



---

# ROMANS 7–16

## WHO IS ISRAEL?

These chapters of Romans continue Paul’s persuasive discourse on Christ’s power to change lives (chapter 7), which allows disciples to become joint heirs (chapter 8) as the true vine of Israel (chapters 9–11), in a new life (chapter 12). For an introduction to the Epistles in general, and Paul’s Epistle to the Romans specifically, please see the first pages of last week’s commentary on “Come Follow Me” of Romans 1–6.

---

## ROMANS 7

---

### Christ’s Power to Change Lives

Chapter 7 discusses how Christ changes our sinful nature from the natural man. Paul’s argument is filled with twisters of both the tongue and mind that make it harder to understand. In the Book of Mormon, King Benjamin gives a similar, clearer argument, “the natural man is an enemy to God” (Mosiah 3:19). Much of Christianity has been plagued with gross misunderstandings of Paul’s discussion of the law and sin.<sup>1</sup> They interpret this chapter as teaching the depravity of man.<sup>2</sup> The JST is helpful in interpreting this chapter. Paul covers three main points:

1. 7:1–6—Leave the deadness of the old law.
2. 7:7–13—Relationship of sin to the law.
3. 7:14–25—The propensity of the flesh to sin.

## Leave the Deadness of the Old Law

### *Romans 7:1–6*

**Romans 7:1 “Do you not know, brothers and sisters—for I am speaking to those who know the law”** (NIV)

Paul is mindful about addressing the women in his audience, but the KJV and most other English translations came from a generation when the English language did not distinguish between gender. The majority of his Epistles include far more positive recognitions of women than negative.<sup>3</sup>

**Romans 7:2–4 “For example, by law a married woman is bound to her husband as long as he is alive”** (NIV)

Paul equates the Law of Moses to a married couple who are bound while they both live. “Just as a woman is not being unfaithful to a deceased husband by remarrying, neither is modern Israel unfaithful to the law of Moses by transferring allegiance to the Savior.”<sup>4</sup> The Book of Mormon similarly teaches, “The law hath become dead unto us, and we are made alive in Christ because of our faith” (2 Nephi 25:25).

**Romans 7:5 “. . . sins, which were not according to the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death”** (JST) The Prophet Joseph Smith turned the meaning of this verse completely around by adding “not.” This is the first of fourteen times in this chapter that the Prophet added a word to reverse the meaning. Many of the JST changes are just word preferences for clarity, or sometimes an addition of words that may have been accidentally missed. However, in this chapter, with so many negations, it appears that Paul’s text had been deliberately changed to confuse his message.

**Romans 7:6 “to serve in newness of the Spirit, and not in oldness of the letter”** (BLB) This sounds as if Paul were addressing an issue that he had had with new Jewish converts who felt all Christians should still live the Law of Moses (Judaizers). Paul explains that serving God by the letter of the Law of Moses led the Israelites to become so absorbed in the minutia that they missed its message. It is the blessing of the Holy Spirit that allows disciples to serve God where He needs them. It is the Spirit that can testify of truth and empower followers with greater faith.

## Relationship of Sin to the Law

### *Romans 7:7–13*

**Romans 7:7 “What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay . . .”** Lest we do not follow Paul’s entire argument, he repeats these rhetorical questions periodically to make sure his audience understands his message. He does not want to claim the Law is corrupt or sinful.

**Romans 7:8** “It was sin that used this command as a way of making me have all kinds of desires . . .” (CEV)  
This verse can be interpreted as saying that sin only exists if there is a law, but I disagree. With God, there is right and wrong, truth and error, and good and bad regardless of whether a law labels it so.

**Romans 7:10** “*when I believed not the commandment of Christ which came, which was ordained to life, I found it condemned me unto death*” (JST) There are so many JST changes in Romans 7:9–25, that it helps to compare the texts, so I will present them in parallel manner.

### KJV—ROMANS 7:9–25

9 For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died

10 And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death.

11 For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me.

12 Wherefore, the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.

13 Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful.

14 For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin.

15 For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I.

16 If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good.

17 Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.

18 For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not.

### JST—ROMANS 7:9–25

9 For *once* I was alive without *transgression of the law*, but when the commandment of Christ came, sin revived, and I died.

10 And *when I believed not* the commandment of *Christ which came*, which was ordained to life, I found *it condemned me* unto death.

11 For sin, taking occasion, *denied* the commandment, and deceived me; and by it *I was slain*.

12 *Nevertheless, I found* the law to be holy, and the commandment to be holy, and just, and good.

13 Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin by that which is good *working death in me*; that sin, by the commandment, might become exceeding sinful.

14 For we know that the *commandment* is spiritual; but *when I was under law*, I *was yet* carnal, sold under sin.

15 *But now I am spiritual*; for that which *I am commanded to do*, I do; *and that which I am commanded not to allow*, I allow not. For what *I know is not right, I would not do; for that which is sin*, I hate.

16 If then I do *not* that which I would not *allow*, I consent unto the law, that it is good; *and I am not condemned*.

17 Now then, it is no more I that do *sin*; but *I seek to subdue that sin which* dwelleth in me.

18 For I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing; for to will is present with me, but to perform that which is good I find not, *only in Christ*.

19 For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.

20 Now if I do that I would not. it is no more I that do *it*, but sin that dwelleth in me.

21 I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me.

22 For I delight in the law of God after the inward man:

23 But I see another law *in* my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.

24 O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?

25 I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord, so then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.

19 For the good that I would ***have done when under the law, I find not to be good; therefore***, I do it not: but the evil which I would not ***do under the law, I find to be good***; that, I do.

20 Now if I do that, ***through the assistance of Christ***, I would not ***do under the law, I am not under the law***; ***and*** it is no more that ***I seek to do wrong***, but ***to subdue*** sin that dwelleth in me.

21 I find then ***that under the*** law, that when I would do good, evil was present with me;

22 For I delight in the law of God after the inward man.

23 ***And now*** I see another law, ***even the commandment of Christ, and it is imprinted in my mind***. But my members are warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.

24 ***And if I subdue not the sin which is in me, but with the flesh serve the law of sin***; O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?

25 I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord then, ***that*** so with the mind I myself serve the law of God.

**Romans 7:22–25 “if I subdue not the sin which is in me, but with the flesh serve the law of sin; O wretched man that I am!”** Paul acknowledges the challenges of natural appetites, temptations, and opposition, but he insists that disciples have the tools to overcome and find freedom from our mortal weaknesses. Then-President of Brigham Young University, Jeffery R. Holland elaborated these verses:

Too often we are also in servitude to our own bodies. Paul said, I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity.” (Romans 7:22–23.) I don’t mean just the dramatic sins—the anger that leads to murder, or the passion that leads to sexual transgression, or the lust that leads to theft. There are more common kinds of bondage than these. The war in the body of someone who is a little overweight that makes him huff and puff by the time he gets to the top of the stairs, the war of the mattress on his back that he somehow cannot shake in the morning so he misses those precious and most inspirational hours of the day, the war of grooming and personal hygiene that could do much for us—all these are restrictive to our freedom if we don’t control them. But of course certain limitations are sometimes beyond our control. God has given disciples power to control the natural man through the power of His Spirit; “For in my inner being I delight in God’s law” (7:22, NIV). The Book of Mormon repeatedly teaches that by follow-

ing God's laws and Spirit, we can overcome our mortal propensity to sin, "Ye are free; ye are permitted to act for yourselves; for behold, God hath given unto you a knowledge and he hath made you free" (Helaman 14:30; 2 Nephi 2:13–14; 10:23; etc.). It is only the tempter and addictions to sin that reduce our power to act. Through the cleansing power of our Redeemer, implemented through the Spirit, we can become free from the bonds of sin and regain full agency.<sup>5</sup>

---

## ROMANS 8

---

### God's Love Extends to All People

In Romans chapter 8, Paul focuses on the Spirit's role (repeated twenty times from 8:1–27), to help saints become joint heirs with Christ. The Lord's love is the power, like a magnetic pull, that draws disciples to overcome wickedness in order to take full advantage of His at-one-ment.

### Holy Spirit

#### *Romans 8:1–4*

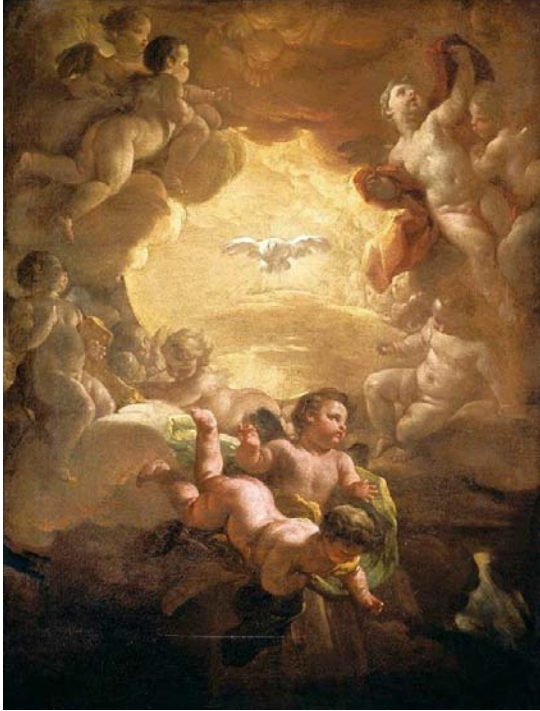
**Romans 8:1 "there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ"** (NIV) Paul speaks to all those who are "in Christ" or in other words, those who obey God, exercise faith, seek repentance, and are baptized. Once forgiven, they are freed from God's condemnation. If they sin again, without repenting, they offend the Spirit and return to condemnation. If this verse is taken out of Paul's context, it can be misunderstood to claim that there will be no punishment for believers. That was not Paul's intent. He refuted this misunderstanding three times in Romans 8:2–4 by referencing the law of Christ saving us, Christ's condemnation of sin in the flesh and the need to "walk not after the flesh."

