israel and of the house of Yahuwdah, which they have done against themselves to provoke Me to anger in offering incense to Baal.

Although Yahuwah removed most of the limbs from the tree, He did leave some of the original branches. Some non-Israelites were grafted in among those branches which remained on the tree. By virtue of being grafted onto the cultivated tree, the Gentiles became immediate recipients of all that Yahuwah had done in cultivating that tree; prior to their grafting they were nothing.

EPH 2:11-12 Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh...that at that time you were without Amanuwal, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without Yahuwah in the world.

11:18 then don't boast as if you were better than the branches [PHL: “don't let yourself feel superior to the former branches”]! **However, if you do boast, remember that you are not supporting the root, the root is supporting you** [REB: “you do not sustain the root; the root sustains you”]! (JNT)

Paul warns these Gentiles, who had been shown Yahuwah's favor, not to misinterpret why they had been granted this privilege of being selected as branches to be grafted onto His tree. No one deserves Yahuwah's favor! Coming out of an idolatrous pagan background, they were no better than the Israelites who had been removed from the tree.

They needed to keep in mind that the tree continues to live as long as the root remains, and will continue to live even when branches are cut off. The survival of the grafted branches requires the root.

11:19-20 You may make the natural retort, "But the branches were lopped off to make room for my grafting!" Very well, then. They lost their position [NKJ: “were broken off”] **because they failed to believe; you only maintain yours because you do believe. The situation does not call for conceit but for a certain wholesome fear.** (PHL)

Broken Off

As a nation, Israel lost its position of being Yahuwah's people because they failed to attain the righteousness of faith. It was only due to their failure that the Gentiles were selected to replace them. Paul reminds the Gentiles that they did nothing to deserve the position they were given. Yahuwah chose them and opened their minds to comprehend the need for trusting Amanuwal in order to achieve the type of righteousness which Israel failed to achieve. Rather than thinking they were better than the Israelites, who were cut off the tree of Yahuwah's people, Paul exhorted them to humble themselves before Yahuwah.

11:21 For if Yahuwah did not spare the natural branches, He may not [JNT: “certainly won't”] **spare you either.**

Haughtiness led the natural branches of Israel into such heinous sins that Yahuwah was forced to remove them as His people.

EZE 16:50 And they were haughty and committed abomination before Me; therefore I took them away as I saw fit. Yahuwah certainly would not hesitate to remove the grafted branches if they followed the same attitude as the natural branches which had already been cut off.

11:22 Therefore consider the goodness and severity of Yahuwah: on those who fell, severity; but toward you, goodness, if you continue in His goodness. Otherwise you also will be cut off.

Those who fell were those who did not comprehend the righteousness of faith and stumbled over their need for Yahuwah's help—whether they lived prior to, or after, the coming of Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach. They were recipients of the severity of Yahuwah; they were cut off from being His people.

Goodness of Yahuwah

The grafted branches were recipients of the goodness of Yahuwah—they received mercy and became the people of Yahuwah when they admitted their need for Yahuwah's help to produce the kind of righteousness needed for salvation.

Paul gives a warning. Those who are shown Yahuwah's mercy are made aware of the need to repent of their sins and establish conduct which is without sin (1PE 2:21-22). The continuation of Yahuwah's goodness is based on the continuation of good conduct (MAT 19:16-17), because faith without works is dead (JAM 2:20).

11:23 And they also, if they do not continue in [GSP: “cling to their”] unbelief, will be grafted in, for Yahuwah is able to graft them in again.

Looking to the future, Paul continues his reference to Yahuwah's goodness—to the time when the “spirit of stupor” (verse 8) is removed so that Israel will have the ability to believe. For those who may have forgotten or misunderstood, Paul assures them that Yahuwah can do whatever Yahuwah chooses to do.

MAR 10:27 But looking at them, Amanuwal said, "With men it is impossible, but not with Yahuwah; for with Yahuwah all things are possible."

Their relationship to Yahuwah which had been dead will be made alive (verse 15).

11:24 For if you were cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and were grafted contrary to nature into a good [JNT: “cultivated”] olive tree, how much more will these, who are the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree?

Grafting

By nature, a branch of a cultivated olive tree is grafted onto a wild olive tree to take advantage of the sturdier roots of the wild olive. The grafted branch will produce the same type of fruit as it did while attached to the cultivated tree. However, Paul shows how the relationship of the Gentiles is a reversal of the way grafting is naturally done. Yahuwah took a branch of a wild olive tree, which symbolized Gentiles specially selected by Yahuwah, and grafted it into the cultivated tree stock and roots, which symbolized the Patriarchs from which the nation of Israel descended. The implication is made that the grafted wild olive branch began producing the good fruit of the cultivated olive tree, rather than the useless fruit of a wild olive tree. After addressing the abnormal grafting procedure of the Gentile branch, Paul then pointed out an equally miraculous event: the reattachment of the original branches which were broken off. Under normal conditions, branches which are removed die and dry out so that their only use is for burning (JOH 15:6).

Yet, Yahuwah can give life to the dead branches because nothing is impossible for Him, and when He does, the natural branches will be more quickly accepted by their parent tree than the branch taken from the wild olive tree.

11:25 For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion [JNT: “so that you won't imagine you know more than you actually do”; NIV: “so that you may not be conceited”], that hardening in part has happened to Israel until the fullness [NRS, MOF, NIV: “full number”] of the Gentiles has come in.

This Mystery

The "mystery" to which Paul refers is what he has just explained in the preceding material: Israel's temporary severance from being Yahuwah's people so that some non-Israelites could be added to the predetermined group who make up the first resurrection. This understanding had not been comprehended prior that time. Until this was explained the assumption of the Yahuwdim was that the first nation to receive salvation would be the physical nation of Israel.

By stating that the hardening of Israel is only "in part", Paul emphasizes that there are some Israelites who have the righteousness of faith. The hardened condition of Israel does have a determined termination: the point in time when the number of non-Israelites reaches the amount Yahuwah wants included in the first resurrection.

11:26-27 And so [GSP: “then”; REB: “once that has happened”] all Israel will be saved, as it is written: "The Deliverer will come out of Zion, and He will turn away unrighteousness from Jacob; for this is My covenant with them, when I take away their sins."

Will Be Saved

This statement is primarily a composite of points contained in ISA 59:20-21 and JER 31:31-34; Paul combined the essence of the two references to make the point that the salvation of Israel as a nation occurs only after Amanuwal returns.

This does not mean every Israelite will be saved; it does mean that—in contrast to the present condition of only a very small number of Israelites being considered Yahuwah's people, due to having the righteousness of faith—the whole of the nation will be offered salvation. Their minds and hearts will be changed to make salvation possible.

EZE 36:26 “I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.”

When this occurs, all of Israel will be grafted back into the olive tree which represents Yahuwah's people.

HOS 14:4-6 “I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely, for My anger has turned away from him. I will be like the dew to Israel; He shall grow like the lily, and lengthen his roots like Lebanon. His branches shall spread; his beauty shall be like an olive tree, and his fragrance like Lebanon.”

11:28 With respect to the Good News they are hated [NKJ: “enemies”] for your sake. But with respect to being chosen [REB: “judged by His choice”] they are loved for the Patriarchs' sake (JNT)

Good News

The good news pointed out that salvation in the Kingdom of Yahuwah is possible only through Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach. Due to the hardness of their hearts, the nation refused to accept that fact and were treated as enemies by Yahuwah, which allowed non-Israelites access to that salvation.

Patriarch's Sake

However, because Israel descended from Abraham, Isaac and Jacob the nation is prophesied to be the first nation selected for salvation after the predetermined group joins Amanuwal at His return, showing that Yahuwah still has great love for Israel.

11:29 For the gifts and the calling of Yahuwah are irrevocable.

11:29 for Yahuwah does not change His mind about those to whom He gives His blessings or sends His call. (GSP)

Due to Abraham's faithfulness and obedience, Yahuwah made unconditional promises to him and his descendants of great blessings. Yahuwah will not renege on any of those commitments which He has made. Yahuwah sent His prophets with promises of restoring His relationship with the descendants of the Patriarchs, and He will fulfill those prophecies.

11:30-31 For as you were once disobedient to Yahuwah, yet have now obtained mercy through their disobedience, even so these also have now been disobedient, that through the mercy shown you they also may obtain mercy.

Once Disobedient

Paul is still directing his attention to the Gentile reader. In summary, he reminds them that they have obtained mercy only because Israel, when they were still considered Yahuwah's people, disobeyed Yahuwah's instructions. And just as surely as the Gentiles received mercy when they were disobedient, so Israel will yet receive mercy while they are disobedient.

11:32 For Yahuwah has committed them all [MOF: "consigned all men"; GSP: "made all men prisoners"] to disobedience, that He might have mercy on all.

Mercy on All

Yahuwah's plan requires that no one can enter His Kingdom without receiving His mercy. No one will be allowed to claim that he has earned the right to be saved. There has been only one human being who has kept the law perfectly, who has not disobeyed: Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach! All others have sinned and come short of the glory of Yahuwah (3:23).

11:33 Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of Yahuwah! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out!

Depth of Yahuwah

Now Paul focuses on Yahuwah's plan and the manner in which Yahuwah is working it out. What human could have ever designed and created such a plan that is so perfect in every respect? Everyone will eventually be dealt with on an even footing. Yahuwah calls a few now, but most must wait until later. Some will receive mercy earlier than others. Most importantly, Yahuwah controls every aspect of the fulfillment; nothing is left to chance!

11:34 "For who has known the mind of Yahuwah? Or who has become His counselor?"

Paul now gives proof of the depth of Yahuwah's decisions in working out His plan; he refers to passages from ISA 40:13 and JER 23:18.

Yahuwah did something that the Israelites never expected Him to do. He chose people of other nations to become His people. And since the Gentiles had never known Yahuwah in the same way as Israel, they had never considered that Yahuwah would reach down in His mercy and take them as His people.