**"Walk . . . after the Spirit"** Only the KJV includes this last sentence here. Other translations include it in Romans 8:4 (where KJV repeats it). Disciples who receive Christ's image in their countenances are "alive with Christ" (Ephesians 2:5). In contrast, those who live solely under the Law of Moses cannot be saved through their animal sacrifices. The old law continues as a moral and ethical guide but is not the *source* of salvation.

**Romans 8:2 "in Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life has set you free"** (BSB) This is the only time we find the phrase, "law of the Spirit" in scripture. This use of the "law" does not refer to the Mosaic Law (nor "law of God" in Romans 8:7).

**"For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free"** In the KJV, the same phrase links the Spirit with "life in Christ," as if they were interdependent in creating freedom. It evokes both the Spirit that gave *life* to Adam and his posterity in the Garden of Eden as well as the life that Christ gave through His resurrection. We

The Holy Spirit by Corrado Giaquinto, 1750s.  
Image via Wikimedia Commons.



find this topic taught in the Book of Mormon, with an even clearer reference to immortality: “the Holy Messiah, who layeth down his life according to the flesh, and taketh it again by the power of the Spirit, that he may bring to pass the resurrection” (2 Nephi 2:8).

**Romans 8:3** “God . . . condemned sin in the flesh by sending his own Son . . . as a sin offering” (CSB) This is an interesting way of wording Jesus’ mission “in the form of sinful flesh” or a mortal body (ABPV). This verse refers to the prophecy given in Eden that the woman’s seed would have power to “bruise” or “crush” Satan and his seed (Genesis 3:15, NIV, Moses 4:21;). Paul describes God and Jesus as two separate beings.

**Romans 8:4** “the righteous requirement of the law might be fully met in us” (NIV) With a Christological interpretation of this verse, we see the Christ as the One who fulfilled the law when He vicariously fulfilled all requirements to redeem fallen humanity from of the Fall in behalf of Christians who walk after the Spirit, not their selfish instincts. In the KJV, it is harder to see Jesus as the source of fulfillment, but the text points to Him. The clearest scripture on this point is from King Benjamin, “the natural man is an enemy to God, . . . unless he yields to the . . . Spirit . . .” (Mosiah 3:19).

## The Natural Man vs. The Man of The Spirit

### *Romans 8:5–13*

**Romans 8:5** “Those who live according to the flesh have their minds set on what the flesh desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires” (NIV) This verse invites a little self-examination. Paul reiterates the Lord’s warning; when one serves the devil, one can’t serve God (Matthew 6:24; Luke 16:9).

**Romans 8:6–7** “To be carnally minded is death” The Greek word for “flesh/carnal/*sarx*” is the base of operations or “human nature.” The phrase is literally, “the mind of the flesh.” The early Latin translation changed it to “body.” Because of that, some Christians interpret this passage as saying that Paul viewed the physical body as inherently evil (as did the Greeks at that time and the Gnostics), but taken in context (with verses 5–6), we see that Paul did not mean that. Paul’s use of the flesh elsewhere makes it clear that he does not see it as an inherently evil thing (also see Galatians 5:13; 6:8; 1 Corinthians 7:3–4; etc.). He actually addresses the law of the harvest again: we reap what we sow.

**Romans 8:8–9** “**they that are after the flesh . . .**” (JST). The JST replaces “in” the flesh to “after” suggesting that it is a choice to follow nature rather than hinting that the body is evil: “the realm of the flesh,” or “follow our desires” (CEV). Paul taught that saints should seek after the Spirit, thus serving God.

**Romans 8:10–11** “**If Christ be in you, though the body shall die because of sin, yet the Spirit is life . . .**” (JST). No matter what happens to us physically, if disciples have the Spirit guiding them, sin and physical challenges can become opportunities to draw closer to God. Those alive with a testimony of the Savior receive the Spirit that creates a quickening of hope in this life and the next. The problem Paul addresses here is the need to curb the “natural man,” by applying self-control to our natural appetites so that the body can work at its best within the guidelines of the Lord. Paul is not denouncing the body. When our spirit and body work in harmony, we can nourish and benefit from both.

**Romans 8:12** “**brothers and sisters, we have an obligation—but it is not to the flesh, to live according to [the Spirit]**” (NIV) I appreciate the translation reminders that in the Apostolic Church, both men and women learned and served to build the Kingdom of Heaven. This was unique in that era where most Jewish religious practices for women were not in the public setting, but in their homes. This changed in Christianity.<sup>6</sup> The KJV metaphor of “debtors” comes from the business world, where we are debtors to our Redeemer. This debt should lead us to live righteously.

**Romans 8:13** “**mortify the deeds of the body**” Literally, Paul asked his readers to “render extinct,” or destroy all evil and damaging (spiritually, socially, and physically) habits in our lives. Giving up sin is a constant battle. As President Russel M. Nelson taught, “Nothing is more liberating, more ennobling, or more crucial to our individual progression than is a regular, daily focus on repentance. Repentance is not an event; it is a process.”<sup>7</sup>

The prophet Joseph Smith felt that adoption was an important concept for the gentiles to become Israelite.<sup>8</sup> When asked, “How do we become of the house of Israel, by adoption or by direct lineage?” Joseph answered,

Every person who embraces the gospel becomes of the house of Israel. In other words, they become members of the chosen lineage, or Abraham’s children through Isaac and Jacob unto whom the promises were made. The great majority of those who become members of the Church are literal descendants of Abraham through Ephraim, son of Joseph. Those who are not literal descendants of Abraham and Israel must become such, and when they are baptized and confirmed they are grafted into the tree and are entitled to all the rights and privileges as heirs.<sup>9</sup>

## Regenerative Powers of The Spirit

### *Romans 8:14-17*

**Romans 8:14** “those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God” The Spirit has the transforming power through the cleansing *baptism by fire* to bridle our natural selfish instincts and purge sin in order to create daughters and sons of God. This can be felt as a tangible burning, or by receiving the fruits of the Spirit, including hope and peace.

**Romans 8:15-16** “you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but . . . the Spirit of adoption” (ESV) When Christ adopts His disciples as “children of Christ,” they are spiritually begotten and can pray, “Abba! Father.” (Paul includes the Aramaic and Greek words together, just Jesus did in Mark 14:36.) The early members of Christianity labored to enjoy the companionship of the Holy Spirit. In so doing, they began the processes of spiritual rebirth. Children of Christ become members of a new family. They take on a new family name and are expected to live by the family rules and regulations. Perhaps the most beautiful part of the Lord’s adoption is the Spirit’s comforting witness of love and a feeling of belonging to God.

**Romans 8:17** “Then we are . . . heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ” (NIV). Paul builds his argument toward this capstone to his thesis, starting with faith (Ch. 3-6), its relation to works (Ch. 6), overcoming sin (Ch. 7-8a), and all building up to God’s reward of exaltation (Ch. 8b). Christ offers all faithful disciples the opportunity to become heirs with Him, to inherit the family treasure: Eternal Life.

Chronologically, Paul had already taught the saints in Corinth about the three degrees of glory in 1 Corinthians 15:40-42 (a year or two before this letter was written). In 1 Peter 3:7 and Ephesians 3:6, women are among the joint-heirs. In the Epistle to the Hebrews, there is a similar idea expressed with other words (Hebrews 2:11-13; Galatians 4:7).

In 1832, the prophet Joseph Smith received a revelation that acted as a prelude to this doctrine in D&C 84:37-39, “He that receiveth me receiveth my Father; And he that receiveth my Father receiveth my Father’s kingdom; therefore all that my Father hath shall be given unto him. And this is according to the oath and covenant which belongeth to the priesthood” (also D&C 76:58).

In April 1844, at General Conference, one of Joseph’s sermons doubled as King Follett’s funeral address. His impromptu sermon pulled many previous revelations and teachings that he had been teaching over the past decade. He addressed becoming joint-heirs with God by inheriting exaltation.

God himself was once as we are now, and is an exalted man, and sits enthroned in yonder heavens! That is the great secret. If the veil were rent today, and the great God who holds this world in its orbit, and who



upholds all worlds and all things by his power, was to make himself visible,—I say, if you were to see him today, you would see him like a man in form—like yourselves in all the person, image, and very form as a man; for Adam was created in the very fashion, image and likeness of God, and received instruction from, and walked, talked and conversed with him, as one man talks and communes with another. . . It is the first principle of the Gospel to know for a certainty the Character of God, and to know that we may converse with him as one man converses with another, and that he was once a man like us; yea, that God himself, the Father of us all, dwelt on an earth, the same as Jesus Christ himself did.<sup>10</sup>

The Lord had revealed earlier that His glory and works would always be greater, He will always be our God, but those who become joint-heirs, can dwell with Him, and progress as He does (Moses 1:39). Most Christians share the hope of living with Him again. Rodney Turner explained:

While this may seem incredible to the rational mind that fallen mortals with all of their weaknesses could dare hope to attain the moral and spiritual stature of the very Son of God, yet this is precisely what must occur if the saints are to become “joint-heirs with Christ” to the riches of eternity. Hence the indispensable need for divine grace as primarily manifest in the atonement, the resurrection, and the sanctifying gift of the Holy Ghost. (Alma 5:54; 3 Nephi 27:20.)<sup>11</sup>

## All Creation Anticipates Future Redemption and Glory

### *Romans 8:18–27*

**Romans 8:18 “our present sufferings are not comparable to the glory that will be revealed in us”** (BSB) Paul again returns to suffering (Romans 5:3 “. . . tribulation worketh patience”). The sufferings of our probationary state can teach reliance on the Lord, humility, and empathy (Heb 2:10). The Lord revealed the same encouragement to our dispensation, “For after much tribulation come the blessings. Wherefore the day cometh that ye shall be crowned with much glory; the hour is not yet, but is nigh at hand” (D&C 58:4; and also see Ether 12:6). It requires great faith and trust to look beyond our present sufferings in order to hope for a better life hereafter.

**Romans 8:20 “the creation was subjected to frustration”** (NIV) The nineteen times “creation” is used in the New Testament the word refers to God’s creations. Paul knew from many first-hand experiences that mortality is subject to “tribulation” (JST), not necessarily vanity or futility (RSV). This deliverance may not occur until our next estate. When we accept that our probationary estate as a time of sorrows and work, we do not boast of an entitled attitude, “I deserve better.”

**Romans 8:21 “The creation looks forward to the day when it will join God’s children in glorious freedom from death and decay”** (NIV) In Paul’s timeline of the earth, there will be an end of decay. Does this mean that all of God’s creations will be set free of corruption? Revelation 20:1–3 describes a millennium when Satan will

be bound. In the Book of Mormon, we learn how that binding will occur: “because of the righteousness of his people, Satan has no power” (2 Nephi 22:26; also see D&C 43:30–31).

**Romans 8:22 “we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth”** (NASB) The imagery of childbirth, as if the earth were about to deliver something may be part of all the natural disasters prophecies in the last days. The prophet Joseph revealed that the earth has a spirit as well, which reacts to gross sin (as was seen at Jesus’ death, 3 Nephi 8:5, 19; Matthew 27:45). We also understand that animals have spirits (D&C 77:2–4).

**Romans 8:23 “the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption”** (ESV) The saints anxiously awaited the Spirit’s witness to transform their hearts from wickedness to righteousness. The “first-fruits of the Spirit” include “the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith” (Galatians 5:22; also see Ephesians 5:9). The “first-fruits” are given as witnesses. They are different from the Gifts of the Spirit, which are given to disciples to bless and serve others. The later fruits include the Second Comforter’s promise of exaltation.

Romans 8:24 “we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope. . . why doth he yet hope for?” The Book of Mormon refers to hope in a similar definition, but adds faith and knowledge: “Faith is not to have a perfect knowledge of things; therefore if ye have faith ye hope for things which are not seen, which are true.” This pattern of finding dozens of biblical topics elaborated in greater detail is one of the geniuses of the text. We also find an answer to Paul’s hypothetical question in Mormon’s sermon: “What is it that ye shall hope for? Behold I say unto you that ye shall have hope through the atonement of Christ and the power of his resurrection, to be raised unto life eternal.”

## God Calls Us to Share His Glory

### *Romans 8:26–30*

**Romans 8:25–27 “then with patience we do wait for [the Spirit]”** (JST) The Spirit’s witness of truth—the cleansing and sealing power— has the means to connect and even bind mortals to Christ. The Spirit’s intercession helps humans overcome our weaknesses. The Spirit’s cleansing and sanctification implement the Savior’s atonement to the repentant. When we pray with the Spirit, we can be guided by the Spirit to know what to pray for. Seeking and asking the Spirit allows disciples to learn the language of the Lord and find answers. It is a symbiotic experience.

**Romans 8:28 “all things work together for good to them that love God”** This glorious promise is not always seen in the short term, but disciples who patiently trust with an eye of faith can agree with Paul. God and His angels work on behalf of the disciples. The Lord told the prophet Joseph Smith a similar principle in Liberty

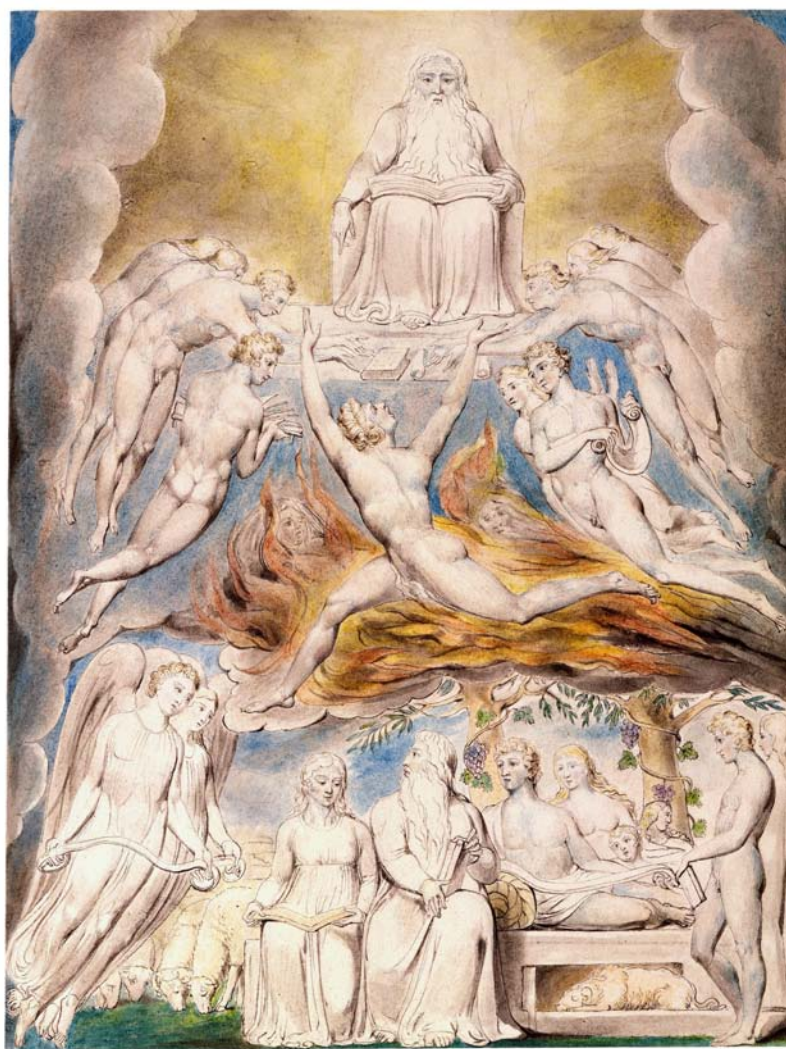
Jail, “all these things shall give thee experience and be for thy good.” Looking at life’s experiences as learning opportunities allows one to see God’s hand in one’s life. This works if we love God and strive to do His will. The Jerusalem Bible reads, “We know that by turning everything to their good, God co-operates with all those who love him.”

**Romans 8:29 “For those God foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed”** The English word, “predestinate” does not leave room for agency. Yet, the Greek word does. Rather, it means: “to define before or a boundary given before; to determine [our potential destiny] beforehand.” Other English translations use “his chosen ones” (CEV), or “He chose specially long ago” (JB). This Greek word appears five other times in the NT—but it is not necessarily translated as predestination in the KJV, while it is in other translations (1 Corinthians 2:7; Acts 4:28). It helps to remember the KJV translators were Reformed Protestants who came from a culture touched by Calvin’s emphasis on the predestination of the elect. The Swiss reformer, Calvin, misunderstood the doctrine and said,

By predestination we mean the eternal decree of God, by which he determined with himself whatever he wished to happen with regard to every man. All are not created on equal terms, but some are preordained to eternal life, others to eternal damnation. And accordingly as each has been created for one or other of these ends, we say that he has been predestined to life or to death.<sup>12</sup>

This doctrine took away the role of agency and dominated the early American religious beliefs in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. This misunderstanding was clarified by the Prophet Joseph Smith, “We can choose to be chosen by how we think and act.”<sup>13</sup> Likewise, the Book of Mormon teaches: “humble yourselves before God, and bring forth fruit meet for repentance, that ye may also enter into that rest” (Alma 13:13).

Satan Before the Throne of God, by William Blake. Image via Wikimedia Commons.



**Romans 8:30** “. . . *him whom he called, him he also sanctified*” (JST) The prophet Joseph felt inspired to change justified to sanctified. Justification refers to the working of the Spirit that applies the Savior’s atonement in our lives (2 Nephi 2:5–6), while sanctification is the process of becoming holy and pure, by the Savior’s atonement, purging all sin from the soul (Alma 13:12; Moroni 10:33). In the restored church, we define this doctrine very differently from most Christians. We all see the Savior as key, but for us it is not a battle between faith or works. Instead, on the day the Church was organized Joseph said, “We know that justification through the grace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is just and true” (D&C 20:30). And later when translating Genesis he wrote, “by the Spirit ye are justified, and by the blood ye are sanctified” (Moses 6:60). We believe both are needed.



Portrait of Jean Calvin by Titian. Image via Wikimedia Commons.

## A Hymn to God’s Love

### *Romans 8:31–39*

**Romans 8:31–32** “**If God be for us, who can prevail against us?**” (JST) Ultimate failure is out of the question for disciples of Jesus. No person can thwart God’s plan. Jesus suffered, and our Heavenly Parents allowed it, all because of Their love for us. They are doing everything in their power to help all their children return to them. Most of God’s children will be exalted, since over the history of the earth, the majority of those born have died before the age of accountability, and “are saved in the celestial kingdom of heaven” (D&C 137:10).

**Romans 8:33** “**God’s elect**” or “chosen” (NIV). For most Christians since Augustine, the elect of God included those who were baptized or who had covenanted with Him. King James’ translators and most Protestants from the 16C interpreted the elect as those who God predestinated to success.<sup>14</sup> The basic beliefs of Reformed Christian doctrine of election are summed up in TULIP.