11:35 "Or who has first given to Him and it shall be repaid to him?"

11:35 "Or who has given a gift to Him, to receive a gift in return?" (NRS)

Paul based this question on the essence of JOB 41:11. He does not state this "is written" anywhere in these scriptures. The point he makes is that no one can make any demands on Yahuwah because Yahuwah is not indebted to anyone. Neither Israelites nor Gentiles have any right to criticize the manner in which Yahuwah has decided to fulfill His plan.

11:36 For of [JNT: "from"] Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever. Aman.

Aman

The use of "Aman", meaning "so be it", affirms man's total dependency on Yahuwah. Yahuwah does not depend on any man—not any Israelite, nor any Gentile!

Romans: Chapter 12

12:1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of Yahuwah [JNT: "in view of Yahuwah's mercies"], that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, kadosh, acceptable to Yahuwah, which is your reasonable service.

Yahuwah's Mercies

Yahuwah's mercies include both the mercy He ultimately shows to all nations and the mercy He has already shown and is now extending to those called during the first harvest period. Paul alludes to the earlier admonition he made as part of the requirement of those who have been immersed and freed from the penalty of sin.

6:13 ...offer yourselves to Yahuwah as people alive from the dead, and your various parts to Yahuwah as instruments for righteousness. (JNT)

12:2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove [NRS, REB: "discern"] what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of Yahuwah.

Be Transformed!

We are exhorted to resist the tendency to yield to the values important to this age. The only sure way to accomplish this is to have our minds made new by transforming our thinking to be in line with Yahuwah's thoughts, which requires the power of the Kadosh Ruwach.

1CO 2:11 ...no one knows the things of Yahuwah except the Ruwach of Yahuwah.

12:3 For I am telling every single one of you, through the grace that has been given to me, not to have exaggerated ideas about your own importance. Instead, develop a sober estimate of yourself based on the standard which Yahuwah has given to each of you, namely, trust [NKJ: “faith”]. (JNT)

Self-Importance

Paul may have originally made this statement as a warning to the Yahuwdim and Gentile groups in Rome not to misconstrue the analogy of the olive tree he had just given. However, the application of this exhortation is to be applied by each True follower throughout time. Humility is essential. No one is in the Assembly because Yahuwah needed them, but rather because Yahuwah showed them favor and granted them faith.

12:4-5 For just as there are many parts that compose one body, but the parts don't all have the same function; so there are many of us, and in union with the Mashyach we comprise one body, with each of us belonging to the others. (JNT)

Although a body is made up of many different parts, each serving a unique purpose, each part relies on all the other parts.

1CO 12:12-14 For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Amanuwal. For by one Ruwach we were all immersed into one body—whether Yahuwdim or Greeks, whether slaves or free—and have all been made to drink into one Ruwach. For in fact the body is not one member but many.

12:6 But we have gifts [MOF: “talents”] that differ and which are meant to be used according to the grace [GSP: “favor”] that has been given to us.... (JNT)

Different parts of a human body perform different functions, such as hands performing functions the eyes could never do and the ears performing functions the feet could never accomplish. In like manner, each member of the Assembly has a special role to fulfill. That role must complement and supplement the roles of all the other members. Every member must be guided by the desire to show outgoing concern for every other member, rather than being motivated by selfish ambitions.

12:6 ...If your gift is prophecy [PHL, GSP: “preaching”; REB: “inspired utterance”], use it to the extent of your trust [NKJ: “in proportion to our faith”]; (JNT)

Gift of Prophecy

Prophecy can refer to either foretelling the future or revealing spiritual truths. Those who have received this gift are admonished not to hold back, but rather to use that Yahuwah-given ability to the fullest.

12:7 if it is serving, use it to serve; if you are a teacher, use your gift in teaching; (JNT)

Service to Others

Immediately after mentioning those who Yahuwah has selected to use for revealing spiritual truths, Paul emphasizes those who have been given the ability to do various physical services for other members of the Assembly.

Teach

Next comes those who have been selected to teach. Teachers are those with knowledge who have been granted the ability to impart that knowledge to others. This certainly applies to ministerial responsibility (EPH 4:11), but can also involve non-ministerial education.

12:8 if you are a counselor [NKJ: “he who exhorts”], use your gift to comfort and exhort;... (JNT)

Counselor

The term "he who exhorts" is from the Greek verb “parakaleo” which means to "call near", “be of comfort”, “give exhortation”. The ministry is admonished to give exhortation (2TI 4:2; TIT 2:15) and members are told to exhort one another (HEB 10:25). Some have been gifted with the ability to strongly urge and warn others without giving offense.

12:8 ...if you are someone who gives, do it simply and generously;... (JNT)

Give

Those who have been blessed with the ability to provide for the physical needs of others by sharing their goods should not have selfish motives for doing so, like Ananias and Sapphira (ACT 5:1-10). When the act of sharing is done out of genuine concern, the giver will experience a euphoric satisfaction.

12:8 ...if you are in a position of leadership, lead with diligence and zeal;... (JNT)

Leaders

Yahuwah expects those He has granted the ability to lead to do so wholeheartedly. Leadership is an area **of service—not prestige**; leaders are to guide those under their charge by keeping them focused on moving in the direction of their mutual goal. Anyone who attains a leadership position in the Assembly strictly to satisfy his ego has not been granted that position from Yahuwah, but has usurped it.

12:8 ...if you are one who does acts of mercy, do them cheerfully.... (JNT)

Acts of Mercy

The Greek refers to showing compassion. Some have been granted the ability to show compassion by comforting those who are emotionally hurt or physically ill. This service is to be done in an upbeat manner to prevent the development of self-pity in the individual who is suffering.

Responsibilities

After giving an overview of how individuals' talents should be correctly utilized, Paul now moves on to general personal responsibilities in daily life. As he elaborates on having our minds transformed, he makes numerous allusions to the need for that transformation in order to satisfy the terms of the New Covenant.

12:9 Let love be without hypocrisy....

12:9 Don't let love be a mere outward show. (JNT)

Agape' Love

Here, the Greek for "love" is “agape’”. This love is to be totally outgoing, without expectation of reciprocation. Therefore it is hypocritical to show “agape’” and expect anything in return. This love is shown because we care about the well-being of the other person.

12:9 ...Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good.

Good & Evil

Abhorrence or hatred is an emotion of great intensity. It is very important to feel intense disgust toward everything which is evil; that disgust establishes a barrier—an emotional wall—between us and the lure of the evil. The Greek word translated "cling" refers to glue; we must be so firmly attached to what is good that we cannot be separated from it.

12:10 Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another [NIV: "honor one another above yourselves"];

Brotherly Love

Here, the Greek for "brotherly love" is "philadelphia". This love is to be directed toward those in a family relationship—those with mutual concern for each other.

12:11 not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving Yahuwah;

12:11 Don't be lazy when hard work is needed, but serve Yahuwah with spiritual fervor. (JNT)

Laziness

A True follower must never let down his guard spiritually; to do so leaves him open to attack. It is imperative that we retain our enthusiasm for Yahuwah's truth and way of life.

HEB 6:11-12 And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope until the end, that you do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

12:12 rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer;

Continue On

We must never lose sight of the hope of Yahuwah's Kingdom and eternal life; in fact, if we keep that hope ever before us, we will be successful in patiently persevering through all suffering and tribulation that we encounter. The only sure way to not lose our zeal and to keep focused on our hope is to stay close to Yahuwah in prayer.

12:13 distributing to the needs of the saints, given to hospitality.

Needs of the Saints

It is extremely important for a True follower to be sensitive to the state of his spiritual family, helping whenever the need arises. There should always be the desire to spend time with Yahuwah's people, including arranging opportunities to entertain them in our homes.

12:14 Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse.

Blessings, Not Cursings

This is one of the requirements Amanuwal stipulated for those who desire to enter into the New Covenant.

MAT 5:44 "But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you,"

A True follower is aware that not everyone is now being called. Therefore those who are presently cut off from the light of the truth should not be cursed for the things they do in ignorance. At a future time Yahuwah will deal with them and they will recognize the sins they have committed while living in darkness. Paul understood this well from personal experience during the time he persecuted True Followers before he was called out of darkness. While giving consent to putting Stephen to death (ACT 8:1), he heard Stephen's reaction.

ACT 7:59-60 And they stoned Stephen as he was calling on Yahuwah and saying, "Sovereign Amanuwal, receive my spirit." Then he knelt down and cried out with a loud voice, "Sovereign, do not charge them with this sin." And when he had said this, he fell asleep.

12:15 Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep.

Rejoice & Weep

True Followers are to be so close to each other that whatever affects one, affects all. If one part of the body suffers, the rest of the body is aware of that suffering (1CO 12:26).

12:16 Be of the same mind toward [GSP: "Live in harmony with"] one another. Do not set your mind on high things, but associate with the humble. Do not be wise in your own opinion.

This is a continuation of the thought from the previous verse: True Followers must be responsive toward each other, just as every part of the human body responds to the needs of all the other parts. A True follower should never act selfishly without regard for the rest of his spiritual family.

PHIL 2:2-4 fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.

To allow pride or vanity to influence our decisions reveals a lack of love.

1CO 13:4 Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up;

12:17 Never pay back evil for evil. Let your aims be such as all count honorable [PHL: "See that your public behavior is above criticism"]. (REB)

Revenge

This is another point Amanuwal made in the Sermon on the Mount regarding conduct becoming of one under the New Covenant.

MAT 5:39 "But I tell you not to resist an evil person. But whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also."

A True follower's conduct must reflect the example of Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach.