4. Total depravity (from birth to adulthood, all are in sin until God elects them for regeneration)
5. Unconditional election (predestined for Eternal Life without any effort, only by God’s choice)
6. Limited atonement (the Savior’s atonement only covered the few whom God elected)
7. Irresistible Grace (humans have no ability or agency to resist His choice of election through grace)
8. Perseverance of the Saints (those whom God elects are the saints who will persevere eternally)

The Book of Mormon denounces all five of these points and claims that Christ’s atonement was for all earthlings—humans and animals.<sup>15</sup>

1. Against total depravity: “little children are whole, for they are not capable of committing sin . . . for awful is the wickedness to suppose that God saveth one child because of baptism, and the other must perish because he hath no baptism . . .” (Moroni 8:8, 12, 19, 22)
2. Against unconditional election: “They were a wicked and perverse people . . . [saying,] O God, for we are a chosen people unto thee, while others shall perish” (Alma 31:16–31)
3. Against a limited atonement: “it must needs be an infinite atonement” (2 Nephi 9:11, 26)
4. Against irresistible grace: “teach—repentance and baptism unto those who are accountable and capable of committing sin” (Moroni 8:10)
5. Against perseverance of the saints: “if ye do not watch yourselves, and your thoughts, and your words, and your deeds, and observe the commandments of God, and continue in the faith of what ye have heard concerning the coming of our Lord, even unto the end of your lives, ye must perish” (Mosiah 4:30; 3 Nephi 18:15, 18).

To further combat this prevailing false doctrine, Joseph Smith published an article on election: “This is the election that we believe in . . . in the words of the beloved Peter and Paul, we would exhort you to ‘work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure’ (Phil. 2:12, 13).”<sup>16</sup>

**Romans 8:34 “Christ . . . maketh intercession for us”** This is beautiful doctrine. With our Savior pleading our cause, Paul asks, “Who is there to condemn us?” No one can compare. This is better than the world’s best attorney defending your case, or the best surgeon healing you. All will work out eternally for those who receive the Savior’s atonement.

**Romans 8:35 “Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?”** Paul pictures God’s love as a song. This is the most encouraging message of hope and love—nothing can stop God’s love from blessing us, from separating us from Him. Yet during times of trial (“tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword”), it is hard to realize these are also gifts of love. Our limited perspective requires that we build faith to trust that God is in the heavens directing the world for our benefit, “conquerors through him that loved us” (Romans 8:37).

**Romans 8:36 “we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered”** (BSB) Paul quotes Psalm 44:22, with Jesus as the sheep being slaughtered. Lambs are one of the few animals that do not protest at the time of slaughter—they are submissive to the end. Jesus too went “. . . as a lamb to the slaughter. . .” (Isaiah 53:7).

**Romans 8:38–39 “I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers . . . will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord”** (NIV) This is so beautiful, it requires no explanation, just time to ponder until it sinks into our hearts.

---

# CHAPTER 9

---

## Israel Chosen Through Faith

In the next three chapters, Paul explores, “Who is Israel?”<sup>17</sup> He looks back to the Old Testament. So far in Romans, Paul cites Old Testament scripture in Romans 1:17; 2:24; 3:4, 10–18, 20; 4:3, 7–8, 17, 18, 22; 7:7; and 8:36. In this chapter, he doubles that number, by referring to over twelve more Old Testament witnesses from Abraham, Isaac, Esau, Moses, Hosea, Isaiah, and even makes references to Sodom and Gomorra. He opens new ideas on what it means to be the chosen people or elected by God.

The KJV translates “*ekloge/chosen*” as “election,” in part because of the Reformed or Calvinistic translators believed in predestined election to grace. The prophet Joseph Smith clarified Paul’s message:

The election of the promised seed still continues, and in the last day, they shall have the Priesthood restored unto them, and they shall be the ‘saviors on Mount Zion,’ the ministers of our God. . . . The whole of [Romans 9<sup>th</sup>] chapter had reference to the priesthood and house of Israel; and unconditional election of individuals to enter into Eternal Life was not taught by the Apostles. God did not elect or predestinate that all those who would be saved should be saved in Christ Jesus, and through obedience to the Gospel; but he passes over no man’s sins, but visits them with correction and if His children will not repent of their sins, He will discard them.<sup>18</sup>

For readers from modern covenant Israel, this chapter begs the questions, “*What are we chosen for, or elected to what?*”

## Paul’s Lament About His People

### *Romans 9:1–5*

**Romans 9:1–2 “I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart”** Ironically, just after Paul’s song of God’s love, the next words are filled with anguish over the plight of his kinsmen (“*suggenes*” means related by blood). He gives a sad reflection, similar to Moses’ prayer in behalf of his wicked people in Ex 32:32. Paul calls on the witnesses of Christ and the Holy Ghost to the truth of his sorrow in behalf of his brethren. Note the parallelism between the Savior and the Spirit.

**Romans 9:3 “(For once I could have wished that myself were accursed from Christ)”** (JST) This parenthetical in the JST, is a flashback as Paul recounts his days as a staunch Pharisee, rejecting Jesus as the Messiah, and persecuting the saints.

**Romans 9:4 “who are Israelites of whom are the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants . . . and the service of God”** (JST) Paul explains that the laws and blessings of the Gospel are available to all—they universally apply whenever and wherever one lives. Rather than using their political name, “Jews,” instead Paul uses their honorific title, “Israelites.” The present tense is significant too. The Jews still have the right to boast of their heritage with their God-given name.<sup>19</sup> The Lord made covenants with Abraham, Moses, and several other prophets. The “giving the law,” was the five books of Moses, or the *Torah* (means “instruction”).

**Romans 9:5 “the Messiah, who is God over all, forever praised! Amen”** (NIV) Paul refers to Christ God. This is accurate as He is the Creator of this earth, the God of the OT, and our spiritual Father as we are born again. Kelly Ogden explained these verses: “Paul was emphatic in his love for the Jewish people, but their way was not the way of salvation, even though Christ came through them. Because the Jews rejected Jesus as the Messiah, they forfeited great blessings. Still the word of God had not failed. The Gentiles accepted the gospel and were adopted into the house of Israel.”<sup>20</sup>

## God’s Promises to Israel Have Not Failed

### *Romans 9:6–18*

**Romans 9:6 “They are not all Israel , which are of Israel”** The birthright of Israel is not enough for Paul. He preaches that we must live up to their covenants. In the Christian setting, baptism is not enough either. Christians must receive the cleansing of the Spirit and live worthy of its direction and sanctification to become children of Christ. This verse has led some to question, “Does Israel’s failure to receive the Messiah mean God’s purposes have failed? Have not God’s promises to Israel ended in nothing as far as the Jews are concerned?” Paul answers, “No,” and then illustrates with God’s dealings with Israel in the past. God kept His promises, even though they did not.

**Romans 9:7–8 “In other words, it is not the natural children who are God’s children, but it is the children of the promise who are regarded as Abraham’s offspring”** (NIV) More than a birthright, one needs a heart like Abraham’s in order to be his child. It is those who obey God who are regarded as Abraham’s offspring. The Bible records eight sons born to Abraham, but Isaac is the promised one who carried the priesthood. (Hagar bore Ishmael, Sarah bore Isaac, and Keturah bore Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shuah.)

**Romans 9:9–10 “For this was how the promise was stated: “At the appointed time I will return, and Sarah will have a son”** (NIV) Sarah, Rebekah, Isaac, and Jacob are mentioned as examples of God’s foreknowledge, as well as those who kept their covenants with God.

**Romans 9:11–12 “before the twins were born or had done anything good or bad—in order that God’s purpose in election might stand”** (NIV) Paul describes the twins, Jacob and Esau, as innocent before their birth.



Jacob and Esau by Andrey Miranov, 2014. Image via Wikimedia Commons.

This speaks of a premortal existence and the lack of depravity at birth—both of which are unique doctrines of the restoration. “Man was also in the beginning with God. Intelligence, or the light of truth, was not created or made, neither indeed can be. All truth is independent in that sphere in which God has placed it, to act for itself, as all intelligence also; otherwise there is no existence” (D&C 93:29–30).

**Romans 9:12 “The older will serve the younger”** (BSB) In Jacob’s day, the birth-order meant the birthright (to the inheritance, priesthood, and more). God’s direction was shocking and sounded unfair. Nevertheless, it is in keeping with the Lord’s teachings to Abraham as to why he chose one over another, “... if there be two spirits,



and one shall be more intelligent than the other . . . [they both] have no beginning; they existed before, they shall have no end. . .” (Abraham 3:18).

**Romans 9:13–14 “Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated.” What then shall we say? Is God unjust? Certainly not!** (BSB) According to some translators, “hated” also means “displeased with” or “rejected.” Our view of God does not include hating his children. We believe that God’s omniscient design looks at the eternal needs, not just mortal status. All this falls next to Romans 8:37–38, reminding us that God loves all His children (also see Moses 1:39). God will address unfairness here when we return to heaven.

**Romans 9:15 “I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy”** Paul quoted Exodus 33:19. The translation and theological bent sound like Augustine and Calvin with their ideas of election in verses like this. This also developed the idea that man was helpless in controlling his destiny, but only God had control and man was helpless to wait. This is a misunderstanding of the truth as described in 2 Nephi 19:17; Alma 5:33; 24:42; D&C 88:40; 97:2.

**Romans 9:16 “It depends not on human will or exertion, but on God”** (ESV) God intervenes with mankind according to His wisdom, love, omniscience, as well as human behavior. But this verse does not mention that He honors our agency, so that our actions have an eternal impact.

**Romans 9:17 –18 “God has mercy on whom He wants to have mercy, and He hardens whom He wants to harden”** (BSB) God’s purposes are higher than our mortal envying and hierarchy. He describes who will be blessed with mercy in Alma 13:3, “this is the manner after which they were ordained—being called and prepared from the foundation of the world according to the foreknowledge of God, on account of their exceeding faith and good works; in the first place being left to choose good or evil; therefore they having chosen good, and exercising exceedingly great faith, are called with a holy calling, yea, with that holy calling which was prepared with, and according to, a preparatory redemption for such.”

Without the witness of the Book of Mormon assisting its interpretation, this verse is one of many that mixed up Calvin and other Reformers into thinking that God had complete control over the saved, and taught humanity to remain passive in their spiritual search. This Puritan doctrine preceded modern “Born Again” rationalism which believes a one-time spiritual experience is sufficient to assure individuals that they are elect.<sup>21</sup> Joseph published a sermon on this topic on June 1, 1841 in the Times and Seasons.