1PE 2:21-23 For to this you were called, because Amanuwal also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps: Who committed no sin, nor was guile found in His mouth; Who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously;

12:18 If possible, and to the extent that it depends on you, live in peace [NKJ: “peaceably”] with all people. (JNT)

If Possible

The point Paul made just before this statement shows that it is not always possible to live peaceably with those who are products of this present evil world. Yet, all who have committed themselves to the terms of the New Covenant must personally suppress emotions which would lead to conflict; they are not to be the instigators of discord, nor should they allow themselves to be drawn into altercations.

MAT 5:9 “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of Yahuwah.”

12:19 Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, “Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,” says Yahuwah.”

I Will Repay

Yahuwah is the Judge and therefore responsible for dispensing judgment on the guilty. We must trust Yahuwah to render righteous justice on those who wrong us.

DEU 32:35 “Vengeance is Mine, and recompense; their foot shall slip in due time; for the day of their calamity is at hand, and the things to come hasten upon them.”

12:20-21 "Therefore if your enemy hungers, feed him; if he thirsts, give him a drink; for in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head." Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

Being overcome by evil means to give in to the carnal mind and strike back at an enemy. A transformed mind's response to harmful aggression is to do good by showing concern for the well-being of the aggressor. Such a response is bewildering to those who expect retaliation in kind, and sometimes leads to an immediate feeling of shame and condemnation, which is the meaning of the quote from PRO 25:21-22. This was the response of Saul after Dawid spared his life, despite Saul pursuing Dawid in order to apprehend and kill him.

ISA 24:17 Then he said to Dawid: "You are more righteous than I; for you have rewarded me with good, whereas I have rewarded you with evil.”

True Followers & Government

Paul now shows that a True follower must not view the state government over him as an enemy, and shows that it is important to do all in our power to live peaceably under that government.

Romans: Chapter 13

13:1 Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from Yahuwah, and the authorities that exist are appointed by Yahuwah.

Daniel introduces us to the fact that Yahuwah has ultimate control over every civil government.

DAN 2:21, 37 ...He removes kings and raises up kings... "You, O king, are a king of kings. For the mighty one of heaven has given you a kingdom, power, strength, and glory;"

Based on Yahuwah's sovereignty over all rulers, Peter, like Paul directed Yahuwah's people to yield to the authority granted them by Yahuwah.

IPE 2:13-14 Therefore submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Sovereign's sake, whether to the king as supreme, or to governors, as to those who are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and for the praise of those who do good.

Yahuwah has not granted total authority to rulers—only sufficient authority to keep order in a society, as the next several verses show. Hence neither Peter, nor Paul states that True Followers must always obey civil authorities—only that they must yield to their laws regulating an orderly populace or be subject to penalties if they are unable to do so. There are times when civil governments overstep the authority Yahuwah grants them and they attempt to impose laws or regulations which conflict with a True follower's responsibility of obeying Yahuwah. In those cases the True follower must obey Yahuwah and be subject to whatever penalty imposed by the civil government.

ACT 5:29 Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said: "We ought to obey Yahuwah rather than men."

13:2 Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of Yahuwah [NIV: "what Yahuwah has instituted"], and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves.

The Greek word translated "ordinance" means "institution". A True follower must try to live peaceably with whatever governmental institution is established over him. He must not oppose that government which attempts to protect its citizens. Paul was no doubt acquainted with the Zealots of Judaism which continually opposed the Roman occupation of Yahuwah, who were sometimes executed for their insurrections.

13:3 For rulers are no terror to good conduct, but to bad. Would you like to be unafraid of the person in authority? Then simply do what is good, and you will win his approval; (JNT)

Those who do not steal or murder and who pay taxes have very little to fear from governmental authorities. It is those who break the laws which establish a peaceful society that must fear the authorities. Sometimes there are rules (taxes as an example) that are enforced as laws that we should also abide by as long as we make our living within the system. Paul understood that a True follower's primary citizenship is in the Kingdom of Heaven (PHI 3:20), but acknowledges that we have a duty to be law-abiding citizens in whatever nation we dwell.

13:4 for he is Yahuwah's servant, there for your benefit [PHL: "protection"]. But if you do what is wrong, be afraid! Because it is not for nothing that he holds the power of the sword; for he is Yahuwah's servant, there as an avenger to punish wrongdoers. (JNT)

In order to have a peaceful society in a world cut off from Yahuwah, it is imperative that governments instill the fear of punishment for crimes in its citizens. Yet we as True Followers of Yahuwah do NOT

have to accept nor are we required to remain silent about laws permitting abortions (murder) and homosexuality (abomination).

13:5 Another reason to obey, besides fear of punishment, is for the sake of conscience.
(JNT)

The conscience of a True follower is developed during the transformation of the mind. The transformed mind has accepted Yahuwah's standard of morality by proving to itself what is the perfect will of Yahuwah (12:2). Since Paul has shown that Yahuwah's will is for a True follower to be subject to the authority Yahuwah has granted to civil government, a True follower's conscience will not allow him to oppose that government because he would be opposing the will of Yahuwah.

13:6-7 This is also why you pay taxes; for the authorities are Yahuwah's public officials, constantly attending to these duties. Pay everyone what he is owed: if you owe the tax-collector, pay your taxes; if you owe the revenue-collector, pay revenue; if you owe someone respect, pay him respect; if you owe someone honor, pay him honor. (JNT)

Taxes are necessary to pay Yahuwah's servants who administer civil governments for Him. Amanuwal was clear that True Followers have a duty to pay what the government requires of them.

LUK 20:22-25 "Is it lawful for us to pay taxes to Caesar or not?" But He perceived their craftiness, and said to them, "Why do you test Me? "Show Me a denarius. Whose image and inscription does it have?" They answered and said, "Caesar's." And He said to them, "Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to Yahuwah the things that are Yahuwah's."

The failure to fulfill our obligations transgresses the eighth commandment.

13:8-10 Owe no one anything except to love one another, for he who loves another has fulfilled the law. For the commandments, "You shall not commit adultery," "You shall not murder," "You shall not steal," "You shall not bear false witness," "You shall not covet," and if there is any other commandment, are all summed up in this saying, namely, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." Love does no harm to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfillment [KJV: "fulfilling"] of the law.

Although we have debts in the form of taxes in the public arena, when it comes to our private lives, we are admonished not to have outstanding debts; we are to quickly fulfill our financial obligations. However, there is one debt which can never be fully paid, although we are to pay it every day: to express our love to one another through keeping Yahuwah's commandments.

LUK 10:25-28 And behold, a certain lawyer stood up and tested Him, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" He said to him, "What is written in the law? What is your reading of it?" So he answered and said, "'You shall love Yahuwah thy Aluhym with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind,' and 'your neighbor as yourself.'" And He said to him, "You have answered rightly; do this and you will live."

13:11 And do this, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed.

Awake!

Paul now reverts back to the original recipients of this letter who had allowed an arrogant, judgmental attitude to create conflict between them. They were so physically and emotionally oriented that they were spiritually asleep. He exhorts them to get reoriented: to focus on the need of renewing their minds and transforming their behavior.

Salvation is Near!

Salvation refers both to Amanuwal's coming as well as to the resurrection at that time. Every day that passes brings us one day closer to the time. Due to the loss of consciousness, the moment of death is the same as the moment the Seventh trumpet sounds and the resurrection occurs.

13:12 The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light.

Passage Meaning

The "night" refers to the present world which is cut off from the light of Yahuwah; the "day" refers to the Day of Yahuwah and the appearing of Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach (1TH 5:1-8). The "works of darkness" refers to the sin which results from the influence of the "rulers of the darkness of this age" (EPH 6:12). The "armor of light" is the "armor of Yahuwah" (Who is light) and must be worn by those who are living for the day of Amanuwal's coming.

EPH 6:11 Put on the whole armor of Yahuwah, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

13:13 Let us walk properly [NIV: "behave decently"], **as in the day, not in revelry** [NIV: "orgies"] **and drunkenness, not in licentiousness and lewdness, not in strife and envy.**

As In The Day

Men are more apt to be on better behavior during the day when all can see and recognize them. Since the Light of the world is always present in True Followers, they must always live with the knowledge they can be seen and recognized (MAT 5:14-16), and therefore will not allow themselves to be caught up in the evils of darkness.

13:14 But put on the Sovereign Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.

Put On Amanuwal

To "put on" Amanuwal refers to imitating Him, becoming like Him, taking on His appearance. Just as He was always concerned with doing the will of the Father, rather than fulfilling the desire of His flesh, so must we. We must not purposely put ourselves into a situation where the lusts of the flesh can be satisfied.

Romans: Chapter 14

14:1 Receive [NAS: "accept"] **one who is weak in the faith, but not to disputes over doubtful things** [NAS: "not for the purpose of passing judgment on his opinions"].

Receive Without Judgment

Paul has already cautioned us not to have exaggerated views about our own importance (12:3).

Therefore, we must be careful in our dealings with individuals who Yahuwah leads to desire fellowship with us. We must not look down on those who have not yet attained the same level of understanding which Yahuwah has granted us.

This passage has nothing to do with doctrine, but rather personal conclusions which effect an individual's relationship with Yahuwah.

14:2 For one believes he may eat all things [REB: “all kinds of food”], but he who is weak eats only vegetables.

What One Consumes

The Yahuwdim had carefully examined the scriptures and understood that Yahuwah created livestock (animals which can be eaten) but also created certain animals to serve as scavengers (which are not to be eaten); they therefore believed that both plants and animals could be eaten. However, some of the Gentile True Followers in Rome, who had come from an ascetic Greek background, were convinced no animal meat should be eaten; they were the ones who were weak in the faith.

14:3 Let not him who eats [PHL: “the meat-eater”] despise him who does not eat [PHL: “the vegetarian”], and let not him who does not eat judge him who eats; for Yahuwah has received [JNT: “accepted”] him.

Although Yahuwah has created certain animals for human consumption, He does not **require** they be eaten but that was not always the case because until the introduction of the New Testament Passover (Memorial Service), all of the people of Yahuwah were required to eat lamb as part of the Passover meal. It is not righteous to condemn another for his or her personal preferences of eating meat or not.