Paul gives Pharaoh credit for *hardening his own heart* in Greek, even though in English you are left wondering who is doing the hardening. Actually, the Old Testament usually gives God credit for doing everything. It was the literary and theological practice of honoring God in all things (Exodus 4:21; 7:3; 4:4,17; etc.).

In addition, if we interpret this as saying God controls all, then it is inconsistent with everything Paul has said in Romans (even in this chapter 9) about the importance of doing the works of Abraham so as to be called a child of Abraham, and about doing God's works, so as to be called the children of God.

## We Cannot Counsel God, But Should Heed His Guidance

### *Romans 9:19–23*

**Romans 9:19–21** “**Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?**” Paul answers that we cannot counsel God. We can trust God's will because He is omniscient, divine, good, noble, and knows what's best for us. The answer to this question could be Jacob 4:10 “. . . seek not to counsel the Lord, but to take counsel from his hand. For behold, ye yourselves know that he counseleth in wisdom, and in justice, and in great mercy, over all his works.” Paul again uses familiar OT imagery of the potter and clay from Jeremiah 18:6, Isaiah 29:16 and 45:9.

**Romans 9:22–23** “**What if God, intending to show His wrath and make His power known . . . prepared for destruction?**” (BSB) God's punishment will roll forward when the wicked are “ripe for destruction” (i.e. Alma 10:19; 37:28; 45:16; Helaman 13:14). We also have the promise that “God will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets” (Amos 3:7).

**Romans 9:23** “**vessels... afore prepared unto glory.**” We see this referring to our premortal life (as does Acts 17:26). But Calvinists' interpret this as evidence of God's predestination.

## God Does Not Act Arbitrarily

### *Romans 9:24–29*

God promised blessings in store for those of us adopted into the house of Israel as well. Verses 25–29 are actually a string of four different OT scriptures that show God's foreknowledge by giving the prophecies that testified of whom make up the “real” Israel.<sup>22</sup>

**Romans 9:25–29** “**I will call them my people, which were not my people**” To show that God does not act arbitrarily, Paul turns to the Old Testament prophets Hosea (Osee) and Isaiah (Esaias) to show how God always planned to have the Gentiles become part of his covenant people, too.

- Hosea 2:23, “And I will sow her unto me in the earth; and I will have mercy upon her that had not obtained mercy; and I will say to [them, which were] not my people, Thou [art] my people; and they shall say, [Thou art] my God.”
- Hosea 2:1, “Thy people Israel be as the sand of the sea, ye are not my people” (KJV). Paul quotes this from

the Septuagint (LXX), as were most verses in the NT, as it was the Bible used most often in that day.<sup>23</sup> This is in part why the text did not repeat the Hebrew text exactly as we have it in our Old Testament.

- Isaiah 10:22, “a remnant of them shall return,” and be saved. We know one remnant became the Book of Mormon peoples.
- Isaiah 1:9 “Except the Lord of Hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom . . . and Gomorrah.” In the New Testament, Paul translates “Lord of Hosts” from the Hebrew, *Sabaoth*, for hosts or armies, “a military epithet of God” (which is also in James 5:4; D&C 88:2; 87:7).<sup>24</sup> Interestingly, when it is used in D&C 87:7, it fits this military definition. Yet, in D&C 95:7, the prophet Joseph’s scribes recorded the same spelling with a modified definition that fits more with the title, “Lord of the Sabbath.” I presume that as Joseph dictated the revelation, it was heard wrong, or a spelled wrong: “The Lord of Sabaoth . . . by interpretation, the creator of the first day, the beginning and the end” (D&C 95:7).<sup>25</sup>

**Romans 9:28** “He will finish the work and cut it short in righteousness” This is our hope! Our prophet, Russell M. Nelson reported in General Conference that our “time is running out.”<sup>26</sup>

## Israel’s Stumbling is Derived From its Own Lack of Faith

### *Romans 9:30–33*

**Romans 9:30–31** Paul returns to his argument for the benefits of faith. He concludes that God has not been unfaithful to His promises, and continues to offer mercy and faith. At the same time, Paul praises the living gentiles for their faith to accept the gospel of Jesus Christ. The book of Romans leads all New Testament books for the number of times the words “grace” and “faith” are used harmoniously.

**Romans 9:32** “They sought it not by faith . . . for they stumbled at the stumbling stone”<sup>27</sup> That stone was Jesus, their Messiah (1 Peter 2:7–8). The Jewish nation and beyond knew of Jesus and His works and teachings, but without faith they did not see His Messiahship. This returns us to Paul’s early theme: “[Salvation] is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed” (Romans 4:16.). Perhaps they did not have the faith needed to receive Him, because they did not have meekness. Elder Maxwell wrote,

Meekness permits us to seek spiritual things by faith. Ancient Israel failed, said the Apostle Paul, for “they sought it not by faith.” Without real faith, individuals find one issue or another to stumble over. Unfortunately, it is difficult to show the proud things, which they “never had supposed,” especially religious things they do not want to know.

Our culture may fall into the same trap and not hear Paul or the other powerful New Testament testimonies of the Christ Jesus because the “arguments against the over-obedient people must not be misunderstood by the under-obedient secular cultures today.”<sup>28</sup> Jesus is the stone that the Jews stumbled over (1 Peter 2:7–8)

**Romans 9:33** “I lay in Sion a stumbling stone . . . whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed” Paul again quotes Jesus’ fulfillment of two other Old Testament Isaian prophecies. Without knowing the scriptures, we may miss the things being fulfilled. Paul did not fall into that trap. He cites parts of Isaiah 8:14 and 28:16, “And he shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel, for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. . . . Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner [stone], a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste.”

---

## ROMANS 10

---

### Who is Israel?

Chapter 10 examined two aspects of pursuing righteousness. Paul again quotes at least six Old Testament scriptures, suggesting that either his audience was filled with Jewish converts to “The Way” or Christianity, or else they had a problem with Judaizers arguing the Gentile-converts to live more of the Law of Moses.

### Israel’s Future Salvation Comes From Faith in Christ, Who Fulfilled The Law

#### *Romans 10:1–5*

**Romans 10:1** “My . . . prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved” Again Paul reaffirms his deep love for his fellow Israelites so as not to offend those he corrected. Like the parent of a wayward child, he still hopes they might recognize their Messiah as the source of their redemption. The people of Israel will be saved from death—but only faithful Israel will be saved in the “third heaven” (2 Corinthians 12:2).

**Romans 10:2** “they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge” Earlier in Romans 9:3, Paul recalled his own zeal gone awry, and now diagnoses it as one of the Jew’s stumbling blocks too. The Jews intimately knew the details of their Law, but they did not understand what it pointed to. They did not see where God wanted their zeal. The Prophet Joseph Smith warned the newly organized Relief Society of the same tendency in April 1842. Eliza R Snow recorded, “[He] commended them for their zeal, but said sometimes their zeal was not according to knowledge”<sup>29</sup> We, too, live in a world of zealous people without the knowledge of God’s will. We each need personal revelation to refine our good zeal towards God’s better and best ways to use our energies to build the kingdom of God on earth.

**Romans 10:3** “they being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto . . . God” Paul juxtaposes, “God’s righteousness” with the Jew’s “own righteousness.” Most often, “righteousness” used in a Jewish setting meant justice or justness.

Righteousness / dikaiosune,

Justification; also integrity, virtue, purity of life, correct-ness of thinking feeling, and acting . . . to attend a state approved of God.

**Romans 10:4** “Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth” They missed that it typified of their Messiah who was the author and finisher of their Law. Paul agrees with the Book of Mormon prophet Nephi’s perspective: the purpose of the Law was to prepare the way for their Messiah.

My soul delighteth in proving unto my people the truth of the coming of Christ; for, for this end hath the law of Moses been given; and all things which have been given of God from the beginning of the world, unto man, are the typifying of him” (2 Nephi 11:4; also Mosiah 3:15; 13:31; 16:4; etc.)

The Law was only temporary; like spiritual training wheels, its purpose was to teach them to find more spiritual balance to take them someplace else. The goal or “*end of the law*” meant: a thing is finished, termination, and in a relative sense, eternal. The last phrase, “for everyone who believes” (AB) is a key to understanding the rest of the chapter.

**Romans 10:5** “The one who does these things will find life in them” (AB) To illustrate Jesus as the finisher of the law (Romans 10:4), Paul cites Leviticus 18:5. It can be read as referring to Israelites, as well as to Jesus as “the man” or “the one” who doeth or completed the Law. I’ve chose this translation, rather than the KJV, because it points to the Savior as the source of life. Whether or not you see a Christological meaning in this text, with a human interpretation, we all can find meaning and purpose to life by living the commandments of the gospel.

## The New Way of Righteousness—Open to All with Faith

### *Romans 10:6–13*

Paul enters into a discussion on faith. In contrast to the Law of Moses, where statutes prescribed specific rules (like counting one’s Sabbath steps), Jesus’ high law required disciples to walk by *faith*. During His mission Jesus asked disciples to “follow Me,” without knowing where He lived nor the details of their journey (John 1:39). Paul teaches the same thing: faith opens the door for trusting God, humbly believing, with the Holy Spirit as the guide. Paul gives evidence for the need of faith, by quoting more Hebrew scriptures.

**Romans 10:6–9** “The righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise . . . the word is . . . in thy heart . . . confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus” Paul uses a Midrashic explanation of two verses in Deuteronomy and one in Psalms (Deuteronomy 9:4; 30:11–14; and Psalms 71:20). Rather than examining them microscopically, by looking at Paul’s larger argument from the first thought in verse six to verse nine, he teaches that faith growing in our heart can lead to the courage to confess Jesus. Faith leads disciples to follow Jesus wherever that is.