In this case, some of the Yahuwdim were condemning those Gentiles who came from an ascetic background because they refused to eat meat; likewise, some of the ascetic Gentiles looked down on the Yahuwdim for eating animal flesh.

14:4 Who are you to judge another's servant? To his own master he stands or falls [GSP: “succeeds or fails”]. Indeed, he will be made to stand, for Yahuwah is able to make him stand.

Who Judges?

Every True follower is a servant of Yahuwah and therefore answerable only to Yahuwah for his personal preferences.

14:5 One person esteems one day above another; another esteems every day alike....

Esteemed Days

Another area which created division among True Followers in Rome involved the observation, by some, of special days apart from the Sabbath and festivals.

14:5 ...Let each be fully convinced in his own mind.

When the Scriptures are silent on a particular issue, a personal practice is allowable as long as its impact does not transgress showing love to our neighbor. However, whenever Scripture directly, or by principle, speaks clearly, conflicting personal opinions must be set aside and conflicting personal practices must cease.

14:6 He who observes the day [JNT: “a day as special”], observes it to Yahuwah; and he who does not observe the day, to Yahuwah he does not observe it. He who eats, eats to Yahuwah, for he gives Yahuwah thanks; and he who does not eat [PHL: “fasts”], to Yahuwah he does not eat, and gives Yahuwah thanks.

This situation involved something the Yahuwdim practiced that the Gentiles did not. There were at least four separate days during the year when the Yahuwdim fasted in commemoration of historical events important to them as a people. These fasts fell during the 4th, 5th, 7th and 10th months (ZEC 8:19). The fast of 10th day of the 10th month commemorated the day the Babylonians began the siege of Jerusalem; the fast of the 9th day of the 4th month marked the day the Babylonians broke through the walls of the city; the fast of the 9th day of the 5th month solemnized the burning of the Temple; and the fast of the 3rd day of the 7th month memorialized the day the Babylonian-appointed governor Gedaliah was assassinated. The Yahuwdim claimed it was important to Yahuwah that these days be observed.

ZEC 7:4-5 Then the word of Aluhym Almighty came to me: "Ask all the people of the land and the priests, 'When you fasted and mourned in the fifth and seventh months for the past seventy years, was it really for Me that you fasted?'" (NIV)

The Gentile True Followers did not see any reason for them to adopt a practice that had no bearing on them or their relation to Yahuwah, and Paul agreed with that conclusion.

14:7-8 For none of us lives to [JNT: “only in relation to”] himself, and no one dies to [JNT: “only in relation to”] himself. For if we live, we live to Yahuwah; and if we die, we die to the Sovereign. Therefore, whether we live or die, we are Yahuwah’s.

None for the Self

Once we become part of the body, everything we do, or do not do, affects the rest of the body. Therefore, any practice we observe must be based on our belief that it pleases Yahuwah. In fact, it is impossible for us to live as we want, without regard for others, because we have been bought by Yahuwah (ACT 20:28), which means we must live according to His will and not our own.

14:9 For to this end Amanuwal died and rose and lived again, that He might be Sovereign of both the dead and the living.

Might Be Sovereign

The phrase "might be Sovereign" is from the Greek "kurieuo" which literally means "has dominion over". By His death, He bought us, and by His resurrection Amanuwal is now in a position to have dominion over all men because He has the power to resurrect the dead (JOH 5:25-29).

14:10 But why do you judge [JNT: “pass judgment on”] your brother? Or why do you show contempt for [JNT: “look down on”] your brother? For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Amanuwal.

The Judgment Seat of Amanuwal

Since Amanuwal has dominion over all men, whether alive or dead, no one should ever treat another member of the body of Amanuwal with contempt or in a condescending way. It is Amanuwal who is Judge: not any of us! In fact, we have no right to judge anyone else because we are under judgment ourselves! And we should keep in mind that we are being judged based on the way we treat each other. It

is important to note that we are not passing judgment on each other when we question their actions, but judging or questioning the action as it pertains to the law of Yahuwah.

1 COR 6:2-4 ... Or do you not know that the saints will judge the world? If the world is judged by you, are you not competent to constitute the smallest law courts? 3 Do you not know that we will judge angels? How much more matters of this life? 4 So if you have law courts dealing with matters of this life, do you appoint them as judges who are of no account in the assembly?...

However, we are to be careful how we perform this duty to one another.

MAT 25:40 "And the King will answer and say to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.'"

14:11 For it is written: "As I live, says Yahuwah, every knee shall bow to Me, and every tongue shall confess to Yahuwah."

Quoting Scripture

This quote is extracted from a passage in Isaiah.

ISA 45:23 "I have sworn by Myself; the word has gone out of My mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, that to Me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall take an oath."

14:12 So then each of us shall give account of himself to Yahuwah.

Give Account

The Assembly is now in its day of judgment.

IPE 4:17 For the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of Yahuwah; and if it begins with us first, what will be the end of those who do not obey the good news of Yahuwah?

This means that we must daily give account of ourselves to Yahuwah, acknowledging and confessing our sins (1JO 1:9), understanding that every sin committed must be accounted for since Amanuwal's blood is required for each of them.

LUK 12:2 For there is nothing covered that will not be revealed, nor hidden that will not be known.

14:13 Therefore let us not judge [GSP: "criticize"] one another anymore,...

Do Not Judge!

If we clearly understand that there is room for personal preferences within the Assembly—that one part of the body can fulfill individual desires as long as the rest of the parts are not hurt—then we should have no reason for becoming upset with any other member who is convicted that his practice does not conflict with pleasing Yahuwah. But even more importantly, we need to analyze our personal preferences and decide whether they are spiritual convictions or physical desires; and, if only physical desires, whether those desires are more important to us than the spiritual well-being of the rest of our spiritual family.

14:13 ...but rather resolve this, not to put a stumbling block or a cause to fall [JNT: “snare”] in our brother's way.

Hurting the Brethren

A “stumbling block” refers to something that could cause someone to trip, which would hamper his spiritual progress; the term “cause to fall” is from the Greek word “skandalon” and refers to an enticement to sin. Our incorrect conduct can either be a barrier in the form of a stumbling-block to our brother's spiritual development, or can be a snare that leads him to compromise Yahuwah's law.

14:14 I know and am convinced by the Sovereign Amanuwal that there is nothing unclean of itself [FEN: “that nothing is essentially defiled”];

Example of Meat

In order to show the necessity of thinking about how our actions impact others, Paul now uses a personal example of his belief regarding the eating of meats. Here, the Greek word translated “unclean” is “koinos” which actually means “common”, not unclean! It refers to meat that has been defiled through external misuse. In the vision of the sheet filled with animals which Peter was told to kill and eat, he responded by referring both to common and unclean animals.

ACT 10:14 But Peter said, "Not so, Master! For I have never eaten anything common or unclean."

The Greek word translated “unclean” in ACT 10 is “akathartos” which means “defiled by nature”; it is by its very nature unclean—it was created in that state. No meat that is “akathartos” can become “koinos”; an “unclean” animal can never become “common”, or unfit for human consumption, because an unclean animal is already defiled by the nature of its creation. Only a clean animal can become common.

There is nothing common of itself; that is, “clean” animals do not become defiled because of what they are: they become defiled by circumstances. The primary cause of meat becoming defiled centered around the slaughter of the animal. If it was killed through strangulation, or was improperly bled, the blood coagulated in its flesh. Yahuwah prohibits the consumption of blood and requires that animals be properly bled before they are consumed.

LEV 17:10-14 “And whatever man of the house of Israel, or of the strangers who sojourn among you, who eats any blood, I will set My face against that person who eats blood, and will cut him off from among his people. For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that makes atonement for the soul. Therefore I said to the children of Israel, "No one among you shall eat blood, nor shall any stranger who sojourns among you eat blood." And whatever man of the children of Israel, or of the strangers who sojourn among you, who hunts and catches any animal or bird that may be eaten, he shall pour out its blood and cover it with dust; for it is the life of all flesh. Its blood sustains its life. Therefore I said to the children of Israel, "You shall not eat the blood of any flesh, for the life of all flesh is its blood. Whoever eats it shall be cut off."

In addition to improper bleeding, another action which polluted clean meat was its being offered as a sacrifice to an idol. The decision made by the apostles at the Jerusalem conference regarding parts of the ceremonial law required of Gentile converts included refraining from meat which had become defiled in these fashions.

ACT 15:20 but that we write to them to abstain from things polluted by idols, from sexual immorality, from things strangled, and from blood.

A serious problem with the meat being sold in meat markets was that much of it had been offered to idols at pagan temples. Paul earlier addressed the need to abstain from eating any meat that was identified as common (1CO 10:25-28).

14:14 ...but to him who considers anything to be unclean [FEN: “defiled”], to him it is unclean [FEN: “defiled”].

In contrast to Paul's conviction, the vegetarian had personal convictions that prevented him from eating any meat; to him all meat was defiled.

14:15 Yet if your brother is grieved [JNT: “upset”] because of your food, you are no longer walking in love. Do not destroy with your food the one for whom Amanuwal died.

Walk in Love!

It is extremely important not to make an issue over personal convictions. This does not mean that we always allow others' convictions to dictate how we live our lives. We simply must be careful not to emphasize differences in sensitive areas which are not clearly defined in scripture.

14:16 Do not let what you know to be good, be spoken of as bad; (JNT)

Our Attitude

It is the way in which we practice our personal convictions that is of utmost importance. Depending on our attitude and approach, we can be perceived as humble or as self-righteous and abrasive.

14:17 for the kingdom of Yahuwah is not food and drink [JNT: “eating and drinking”; PHL: “not a matter of whether you get what you like to eat and drink”], but righteousness and peace and joy in the Kadosh Ruwach.