**Romans 10:10** “Such faith of the heart leads to uprightness; such profession of the lips to salvation” (AB) Repentance and confession must come from the heart. Some Christians who take this verse out of context, use it as evidence that confession alone is needed. Yet, that is not Paul’s message. This verse is part of his thesis that disciples need to develop faith to confess the Lord and follow His commandments (see Romans 6:18; 7:4, 10:16; 12:1–14:23; etc.).

**Romans 10:11** “For the scripture says, ‘No one who believes in Him shall be put to shame’” (AB) Paul cites Isaiah of 28:16, which prophesies of the Lord as a tried foundation stone, and ends with “he that believeth shall not make haste” (Is 28:18, KJV). Some who read this verse understand, “belief” as Abraham’s, which develops into a strong, sure knowledge. Others take a predestined interpretation, claiming that if one receives God’s gift of belief, then they cannot forget or change their position, because of the absolute “perseverance of the saints” (i.e. TULIP, see Romans 8:33). The Book of Mormon again gives us clarity on how to interpret this verse, in the Tree of Life vision. Lehi and Nephi saw how those who partially “believed,” were affected by the temptations of the world over time, and become ashamed and let go of the rod, or “the word of God,” thereby forfeiting their goal to partake of the fruit of the Tree of Life (1 Nephi 8 and 11). The inability to change one’s station speaks against our view of the atonement and repentance as well.

**Romans 10:12** “For there is no difference between the Jew and Greek: for the same Lord over all” In a society with severe class distinctions, this was shocking for both the Jews and Gentiles in Paul’s audience, especially in Rome, where “citizens” had great civil rights, wore togas, and received bread and circuses, in contrast to half the population who were either servants or slaves. Nephi’s concluding sermon includes a longer elaboration on this universality of God’s invitation to “partake of his goodness” (2 Nephi 26:33).

**“rich unto all that call upon him”** Without the worldly counterfeit view of material riches, God makes one rich by richly blessing those who call on Him. Those rich blessings are the enjoyment of His Spirit, His commandments, and covenants.

**Romans 10:13** “Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.” To save is the work of the Savior’s atonement.<sup>30</sup> Paul quotes a portion of Joel 2:32, which in the KJV translation reads: “whosoever shall

call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the Lord hath said, and in the remnant whom the Lord shall call.” Joel’s context speaks of the last days when the gifts of the Spirit will be poured out on believers and there will be mutual communication between the Lord and those who find deliverance on the temple mount in the holy city. Paul’s audience may have understood this temple context, but without that background we lose the significance of where and how the “deliverance” or “saving” comes. In this dispensation we learn that those who keep their covenants and call on the Lord in the temple will receive saving ordinances and find “deliverance.” It makes sense that Paul intends to evoke the temple as a place of deliverance if he chose to quote that portion of Joel.

Saved / sózó: heal, preserve, rescue (principally, “God rescuing believers from the penalty and power of sin.”)

You may ask, “what did Paul know about temple work on Mt. Zion? Did he think of the Mosaic rites of animal sacrifices, priestly washings and clothings?” By the time he wrote this Epistle, he had been a participant in the Aaronic Temple sacrifices regularly for his entire life (Acts 21:26). He also had been a Christian apostle for years. To answer, “how did Paul interpret Joel’s deliverance at the temple?” it helps to know that the Book of Hebrews speaks of the price and promise of the temple with Christians making Melechizedek covenants. Also, Joseph Smith taught “Paul . . . knew . . . all the ordinances, and blessings [that] were in the Church.”<sup>31</sup> We have archeological and written evidence that baptisms for the dead, washings, anointings, prayer circles, and clothing endowments were given in the apostolic church. The New Testament writings of Paul and Peter offer clear ties to modern temple vocabulary and practices (xx). With this as evidence, it is probable that Paul understood parts of the teachings of modern temples. This is probably why he chose this verse from Joel, which spoke of temples as places of saving, and ordinances.

## The Necessity of Preachers Called by God

*Romans 10:14–21*

**Romans 10:14–16** “How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?” Paul uses a step-by-step style of logic to describe that the need to seek or call on God must be preceded by belief, hearing, preaching, and authority from God to preach (apostle / *apostellósín*: one sent [from God], messenger, commissioned). Paul does not just ask for a preacher, he asks for either apostles or those who have been called of God to preach—as we see in our full time missionaries, teachers, and everyone whom God calls to share the gospel and do His work.

Paul culminates his list with the wonderful prophesy from Isaiah 52:7, “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!” But then, he contrasts this hopeful message with the sad observation, “Lord, who has believed our report?” (Isaiah 53:1).

**Romans 10:17** Like Paul in this verse, Joseph Smith also taught, “Faith comes by hearing the word of God, through the testimony of the servants of God; that testimony is always attended by that Spirit of prophecy and revelation.”<sup>32</sup>

**Romans 10:18–21** I like to read the NIV parallel formatting, to which I’ve added the four Old Testament references below.

*But I ask, Did they not hear? Of course they did:*

*“Their voice has gone out into all the earth,  
their words to the ends of the world.” (Psalm 19:4)*

*Again I ask, did Israel not understand? First, Moses says,*

*“I will make you envious by those who are not a nation;  
I will make you angry by a nation that has no understanding.” (Deuteronomy 32:12)*

*And Isaiah boldly says,*

*“I was found by those who did not seek me;  
I revealed myself to those who did not ask for me.” (Isaiah 65:1)*

*But concerning Israel he says,*

*“All day long I have held out my hands  
to a disobedient and obstinate people” (Isaiah 65:2)*

Paul shows that even though the Gentiles were not a single nation forged by God like Israel was, they still understand that the heavens testify of God’s glory. Israel itself is responsible for their rejection by God because of their disobedience.

---

## ROMANS 11

---

### The Remnant of Israel Chosen By Covenant

Paul continues to answer the question, “Who is Israel?” He answers with examples of Israelis by lineage, land, and covenant. He warns the Gentile converts that the Jews are still beloved of God. To illustrate the need for the two groups to work together, he gives an allegory of an olive tree with branches grafted in. Nearly one-third of the text (28%) comes from Old Testament citations.



## God Has Not Rejected His People—They Have Stumbled, But Not Fallen

*Romans 11:1-6*

**Romans 11:1 “Did God reject his people? By no means!”** (NIV) Paul spends the rest of the chapter elaborating on the answer to his question, “If the Jews rejected Jesus, how can they be saved?” This question opens the discussion of the “mystery” of God’s love (vs 25).

As we look at the Book of Mormon, we find many parallels between Romans 11 and Jacob 4 and 5 (especially the grafting of the olive tree imagery). For example, “The Jews were a stiffnecked people; and they despised the words of plainness, and killed the prophets . . . blindness came from looking beyond the mark . . . how is it possible that these, after having rejected the sure foundation, can ever build up it, that it may become the head of their corner?” (Jacob 4:14).

**Romans 11:2-5 “Do you not know what the scripture says in the passage about Elijah . . .?”** (NASB) As usual, Paul finds answers to his questions from the Old Testament prophets. The first example he offers is “*Elias/ Elijah*” who complained that all of Israel had denounced God, but the Lord who knows the heart of all, knew of seven-thousand who had not bowed to the foreign God, Baal (I Kings 19:10, 14, 18). This remnant would be saved.

**“a remnant according to God’s gracious choice”** (NASB) One of the most consistent parallels between Jacob 4 and Romans 11 is the idea that a “*remnant*” is chosen and saved by grace. Paul uses the word “election” as a term of God’s conditional selection. The KJV word choice “election” appears seven times in the New Testament, with four in Romans. It does not suggest a dictator’s nomination.

### **ELECTION/EKLOGE**

the act of picking out, choosing a thing or person.

**Romans 11:6 “If it by grace, then is it no more of works . . .”** Paul makes it clear that Jesus is the Savior. Yet, at the same time, in Romans he repeats over and over that righteousness is a condition of full salvation (even in this section, Romans 11:22). However, Paul emphasizes here that the grace of God—not the righteousness of those saved—brings salvation. Grace is particularly demonstrated in God’s ability to turn the fall of Israel into the salvation of the Gentiles and the grafting or adoption of the Gentiles into the house of Israel. Trouble comes when this verse is taken out of Paul’s context: how God can still keep His covenant with the Jews. Neither Paul nor the Lord ever denounced the need for obedience (Paul even lists the Ten Commandments in Romans 13). He wants to teach Christ’s miraculous gift of redemption and grace, outside of the Law of Moses, even for the Jews who rejected Him (also see James 2:17-18).

## The Irony of Israel's Temporary Stumbling

*Romans 11:7-15*

**Romans 11:7** “What Israel sought so earnestly it did not obtain, but the elect did, the others were hardened” (NIV) Even though Israel, generally speaking, did not recognize nor accept their Promised Messiah, He still saved them!

**Romans 11:8–10** “As it is written . . .” Paul corrects a potentially dangerous attitude of superiority among the Roman saints by quoting Deuteronomy 29:4, Isaiah 29:10; and Psalm 69:22 where Israel was described as “in stupor or sluggish/slumber.” It is fascinating to study these two accounts of the allegory of the olive tree to see their shared key words.

### JACOB 4

“Because they desired it God hath done it,  
that they may stumble”

“Killed the prophets” (4:14),

“blindness came by looking beyond the mark, they  
must needs fall” (4:14)

### ROMANS 11

“Have they stumbled that they should fall?” (11:11)

“they have killed the prophets and digged down  
the altars” (11:3)

“the rest were blinded...eyes that should not see ...  
let their eyes be darkened that they may not see ...  
and the consequence of their fall (11: 7–8, 10, 11)

We find these themes throughout the Old Testament, though nowhere but in these two texts—Jacob and Romans—do we find them together. Furthermore, both are followed by the allegory of the olive tree.

**Romans 11:11–12** “Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy” As He always does, God used the situation to open another doorway. His foreknowledge allowed Him to plan this in a way that would motivate the Jews to look anew for their Savior.