Our Goal

The goal for which a True follower strives has nothing to do with satisfying selfish pulls; it has everything to do with unselfish acts. Righteousness is the outcome of having Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach living in us; it requires loving Yahuwah and loving man. Peace is the state where conflict does not exist. Joy is the state of delight that comes when one is mutually blessed with others.

14:18 Anyone who serves the Mashyach in this fashion both pleases Yahuwah and wins the approval of other people. (JNT)

Serving the Mashyach

Paul now links verse 17 to the admonition in verse 13 of not putting a stumbling block or a snare before others. We must be careful in the way we live our lives because our examples do influence others: both positively and negatively.

14:19 Therefore let us pursue the things which make for peace and the things by which one may edify [REB: “build up”] another.

Us

Paul originally directed this exhortation to the separate groups of Yahuwdim and Gentile True Followers in Rome since the previous content of this letter revealed the relations between the two groups were neither peaceful nor edifying.

14:20 Do not destroy the work of Yahuwah for the sake of food. All things indeed are pure, but it is evil for the man who eats with offense [NIV: "to eat anything that causes someone else to stumble"].

The Work of Yahuwah

The work of Yahuwah is the creation of His Family. Anyone who makes an issue out of a personal preference and thereby puts a stumbling block before others with whom Yahuwah is working obstructs the work of Yahuwah, which consists of both the one who stumbles as well as the one who acts selfishly.

All Things Are Pure

Paul's use of "all things" amplifies his earlier point that both plants and animals can be used for food; he is not stating that all plants and animals are pure. The word "pure" is from the Greek "katharos" which means "undefiled" or "clean". Obviously, not all plants were created to be eaten, since many are poisonous. Neither were all animals created to be eaten.

1TI 4:1, 3 Now the Ruwach expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons...forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from foods which Yahuwah created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth.

Offense

Although the flesh of "clean" animals can be used for food, it is wrong to eat it in the presence of one who would be offended by such action.

14:21 It is good neither to eat meat nor drink wine nor do anything by which your brother stumbles or is offended or is made weak.

We must be willing to curtail the fulfillment of any of our personal convictions which can be detrimental to the spiritual growth of fellow True Followers. For example, if we know individuals who are offended by the use of alcohol, we should not use alcohol in their presence. Paul went so far as to say he would be willing to quit eating meat altogether to prevent giving offense.

1CO 8:13 Therefore, if food makes my brother stumble, I will never again eat meat, lest I make my brother stumble.

This also pertains to the one who does not eat meat. If you are invited to someone's home for a meal let them know ahead of time that you do not eat meat and thus neither of you will be offended. Either they will accommodate you or withdraw the invite or you will go and not cause any offense.

14:22 Do you have faith? Have it to yourself before Yahuwah....

Got Faith?

Faith is conviction! We must make certain our conviction is in accordance with the will of Yahuwah. We are before the judgment seat of Yahuwah and are being judged by the way we follow our conviction.

14:22 ...Happy is he who does not condemn himself in what he approves.

Non-condemnation

To live according to conviction establishes a clear, clean conscience which prevents the condemnation created by guilt.

14:23 But he who doubts is condemned if he eats, because he does not eat from faith; for whatever is not from faith is sin.

Doubt = Condemnation

Paul goes back to his earlier example of those whose personal convictions caused them to be vegetarians. If they act contrary to their convictions in order to please those who eat meat, the result will be the condemnation of a guilty conscience. Until they have proven their old belief wrong and form a new conviction, they should not compromise their stand. To do what one believes is wrong damages the conscience, and for that person it is sin (Greek: "hamartia", meaning to "miss the mark").

Romans: Chapter 15

15:1 So we who are strong have a duty to bear [GSP: "put up with"] the weaknesses of those who are not strong, rather than please ourselves. (JNT)

Strength = Duty

Paul places himself in the category of those who have more strength. It is the spiritually mature who should take the initiative and patiently work with the weaker members, helping them to grow out of their weaknesses.

15:2 Each of us should please [PHL: "consider the good of"] his neighbor and act for his good, thus building him up. (JNT)

Paul made this his practice. He always tried to put himself in the shoes of those he sought to teach the truth.

1CO 9:19, 22 For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win the more...to the weak I became as weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.

He always put the other person first, revealing that he had genuine concern for them, rather than for some selfish motive.

1CO 10:33 just as I also please all men in all things, not seeking my own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved.

15:3 For even Amanuwal did not please Himself; but as it is written, "The reproaches of those who reproached You fell on Me."

Amanuwal's Duty

Paul now draws attention to the fact that Amanuwal set the example of surrendering His desires to the will of Yahuwah by quoting from PSA 69:9. If Amanuwal was willing to set aside His personal desires in order to help accomplish what Yahuwah wanted done, then we should be willing to do the same.

Yahuwah wants us to help in the accomplishment of His work of building His Family, the Assembly, which requires helping each member of the body reach its full potential.

15:4 For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope [JNT: “hold on to our hope”]. (NAS)

Instruction & Encouragement

This conclusion is attached directly to the messianic prophecy of PSA 69 to stress that literally everything written in the Kadosh Scriptures is relevant to the growth of a True follower.

2TI 3:16-17 All Scripture is given by inspiration of Yahuwah, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of Yahuwah may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

The experiences of those whose lives are recorded in the Kadosh Scriptures are preserved as examples for us to either emulate or avoid.

1CO 10:11 Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, on whom the ends of the ages have come.

The “encouragement of the Scriptures” refers to seeing the hand of Yahuwah in the lives and events recorded therein. If Yahuwah was so intimately involved with carnal people and nations, then there can be no question that He is even more intimately involved with us. This understanding strengthens resolve and creates the perseverance needed to hold fast to the promised hope of eternal life in the Kingdom of Yahuwah.

15:5-6 Now may the mighty one of patience and comfort [JNT: “may Yahuwah, the source of encouragement and patience”] **grant you to be like-minded toward one another** [JNT: “give you the same attitude among yourselves”], **according to** [GSP: “following the example of”] **Amanuwal Ha’Mashyach, that you may with one mind and one mouth** [JNT: “voice”] **glorify the mighty one and Father of our Sovereign Amanuwal Ha’Mashyach.**

Yahuwah of Patience

Yahuwah is extremely patient; Peter tells us His patience is so great that some question whether Yahuwah will ever bring the present age to a close.

2PE 3:9 Yahuwah is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

Be Patient & Glorify

As verse 4 showed, Yahuwah has provided encouragement through the instruction recorded in His word. As members of the body of Amanuwal we need to be patient with and encourage all the other members of the body.

15:7 Therefore receive [NAS: “accept”] **one another, just as Amanuwal also received us, to the glory of Yahuwah** [NIV: “in order to bring praise to Yahuwah”].

Receive Each Other

Paul now makes a transition from the topic he began in 14:1 by again emphasizing the need for all of them to accept each other regardless of their personal preferences. After all, Amanuwal has accepted us and allowed us to hold personal convictions which do not oppose the truth.

Amanuwal Received Us

Verses 8-12 amplify Amanuwal's acceptance of both the Yahuwdim and the Gentiles. His acceptance is based on mercy and centers on the fulfillment of promises for the Yahuwdim and prophecies for the Gentiles.

15:8 For I say that the Mashyach became a servant of the Yahuwdim people [NKJ: "the circumcision"] in order to show Yahuwah's truthfulness by making good His promises to the Patriarchs, (JNT)

Purpose for Amanuwal's Role

In this and the next verse, Paul reveals that Amanuwal became a servant of the Yahuwdim for two important reasons. First, to fulfill the promises to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob that, through a physical descendant of theirs, all nations of the earth would be blessed (GEN 12:3). This was thoroughly covered in Chapters 9-11.

15:9 and that the Gentiles might glorify Yahuwah for His mercy, as it is written: "For this reason I will confess to You [JNT: "acknowledge You"] among the Gentiles, and sing to Your name."

The second reason Amanuwal became a servant of the Yahuwdim people was to exhibit Yahuwah's mercy to the Gentiles. For although the good news was to go first to the Yahuwdim by virtue of Yahuwah's promises to the Patriarchs, it was to also go to the rest of the nations (1:16). As was covered in the closing verses of Chapter 2, Yahuwah did something for the Gentiles that they never expected to happen. They had no concept of Yahuwah, the mighty one of Israel, the one true Yahuwah. Being in such a state of ignorance, they could never have conceived of the mercy shown them by Yahuwah.

It Is Written

To substantiate this point of the Gentiles praising Yahuwah, Paul gives proof from all three of the divisions of the Kadosh Scriptures. The first is from both the Former Prophets (2SA 22:50) and the Writings (PSA 18:49) where Dawid is praising Yahuwah among the nations made subject to him upon Amanuwal's return.

15:10 And again he says: "Rejoice, O Gentiles, with His people!"

This quote is taken from the Law: DEU 32:43.

15:11 And again: "Praise Yahuwah, all you Gentiles! laud Him, all you peoples!"

This quote is from PSA 117:1, located in the fifth Book of the Psalms, which gives details of the world under the kingdom of Yahuwah.

15:12 And again, Isaiah says: "There shall be a root of Jesse; and He who shall rise to reign over the Gentiles, in Him the Gentiles shall hope."

This quote is taken from the Prophets (ISA 11:10), which is also pointing to the future rule of Amanuwal over the nations. When added to the previous three quotes, it is clear that the entirety of the Kadosh Scriptures attests to the extension of Yahuwah's mercy to all nations.

Concluding His Letter

Paul has now covered the primary teaching he wanted conveyed by this letter. The remainder of this chapter and the next cover personal information regarding his plans and specific greetings to those he knew in Rome.

15:13 Now may the mighty one of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing [JNT: “as you continue trusting”], that you may abound in hope by the power of the Kadosh Ruwach.

Yahuwah of Hope

After earlier referring to Yahuwah as the mighty one of patience and comfort, Paul now designates Yahuwah to be the mighty one of Hope. Because Yahuwah lives and cannot die, hope is alive. He is always there with the power to intervene for the living and the dead. Therefore there is never any reason to doubt whether or not Yahuwah can fulfill all that He has promised. Knowing the certainty of Yahuwah's promises results in: joy for what we are assured will come in the future and peace for the time now present. To attain the level of joy and peace which comes with faith requires yielding to the presence of Amanuwal's Ruwach in us, rather than yielding to the pressures of the world around us.

15:14 Now I myself am confident concerning you, my brethren, that you also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another.

Full & Able

Paul commended their display of faith in 1:8, and here speaks of their knowledge and possession of one of the fruits of the Ruwach (GAL 5:22). This fruit refers to doing things for the benefit of others. When in possession of knowledge, those with goodness should be prepared to help those who may be failing in their commitment to Amanuwal.

15:15-16 Nevertheless, brethren, I have written more boldly to you on some points, as reminding you [PHL: “to refresh your minds with truths that you already know”], because of the grace given to me by Yahuwah, that I might be a minister of Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach to the Gentiles, ministering the good news of Yahuwah, that the offering of the Gentiles might be acceptable, sanctified by the Kadosh Ruwach.

Boldly Written

Paul explains that his strong words were intended to jog their memories, since they apparently had let slip putting into practice what they already knew. It was his duty as a minister of Amanuwal to teach and exhort (2TI 4:2), and since he was designated as the apostle to the Gentiles, he had an obligation to the members at Rome to perform these functions for their sakes.

15:17 Therefore in Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach I have found reason for boasting in things pertaining to Yahuwah [NRS: “reason to boast of my work for Yahuwah”]. (NAS)

Reason for Boasting

Paul always cautioned Yahuwah's people not to boast about their accomplishments (3:27; 1CO 1:29). Here, the boasting involves what Amanuwal accomplished through Paul.

15:18-19 For I will not venture to speak of anything except what Amanuwal has accomplished through me to win obedience from the Gentiles, by word and deed, by the power of signs and wonders, by the power of the Ruwach of Yahuwah, so that from Jerusalem and as far around as Illyricum I have fully proclaimed the good news [NKJ: “fully preached the good news”] of Amanuwal. (NRS)

Proclaiming Amanuwal

The most emotionally moving aspect of Paul's life was the fruit he saw as the result of what Amanuwal did among the Gentiles he visited. In some cases, all that was needed to draw people were the words of truth and the fact that Paul lived what he preached. In other instances, Amanuwal exhibited His power through signs and wonders; the “power” of signs and wonders refers to the ability of supernatural interventions to substantiate the credibility of the individual who calls upon Yahuwah to perform them. Paul categorized signs and wonders among the things which identified an apostle.

2CO 12:12 Truly the signs of an apostle were accomplished among you with all perseverance, in signs and wonders and mighty deeds.

Whether by word and deed, or signs and wonders, the Gentiles would have never been converted if it were not for the power of the Kadosh Ruwach working with their minds.

Illyricum

Illyricum was the Roman province northwest of Macedonia. It was on the eastern coast of the Adriatic Sea, in the northern part of Greece, toward Europe (see Appendix D). After reaching Illyricum Paul felt he had completed his commission in the eastern Mediterranean, and now needed to push westward.

15:20 And so I have made it my aim to preach the good news, not where Amanuwal was named [JNT: “where the Mashyach was not yet known”], lest I should build on another man's foundation,

Building on Another's Foundation

Paul did not want to duplicate effort; he did not want to overlap the work being done by other apostles. He felt there was scriptural guidance regarding the work of an apostle, as he goes on to show.

15:21 but as it is written, "They who had no news of Him shall see, and they who have not heard shall understand." (NAS)

It Is Written

This quote is taken from ISA 52:15, which is in the midst of the most detailed prophecy of the sacrifice of the Mashyach for the sins of the world.

15:22 This is also why I have so often been prevented from visiting you. (JNT)

Previous Understanding

Paul said that the reason he had not yet visited Rome was due to the fact that there were Yahuwdim and Gentiles in Rome who had heard the good news and understood it. Rome was the hub of the greatest empire in the world at that time; this meant that vast amounts of commerce, slaves, and skilled freemen seeking financial opportunity gravitated to the city. Since the New Testament Assembly had been founded at least 25 years prior to the composition of this letter, it was inevitable that many True Followers would have found their way to Rome by this time. The first True Followers of Rome were

those who were visiting Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost when the New Testament Assembly began (ACT 2:5, 10).

As Chapter 16 reveals, there were a number of other True Followers who had been immersed in other areas and relocated in Rome.

15:23 But now no longer having a place in these parts [JNT: “since there is no longer a place in these regions that needs me”], **and having a great desire these many years to come to you,**

15:24 I hope to see you as I pass through on my way to Spain, and to have you help me travel there after I have enjoyed your company awhile. (JNT)

Fulfilling His Desire

Paul was convinced he had visited all the areas in Greece and Asia Minor where the good news had not been heard, so he now saw it possible that he could at last make a short stop in Rome as he pressed on to western areas of the empire where the good news had not been preached. Spain supplied the Roman Empire with many notable men during this period: orators, poets and philosophers, the most famous of which was Seneca.

15:25-26 But now I am going to Jerusalem to minister to the saints. For it pleased those from Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor among the saints who are in Jerusalem.

Ministering to the Saints

Paul was forced to delay his plans of going west until after delivering the special offering collected from the congregations in Greece to the poor Yahuwdim brethren in Jerusalem, whose financial woes seem to have extended over a considerable number of years. When Paul was in Jerusalem in AD 49, James, Peter, and John asked only one thing of him and Barnabas: to remember the poor in the Jerusalem congregation (GAL 2:10). It was now almost seven years later and some were still in a state of poverty. Paul mentioned this offering in each of his letters written to Corinth in early AD 55.

1CO 16:1 Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given orders to the Assemblies of Galatia, so you must do also:

Although the congregations of Galatia in central Asia Minor also contributed to this relief effort, Paul apparently designated others to collect and transport their offering to Jerusalem. He would personally oversee the offering from Greece.

2CO 9:1-5 Now concerning the ministering to the saints, it is superfluous for me to write to you; for I know your willingness, about which I boast of you to the Macedonians, that Achaia was ready a year ago; and your zeal has stirred up the majority. Yet I have sent the brethren, lest our boasting of you should be in vain in this respect, that, as I said, you may be ready; lest if some Macedonians come with me and find you unprepared, we (not to mention you!) should be ashamed of this confident boasting. Therefore I thought it necessary to exhort the brethren to go to you ahead of time, and prepare your bountiful gift beforehand, which you had previously promised, that it may be ready as a matter of generosity and not as a grudging obligation.

The reason for the poverty being experienced by the Yahuwdim True Followers, which necessitated this offering, is never mentioned. One possibility may have been a lengthy recovery period affecting all of Yahuwdah in the aftermath of a famine that had struck the eastern Mediterranean. The prophet Agabus prophesied there would be major crop failures throughout the Roman Empire, which happened during the reign of Claudius Caesar (ACT 11:28), who reigned from AD 41-54. Josephus tells of a severe famine striking Yahuwdah in the years AD 45-47 (Antiquities, XX.2.5). There was an offering made at that time.

ACT 11:29-30 Then the disciples, each according to his ability, determined to send relief to the brethren dwelling in Yahuwdah. This they also did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul.

However, the letter to the Romans was written in either late 55 or early 56 from Corinth, some eight to nine years after the conclusion of that famine. Therefore, either another famine struck the area, or some other problem required assistance from outside Yahuwdah. It is speculated that the religious leaders of Judaism created a climate of discrimination against the Yahuwdim who became True Followers, which hampered their ability to work or to sell their crops or products, resulting in poverty among many of them.

15:27 They were pleased to do it, but the fact is that they owe it to them. For if the Gentiles have shared with the Yahuwdim in spiritual matters, then the Gentiles clearly have a duty to help the Yahuwdim in material matters. (JNT)

Pleased but Owed

The motive of the members in Greece, as well as in other Gentile areas, was out of a sincere desire to help their brethren in distress. Paul points out that their willingness to share their wealth was also their obligation, based on what the Jerusalem congregation had done for them; the Yahuwdim True Followers in Jerusalem had shared the good news which opened the door for the Gentiles to be called.

15:28 Therefore, when I have performed this and have sealed to them [JNT: “made certain that they have received”] this fruit, I shall go by way of you to Spain.

Delivering the Offering

Paul considered the contributions of the Gentile True Followers to be solid evidence to the members in Jerusalem of the validity of the conversion of the Gentiles. He was ultimately successful in delivering the contribution of the Gentile congregations to the Yahuwdim True Followers (ACT 24:17), but was caught by hostile Yahuwdim, then rescued by Roman soldiers before the Yahuwdim could kill him (ACT 21:32-33).

15:29 But I know that when I come to you, I shall come in the fullness of the blessing of the good news of Amanuwal.

Paul's Arrival

Due to the problems he encountered in Jerusalem, Paul did not come to Rome in the manner he had anticipated; he came as a prisoner.

ACT 28:16, 30-31 Now when we came to Rome, the centurion delivered the prisoners to the captain of the guard; but Paul was permitted to dwell by himself with the soldier who guarded him...Then Paul dwelt two whole years in his own rented house, and received all who came to him, preaching the kingdom of Yahuwah and teaching the things which concern the Sovereign Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach with all confidence, no one forbidding him.

15:30 Now I beg you, brethren, through the Sovereign Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach, and through the love of the Ruwach, that you strive together with me in your prayers to Yahuwah for me [JNT: "join me in my struggle by praying to Yahuwah on my behalf"]

Request for Prayers

Paul understood the importance of having others praying for him. To know that others are with us in spirit provides peace and comfort in times of difficulty and severe trials.