**Romans 11:13–15** “I am the apostle of the Gentiles . . . in the hope that I may show arouse my own people” The Lord often teaches us through ironic settings. During Jesus’ mission He battled repeated irony. God also molds us so that we are in a position to do exactly what we previously detested. We see this here in Paul, who was a strict Jewish “pharisee of the pharisees,” and yet a few decades later, God called him to welcome Gentiles into the fold.

## Allegory of the Olive Tree

### *Romans 11:11-24*

**Romans 11:16** “. . . if the root be holy, so are the branches” Paul leads into his allegory of the wild olive tree by establishing that the health of the branches come from the root. It is theoretically possible that Paul has access to Zenos’ record, or perhaps more probable, that a third text quoted (or even preceded Zenos).

There are several differences between Jacob’s recounting of Zenos’ Allegory of the Olive Tree in Jacob 5, and Paul’s imagery. For example,

1. Jacob has at least five trees, Paul has one.
2. Jacob emphasizes the fruit, while Paul the branches.
3. There is no “Lord of the vineyard” in Romans, but there is in Zenos’ account.

These differences suggest that Paul does not exactly quote Zenos’ allegory as Jacob did. Yet, the similarities are consistent enough between Jacob 5 and Romans 11 that we can safely assume that Paul probably references a similar secondary source. (Throughout the Old Testament, we find olive trees with symbolic interpretation in Judges 9:8-9; Hosea 14:16, Psalm 52:8; 80; Isaiah 17:6, 24:13; Jeremiah, etc.).

For Paul, the olive tree is Israel, and grafted branches represent different groups of people: Israelites and Gentiles. Whatever branch is grafted into the tree, it becomes holy because of the strength of the root. Paul probably means for the root to symbolize the covenant made with the fathers, or perhaps the Savior-Jehovah—He does not say.

### **Romans 11:17** “. . . some of the branches being broken off . . . a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them”

The Lord of the vineyard works to save the trees, by changing what they presently are to something better. Both Jacob and Romans use the image of the olive tree as a promise and a warning. Traditionally, the wild olive tree is the Gentiles.

**Romans 11:18-19** “Boast not against the branches . . . the branches were broken oft, that I might be grafted in” Paul uses the grafted branches to illustrate—as a warning to the Gentiles (again)—to not think themselves superior to the Jews, even though the Jews at large had not accepted the message of Christianity.

**Romans 11:20-22** “. . . they were broken off because of unbelief . . . If God did not spare the natural branches, he will not spare you either” (NIV) Again Paul warns the gentiles against “haughtiness” (KJV) or “do not become proud” (RSV), “conceited” (NASB), or “arrogant” (NIV). The Gentiles, as “adopted children of the covenant should have a profound sense of gratitude to Israel for opening the door of salvation.”<sup>33</sup> Gratefully, the Jews preserved the oracles of God. (3:1-2).



The Tree of Life by Hannah Butler. Submitted to the 2018 Book of Mormon Central Art Contest.

Hannah Butler

**Romans 11:23–24 “God is able to graft them in again”** Grafting becomes an agricultural image for adoption. Figuratively speaking, the gentiles became part of Israel (e.g. Ruth, the Moabitess, became the grandmother to King David). We believe that baptism also is an adoption into Israel through covenant making. The Gentile conversion was completely unexpected by the Jews. But as Paul and Jacob taught, the new branches do not change the nature and destiny of Israel. Rather Israel is still the chosen family and guardian of the Abrahamic covenant. Ironically, by grafting in the wild branches of Gentile converts, Israel became rejuvenated.<sup>34</sup> As James Faulconer said, “The olive tree shows, Israel can trust the Lord because only He has power to save his people, in spite of what might appear to us to be impossible odds. Our choice is to despair or to trust the Lord.”<sup>35</sup>

## The Final Reconciliation

### *Romans 11:25–36*

**Romans 11:25 “blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in”** The “fulness of the Gentiles” referred to that time and forward—when the Gentiles have the opportunity to accept the gospel. The Jews had that blessing before the meridian of time, and the Gentiles have first priority now, but later the Jews will have another chance. That is the “mystery” of how God’s love and gift of Salvation is extended even to the Gentiles. Yet, Paul again warned them against haughtiness in their new found status as adopted children of the covenant. He hopes the Gentiles will have a profound sense of gratitude for Israel as those who received and the prophecies of God.

**Romans 11:26–27** Paul quoted two sections of Isaiah 59:20, 21 and 27:9, filled with hope of the Lord’s cleansing.

*The Deliverer will come from Zion,  
he will banish ungodliness from Jacob  
and this will be my covenant with them  
when I take away their sins*

**Romans 11:29 “for God’s gifts and his call are irrevocable”** (NIV). The KJV “repentance” is actually just a negative participle, “without regret.” It means that God will honor His side of our covenants.

**Romans 11:30–32 “for God has not consigned all men to disobedience”** (RSV) These three verses communicate different messages depending on the translator’s understanding of God’s purpose. Some sound as if God intentionally made humanity disobedient so that he could show more mercy; “For God has imprisoned all in disobedience, so that He may have mercy on all” (HCSB). That would not fit the God we worship, nor the loving God that Paul just described (Moses 1:39; Romans 8:37–38). It is true that we become spiritually imprisoned by our sins, “in making all mankind prisoners to disobedience” (NEB). However, God did not make us wicked. It is our rejection of God that causes our imprisonment, not the other way around.

The Book of Mormon again provides a clearer understanding God’s role in disobedience and mercy.

- 2 Nephi 2:4 “And the way is prepared from the all of man, and salvation is free” (also 2:5–9)
- 2 Nephi 9:6 “The fall came by reason of transgression”
- Mosiah 4:6 “The atonement which has been prepared from the foundation of the world, that thereby salvation might come to him that should put his trust in the Lord.” (also 4:7–11)
- Alma 42:12 “Man had brought fallen state upon himself because of disobedience”

**Romans 11:33–36** This is a beautiful poetic conclusion that is filled with Old Testament scriptures. The NIV translation it reads:

Oh the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God!

How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out!

“Who has known the mind of the Lord? (Lev 24:12)

Or who has been his counselor?” (Isa 40:13)

“Who has ever given to God that God should repay him?”

For from him and through him and to him are all things. (Job 41:11)

To him be the glory forever! Amen.

---

## CHAPTER 12

---

### Living Sacrifices Our Conduct In Relation To God

Paul’s “greatest epistle on grace is also the greatest epistle on keeping God’s commandments.”<sup>36</sup> This is one of the ten chapters in Romans that deal with “the relationship of the Jewish law to the Christian gospel.”<sup>37</sup> More than any other Pauline letter, Romans includes rules for righteousness. Just between the next few chapters (chapters 12 to 15), Paul lists over fifty Christian commandments.

**Romans 12:1** “**brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy . . . offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship**” Paul pled with his audience to become clean for the Lord’s work. This can only be done through the atonement. Once cleansed we can better serve God. The idea of offering or presenting a sacrifice to God evokes the Old Testament Temple rites. We usually think of our Savior as the unblemished lamb on the slaughter, but Paul encouraged the saints to offer their lives—time, gifts, desires, generosity, thoughts—as a perfect unblemished sacrifice to the Lord.

*\*How can you make your life a living sacrifice to the Lord?*

Like the unblemished animals, our lives can be a clean offering, through repentance. As actions speak louder than words, the action Paul required spoke louder than the interpretation of his theology. Paul established a bridge between grace and keeping our covenants. “We establish the law” (Romans 3:31) became the bridge with the last phrase in Romans 21:1, “which is your reasonable service.” This evoked a Temple-sacrifice theme.

**Romans 12:2 “Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind”** (BSB)

How do we renew our minds? The Spirit has power to transform us from natural men and women into holy priests and priestesses to the Most High God. This idea was restated in Paul’s earlier advice to the Thessalonians, “Prove all things; hold fast that which is good” (1 Thessalonians 5:21). Many Christians often rephrase Paul’s words here into the oft quoted passage, “be in the world but not of the world.”

## Christin Conduct to Others

### *Romans 12:3-20*

**Romans 12:3 “Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought”** (BSB) Paul called for humility in Christian thought and conduct. Everyone had received a “measure of faith” from the Spirit, and he reminds them to respect one another and not look down on others (remember the Roman Empire had a segregated class system with one-third as slaves and servants). Galatians 6:3 and D&C 136:19 repeats the same council.

**Romans 12:4-5 “So in Christ we who are many are one body, and each member belongs to one another”**

(BSB) God loved variety in people and in His creations—all are different, and all are important. Our gifts are diverse while still conforming to God’s commands as we become “one body in Christ.” In 1 Corinthians 12:21 Paul also wrote about each person’s responsibility to serve to build the kingdom in “the body of Christ”

**Romans 12:6-7 “we have different gifts: If prophecy, use it according to the proportion of one’s faith, if service, use it in service; if teaching, in teaching”** This is a shorter version of the Gifts of the Spirit that Paul is known for in 1 Corinthians 12 (or D&C 46 and Moroni 10:8-19). These God given gifts are not for personal aggrandizement, but only to serve others and honor God (D&C 46:12). Paul encouraged the members in 1 Corinthians 14:12 to seek the gifts of the Spirit (also see D&C 46:8, “that ye may not be deceived seek ye earnestly the best gifts, always remembering for what they are given”),

**Romans 12:8 “he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence”** The translation choice of “*simplicity*” is confusing. I like other translations better, “liberality” (RSV), “generously” (NIV)

**Romans 12:9 “Let love be without dissimulation” Jesus finishes the gifts of the Spirit with the most important, love**” Paul used the form of divine love often translated as “charity/*agape*.” We need sincere genuine love, “without hypocrisy” (RSV). Paul repeated these from other Epistles.

**Romans 12:14 “Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not”** Paul next recounted Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:44, as does Romans 12:21).

**Romans 12:15 “Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep”** Paul now paraphrased a phrase from Jesus’ parable of the lost sheep (Luke 15:6). Also see Mosiah 18:8–9; D&C 42:25 where the same these was revealed in this dispensation.