15:31 that I may be delivered from those in Yahuwdah who do not believe, and that my service for Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints,

There were two specific items for which he desired their prayers:

1. that the contribution of the Gentile congregations would be graciously received, creating a positive bond between them and the Yahuwdim True Followers, and
2. that he be protected from the Yahuwdim who wanted to kill him. Paul earlier explained the character of the Yahuwdim who did not believe:

1TH 2:14-16 For you, brethren, became imitators of the Assemblies of Yahuwah which are in Yahuwdah in Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach. For you also suffered the same things from your own countrymen, just as they did from the Yahuwdim, who killed both the Sovereign Amanuwal and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they do not please Yahuwah and are contrary to all men, forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they may be saved, so as always to fill up the measure of their sins; but wrath has come upon them to the uttermost.

Who Do Not Believe

The unbelieving Yahuwdim constantly stirred up strife by making false accusations and spreading slanderous rumors, as Paul discovered when he reached Jerusalem.

ACT 21:17-21 And when we had come to Jerusalem, the brethren received us gladly. On the following day Paul went in with us to James, and all the elders were present. When he had greeted them, he told in detail those things which Yahuwah had done among the Gentiles through his ministry. And when they heard it, they glorified Yahuwah. And they said to him, "You see, brother, how many myriads of Yahuwdim there are who have believed, and they are all zealous for the law; but they have been informed about you that you teach all the Yahuwdim who are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children nor to walk according to the customs."

15:32 so that, if it is Yahuwah's will, I may come with a glad heart to see you and enjoy a visit with you. (GSP)

Yahuwah's Will

Paul was careful to qualify his desire to come to Rome in the context that he would definitely do so—if it was also Yahuwah's desire for him. He was always conscious of Yahuwah's place in his life, yet he did not always attach the condition of Yahuwah's will to every statement (1CO 16:5, 8).

15:33 Yahuwah who gives peace [NKJ: "Now the mighty one of peace"] **be with you all! Aman.** (GSP)

Yahuwah of Peace

It was due to the peace that comes from knowing Yahuwah is always overseeing the welfare of His children that made it possible for Paul to go to Jerusalem.

JOH 14:27 "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

Romans: Chapter 16

16:1 I commend [JNT: "am introducing"] to you Phoebe our sister, who is a servant [PHL: "deaconess"] of the Assembly in Cenchrea,

Phoebe

Phoebe was ordained to a position of physical service in the Cenchrean congregation, which the PHL translation identifies as a deaconess. The city of Cenchrea was a major port on the east coast of southern Greece located about seven miles southeast of Corinth (see Appendix B). Phoebe was apparently travelling west to Rome and met Paul in Corinth, which was the major port city in southern Greece for westbound travelers (see Appendix B). Paul entrusted his letter to her for delivery to the members in Rome.

16:2 that you may receive her in the Sovereign in a manner worthy of the saints, and assist her in whatever business she has need of you; for indeed she has been a helper of many and of myself also.

To "receive her in a manner worthy of the saints" meant to show her True follower hospitality (12:13). It is likely that the help she would need from them involved making certain that all True Followers throughout the city of Rome were made aware of the content of Paul's letter.

Mentioning Individuals

Paul now begins a long list of personal greetings to all the True Followers he knew who were in Rome at that time: six women and eighteen men. Since he had never been to Rome, he had obviously met them in other places at earlier times. His purpose in mentioning so many by name may have been to validate his claim that the Mashyach was already known in Rome (verses 20-21), or possibly to point out individuals who personally knew him who could assure those who did not of his dedication to Yahuwah and to them, especially in light of some of the strong corrective statements he made earlier.

16:3 Greet Priscilla and Aquila, my fellow workers in Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach,

Priscilla & Aquila

Paul first met them in Corinth where they worked as tentmakers.

ACT 18:1-2 After these things Paul departed from Athens and went to Corinth. And he found a certain Yahuwdite named Aquila, born in Pontus [north of Galatia, in Asia Minor], who had recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla (because Claudius had commanded all the Yahuwdim to depart from Rome); and he came to them.

The edict of Claudius Caesar which expelled all Yahuwdim from Rome was issued in late AD 49. It lasted until the death of Claudius in AD 54, after which Nero came to the helm of the Empire and allowed the Yahuwdim to return. However, during their absence from Rome, they assisted Paul in his ministry:

both in Corinth, then in Ephesus (ACT 18:18-19). Prior to Paul's martyrdom, they once again left Rome and relocated in Ephesus (2TI 4:19).

16:4 who risked their own necks for my [JNT: "to save my"] life, to whom not only I give thanks, but also all the Assemblies of the Gentiles.

The only event recorded which could possibly involve preventing Paul's death was during the uprising of the worshipers of Diana in Ephesus.

ACT 19:30-31 And when Paul wanted to go in to the people, the disciples would not allow him. Then some of the officials of Asia, who were his friends, sent to him pleading that he would not venture into the theater.

16:5 Likewise greet the Assembly that is in their house....

They also provided a meeting place for a congregation while living in Ephesus.

1CO 16:19 The Assemblies of Asia greet you. Aquila and Priscilla greet you heartily in the Sovereign, with the Assembly that is in their house.

16:5 ...Greet my beloved Epaenetus, who is the firstfruits of Achaia to Amanuwal.

Epaenetus

He was the first immersed member from southern Greece, and must have been part of the family of Stephanus, since his family was designated as the firstfruits of Achaia (1CO 16:15).

16:6 Greet Mary, who labored much for us.

Mary

Since her name is Semitic and not Latin, it is most probable that she was Yahuwdim. There is no indication of when or where she served Paul.

16:7 Greetings to Andronicus and Junia, relatives [PHL: "fellow countrymen"] of mine who were in prison with me.... (JNT)

Andronicus & Junia

Andronicus is a Latin name; Junia is Greek. Yet, Paul claims they are of Israelite extraction. The timing of their conversion—before Paul and therefore prior to Peter's vision, which opened the way for the good news to go to the Gentiles—does substantiate their Yahuwdim roots. It has been the practice of many of the Yahuwdim to take names from the peoples they settle among, and must have been the case with these two. Paul does not state at which of his imprisonments these two were with him; he was jailed many times (2CO 11:23).

16:7 ...They are well known among the emissaries [NKJ: "apostles"]; also they came to trust in the Mashyach before I did. (JNT)

Some have interpreted this statement as meaning the apostles were all acquainted with Andronicus and Junia; however, if this was the point Paul wanted to make he would have used a different syntax in the Greek. The term "well known among the apostles" refers to the reputation they developed in the capacity of an apostle.

Recent debate has centered around the individual named "Junia" in this verse. The Greek is "Iounian" and not clearly identified as either masculine or feminine (the word Junias is the masculine; Junia is the feminine form). A few have claimed that Junia refers to a woman apostle.

The term "apostles" generally refers to those ordained to authoritative positions in the Assembly, but can also have the meaning of "messengers". This must be the case here because if these two individuals were in authority, why was Paul even addressing the Assembly under their care in Rome? or, why did Paul wait to address them until after greeting five other non-apostles, plus a group of unknown numbers meeting in the house of Aquila and Priscilla?

When he states that they were "well known among the apostles", why is it that there is no other mention of them anywhere else in the New Testament, unless the reference made about them only involves the role of messengers of the Assembly, and not men sent by Yahuwah with authority?

16:8-10 Greet Amplias, my beloved [JNT: "dear friend"] in the Sovereign. Greet Urbanus, our fellow worker in Amanuwal, and Stachys, my beloved. Greet Apelles, approved in Amanuwal [JNT: "whose trust in the Mashyach has been tested and approved"]. Greet those who are of the household of Aristobulus.

Aristobulus

It is likely that this Aristobulus was the grandson of Herod the Great, whose residence was in Rome. His household would consist primarily of his slaves.

16:11 Greet Herodion, my kinsman [PHL: "fellow-countryman"]. Greet those who are of the household of Narcissus who are in the Sovereign.

Herodion & Narcissus

Herodion is designated a Yahuwdim Messianic. This Narcissus was probably the man who was one of Claudius Caesar's closest advisers: his minister of letters. His household would be composed primarily of slaves.

16:12 Greet Tryphena and Tryphosa, who have labored in the Sovereign. Greet the beloved Persis, who labored much in the Sovereign.

Tryphena, Tryphosa & Persis

These three were women; the first two were probably sisters. It is very clear from the references that Paul makes about the women in this series of greetings that he did not consider women inferior to men. His statements prohibiting them from assuming the role of teachers over the congregations of the Assembly involved Yahuwah's will, not an insinuation that women were of lesser value (1CO 14:34; 1TI 2:11-12).

16:13 Greet Rufus, chosen by the Sovereign, and his mother, who has been a mother to me too. (JNT)

Rufus

This was probably the same Rufus whose father, Simon the Cyrenian, was compelled to carry the crucifixion stake of Amanuwal (MAR 15:21). Since all the saints are "chosen", the designation he is given must encompass his selection for a special task or position.

16:14-15 Greet Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermas, Patrobas, Hermes, and the brethren who are with them. Greet Philologus and Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints who are with them.

Groupings

These two groups, in addition to the group meeting in the house of Aquila and Priscilla, bring the total to three separate assemblies of the True Followers in Rome. Since the city was an extremely large metropolis, without public transportation, it would have been very difficult to convene as one congregation on a weekly basis.

16:16 Greet one another with a kadosh kiss. The Assemblies of Amanuwal greet you.

Kadosh Kiss

To greet a fellow True follower with a kadosh kiss simply means to show an affectionate greeting as a display of our concern for another member of the body of Amanuwal. The custom in the first century in the Mediterranean world was, and still is, to greet a friend by kissing each of his or her cheeks. The customary greeting in Japan is bowing and in the western world it is shaking hands—neither of which displays affection.

The Assemblies Greet You

He concludes his greetings and gives one final greeting from the congregations in the Corinth and Cenchrrea areas where he was then serving.

16:17 Now I urge you, brethren, note [JNT: “watch out for”] those who cause divisions and offenses [JNT: “put snares”], contrary to the doctrine which you learned, and avoid them.

Note & Avoid

The most precious thing we have is a relationship with the true Yahuwah. Therefore, we should want to do all in our power to protect it. This involves staying close to Yahuwah and being constantly alert for anything that might damage our link to Him—including false brethren. The two major ways these tares work against the unity of the Assembly is by using the tactic of "divide and conquer" and by undermining confidence in doctrinal truths.

We are warned to quickly withdraw ourselves from anyone who attempts to create animosity within the congregation, or who subtly or overtly begins questioning foundational teachings.

Those Causing Divisions & Offenses

Paul warns that unscrupulous, deceitful individuals who have no spiritual ties to Yahuwah, but only to Satan, are always looking for a way to gain influence over Yahuwah's people.

16:18 For those who are such do not serve our Sovereign Amanuwal Ha’Mashyach, but their own belly [GSP: “base passions”; PHL: “ambitions”], and by smooth words and flattering speech deceive the hearts of the simple [NAS: “unsuspecting”].

Paul had warned the congregation in Corinth of these servants of Satan several years prior to this letter.

2CO 11:3-4, 13-15 But I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Amanuwal. For if he who comes preaches another Amanuwal whom we have not preached, or if you receive a different spirit

which you have not received, or a different good news which you have not accepted, you may well put up with it [KJV margin: "me"]...For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Amanuwal. And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works.

Peter later warned of false teachers who would come among the Assembly for the purpose of luring Yahuwah's people away from the truth to satisfy their selfish desires.

2PE 2:1-3 But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Sovereign who bought them, and bring on themselves swift destruction. And many will follow their destructive ways, because of whom the way of truth will be blasphemed. By covetousness they will exploit you with deceptive words...

16:19 For everyone has heard about your obedience; therefore I rejoice over you. However, I want you to be wise concerning good, but innocent concerning evil. (JNT)

Hearing of Their Obedience

Paul draws attention to their record of obeying what they are taught, with the intention that they will do the same with what he has instructed them in this letter, especially the need to avoid those who cause division and offenses.

Be Wise

He stresses the way to prepare ourselves for this inevitability is to stay focused on the truth contained in Yahuwah's word, and stay alert to the pulls of human nature so that we recognize enticements to sin and avoid them.

16:20 And the mighty one of peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly....

Yahuwah of Peace

Yahuwah is the author of peace, not confusion (1CO 14:33). The one responsible for confusion in the world and for causing division in the Assembly is Satan. By this statement, Paul concludes the point he began in verse 17.

Shortly

He expected Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach to return shortly. At the time Amanuwal does return, Satan will be crushed under His feet: the dominion of the earth will be taken back from him, and his power will be cut off for a thousand years, preventing him from influencing the world.

16:20 ...The grace of our Sovereign Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach be with you. Aman.

Paul's Closing

This was the original closing of the letter; this was his standard closing in every letter to congregations which he personally wrote.

2TH 3:17-18 The salutation of Paul with my own hand, which is a sign in every epistle; so I write. The grace of our Sovereign Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach be with you all. Aman.

Paul did not write his letters; he dictated them and someone else, trained as a scribe, actually wrote them.

16:21 Timothy, my fellow worker, and Lucius, Jason, and Sosipater, my kinsmen [PHL: “fellow-countrymen”], **greet you.** Timothy, Lucius, Jason & Sosipater

All of these were with him in Corinth.

16:22 I, Tertius, who wrote this epistle, greet you in the Sovereign.

Tertius

Tertius was the scribe used to record Paul's dictation.

16:23 Gaius, my host and the host of the whole Assembly, greets you. Erastus, the treasurer of the city, greets you, and Quartus, a brother.

Gaius

Gaius was the member in Corinth who provided a place for the congregation to meet. He and Crispus were the only two members in Corinth mentioned by name who Paul personally immersed (1CO 1:14).

16:24 The grace of our Sovereign Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach be with you all. Aman.

Second Closing

Apparently after Paul concluded the letter (verse 20), the men mentioned in verses 21-23 desired to send greetings, therefore Paul added a more lengthy closing with this and the next three verses.

16:25 Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my good news and the preaching of Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach—according to the revelation of the mystery which was kept secret since the world began [NRS: “for long ages”; NLT: “from the beginning of time”].

To Him Who Establishes

Yahuwah is the One who convicts the mind once an individual hears the truth expounded from His word. Paul alludes to the point he made in 10:14-17.

Revelation of the Mystery

The mystery involves the procedure Yahuwah is using to create His Family.

16:26 but now has been made manifest, and by the prophetic Scriptures has been made known to all nations, according to the commandment of the everlasting [NAS: “eternal”] **Yahuwah, for obedience to the faith** [JNT: “to promote in them trust-grounded obedience”]—

Made Manifest

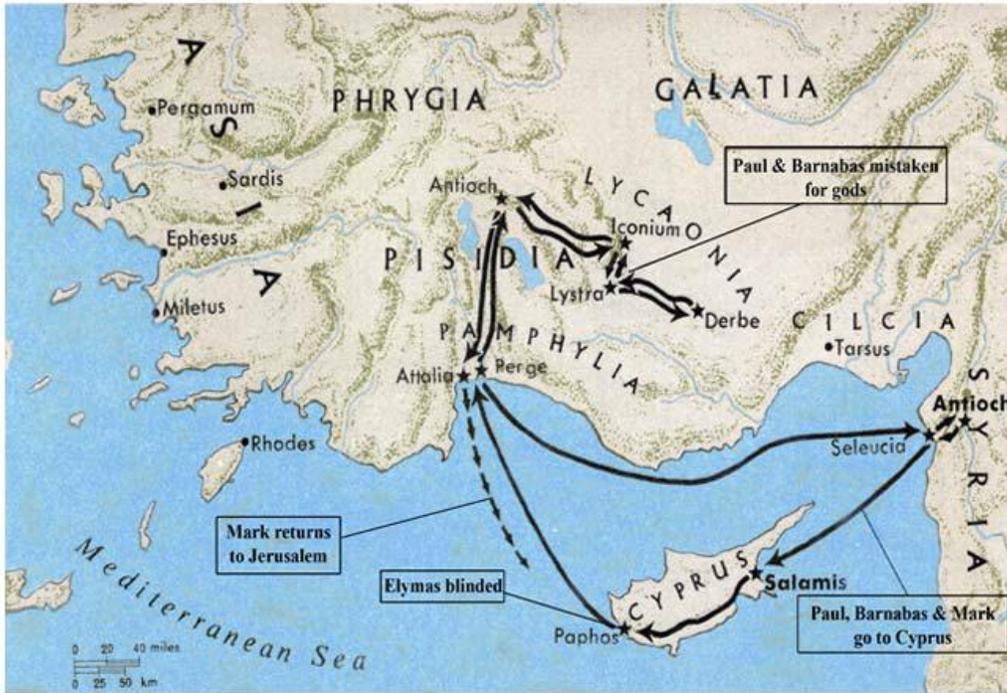
Paul has covered the whole scope of the procedure within this letter: man's rejection of Yahuwah, the whole world cut off by sin, the promise of the Mashyach descending from Abraham, the role of the Law of Yahuwah, the role of faith, how man is justified, the role of grace, the role of the Kadosh Ruwach, the inheritance of Yahuwah's children, the reason Israel was cut off, conversion and the remaking of the mind, etc.

**16:27 to Yahuwah, alone wise, be glory through Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach forever.
Aman.**

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Appendix A



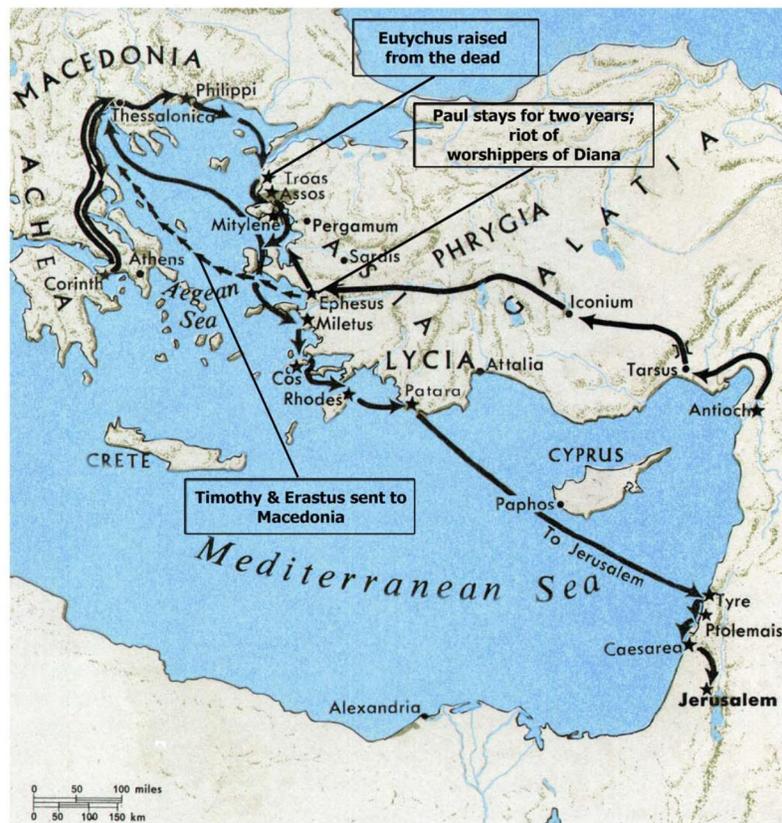
Paul's First Missionary Journey

Appendix B



Paul's Second Missionary Journey

Appendix C



Paul's Third Missionary Journey

Appendix D



Paul Taken To Rome