**Romans 12:16 “Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited”** (NIV) Paul encouraged the saints to “associate with” those different than yourself and be humble (RSV).

**Romans 12:18 “as far as it depends on you”** (NIV) or “Do all you can” (JB), hints of the Law of Consecration.

**Romans 12:20 “if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink . . .”** As always, we are admonished to feed the poor, even if they are our enemy.

**Romans 12:21 “Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good”** *How do you do that?* By returning kindness for anger, love for hate, honesty for deceit, generosity for greed, forgiveness for resentment, selflessness for egotism, faith for despair. The Lord’s balance of law and punishment is beautifully described in 2 Nephi 9:25–26.

25 Wherefore, he has given a law; and where there is no law given there is no punishment; and where there is no punishment there is no condemnation; and where there is no condemnation the mercies of the Holy One of Israel have claim upon them, because of the atonement; for they are delivered by the power of him. 26 For the atonement satisfieth the demands of his justice upon all those who have not the law given to them, that they are delivered from that awful monster, death and hell, and the devil, and the lake of fire and brimstone, which is endless torment; and they are restored to that God who gave them breath, which is the Holy One of Israel.



---

# ROMANS 13–14

---

## Fifty Christian Commandments

### CAESARS FROM THE NEW TESTAMENT TIME

Augustus (27 BC– 14 AD): Jesus' birth

Tiberius (14–37 AD): Jesus' ministry

Caligula (37–41): Paul served in Antioch

Claudius (41–54): Paul's first missions

NeRomans (54–68) Galba (68) Otho (69) Vitellius

### HISTORY: ROME AND EARLY CHRISTIAN PERSECUTION

From AD 41, Emperor Claudius demanded that Jews stop holding meetings. In AD 49 he expelled them from Rome. (The Roman historian, Suetonius in AD 120, recalled that Gentile-Christians were not deported at that time.) Also at that time, it appears that the church grew in Rome with gentile converts. In AD 54, after Claudius Caesar's death, the Jews were allowed back into Rome—including Jewish Christians such as Priscilla and Aquila (Romans 16:3).

Caesar NeRomans (AD 54–68) reigned over the Roman emperor at the time of Paul's known Epistles. Even though, by AD 59, NeRomans had not singled out the Christians for persecution, yet, undoubtedly Paul was aware of the political unrest. A few years later, the elite Roman writer, Tacitus, recorded that NeRomans began brutally persecuting the saints, including giving them the blame for the great fire in Rome in AD 64.



Statue of Augustus via Wikimedia Commons.

In these chapters, Paul dealt with the specific problem of unifying the Jewish and Gentile Christians. Their efforts to integrate were exacerbated by the Roman persecution that removed all the Jews from Rome for several years. When the Jews returned to Rome, a rift developed between the two groups of converts. This problem of brief Jewish persecution affected the early saints in Rome.

---

## ROMANS 13

---

### Respect for Authority

#### *Romans 13:1-7*

**Romans 13:1** “Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power *in the church* but of God” (JST) The first commandment of this chapter is: *be subject to higher powers*. Another translation reads, “You must all obey the governing authorities” (JB). But, the Prophet Joseph changed this from a discussion of the state to “in the church.”<sup>38</sup> For Joseph this is all about following the Lord and His leadership. Commentaries without the JST wonder if there were some political unrest spurring on this counsel? The community of saints in Rome would have been especially more conscious of imperial authority.<sup>39</sup>

Without the JST, Paul seems to be supporting the Roman propaganda that Caesar and other political figures were divinely appointed. As the Greek reads now, Paul works under the assumption that all power was given by God. Even Rome’s imperial authority came from God, although the Jews may have been reluctant to admit it. It does not seem possible for Paul to share this perspective. He saw unrighteous government leaders first hand—from the martyrdom of James (Acts 12:2), and Peter’s imprisonment (Acts 12:3,5), to his own repeated abuses (Acts 20:23; 21:27, 30–33; 23:3; etc.). In addition to the Roman world, the perspective of the King James’ translators may have agreed.

It makes sense that this would certainly have been a delicate subject in the age of Christian persecution. I think similar counsel is still in place. In 1842, even though the US government did not protect Joseph Smith, nor the rights of the church members, in the same decade that the saints were being chased out of three states, Joseph penned: “We believe in being subject to kings, presidents, rulers, and magistrates, in obeying, honoring, and sustaining the law” (12<sup>th</sup> Article of Faith).. The point the text tries to make is that we must be good law-abiding citizens.

**Romans 13:2** “Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves *punishment*” (JST) In keeping with teachings of the Restoration, the Prophet Joseph changed “*damnation*” to “*punishment*.” The Greek word: “*ordinance/diatage*” can be defined as “institution” or “ordinance” (and is used only one other time in the NT, Acts 7:53; more often “ordinance” was translated from

“*paradoseis* and *ktisei*”). The reference to an “ordinance” seems consistent with JST’s change to make this a discussion about the church not the state. Also, in keeping with a church perspective, Paul only references the citizens’ responsibilities not the authorities.”<sup>40</sup>

**Romans 13:3 “Do you want to be free from fear of the one in authority? Then do what is right and you will be commended”** (NIV) This verse includes the second commandment of this chapter: “do what is right.” It can be read from either the previous JST perspective—of God’s authority— or from the political authorities. For the new Christian church that had already faced persecution in the Roman Empire, it is important for Paul to teach about being good citizens. The JB reads, “Good behavior is not afraid of magistrates; only criminals have anything to fear.” This sounds as though Paul had great faith in his government—but it is quite ironic in the face of his past torture while obeying the laws. Through Joseph Smith’s perspective, church leadership sought to do good.

**Romans 13:4 “He is God’s servant, an agent of retribution to the wrongdoer”** (BSB) Religious leadership is often referred to as being in servitude to God. On the other hand, political authority included its delegated or vicarious role across the Empire. The local and national leaders could also enforce the law with the “sword” (a symbol of penal authority, or power, legitimately possessed to coerce recalcitrant citizens to maintain order for the common good).

**Romans 13:5 “submit to authority, not only to avoid punishment, but also as a matter of conscience”** (BSB) As Christians, we hope to do well not because we are motivated from fear of punishment, but for the sake of goodness. Shortly before this Epistle is written, in AD 58, Caesar Nero passed a decree to regulate tax collection. Tacius recorded that the people in Rome complained about publicans collecting indirect and unfair taxes, so Nero ordered that all taxes be publicly posted and enforced.<sup>41</sup>

**Romans 13:6 “also pay taxes, for the authorities are ministers of God, attending to this very thing”** (ESV) This third commandment is: *Pay tribute*. (It is also the third time Paul mentions the delegated nature of authority, vs. 1, 4, 6.) In the KJV, Paul emphasizes civil duty as part of citizenship in God’s kingdom, as well as in the Roman Empire. Christians’ “heavenly” citizenship does not remove them from their civil duties.

**Romans 13:7 “Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour”** Remember “fear/*phobon*” also can mean “reverence” (AET), or “respect” (RSV). Jesus likewise emphasized paying tribute to Caesar (Matthew 22:17–21). The verse includes three Christian commandments: #3, render dues, #4, fear those whom one fears; #5, honour.

## Love fulfills the Law

### *Romans 13:8-10*

**Romans 13:8 “Owe no man any thing, but to love one another”** Paul counsels Christians to not go into debt, or “leave no debt outstanding” (RSV). The one exception is the debt of “love/*agapao*/charity” (also in Romans 13:10). The obligation of charity sums up the whole Mosaic Law. This summarizes all the obligations of Christian life as well. Paul speaks of love as something we owe our neighbor, and God.

**Romans 13:9 “For, ‘You shall not commit adultery . . . murder . . . steal . . . covet . . .’”** (BLB) Paul expounds on exactly which laws he meant, by quoting the last five of the Ten Commandments (that each deal with loving one’s neighbor).<sup>42</sup> Nearly all of the Old Testament commandments are summed up in “the golden rule.” (Jesus used almost the same words in Matthew 19:18 ; Mark 12:28–34; Deuteronomy 6:4–5; Leviticus 19:18). The Ten Commandments became part of the Christian Laws of the Gospel. Of the fifty commandments that Paul lists in these two chapters, over a quarter deal with loving one’s neighbor. Paul probably knew of Jesus’ *new commandment* that He introduced at the Last Supper, to love as He does (John 13:34). One fourth of the commandments in these two chapters deal with loving or helping one’s neighbor.

**Romans 13:10 “Love is the one thing that cannot hurt your neighbor; that is why it is the answer to every one of the commandments”** (JB) The message of love became one of the most oft-repeated themes in Paul repeats. John the Beloved came to this same conclusion (1 John 2:5; 3:16; 4:7–18; etc.).

## Awake Spiritually

### *Romans 13:11-14*

**Romans 13:11 “It is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed”** Paul refers to wake from our spiritual slumber, to end our spiritual complacency and prepare to meet the Savior. This verse has an eschatological (end of the earth) motivation. The early saints expected the Lord’s Second Coming within a generation or two (1 Corinthians 7:29; 1 Peter 4:7; 1 John 2:18; etc.).

**Romans 13:12 “the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light”** Paul often uses the imagery of “day” and “night,” figuratively. The night represents evil and spiritual darkness, which can be dispelled through the Holy Spirit (similar in Ephesians 5:8; the “day” represented the present and the time to work (1 Thessalonians 5:8; Hebrews 10:25). Paul’s dressing with light, or “putting on the armor of light” can be literal as well. The Holy Spirit’s guidance and protection is real and can become armor against the adversary. If we do nothing to offend the Spirit, it can even become more powerful than metal armor. Disciples put on this armor of light each day as they pray, study the scriptures, and repent. There are many ways to don the armor, from church and temple worship to service and missionary work. We never want to be scantily clothed in this way! Earlier, in 1 Thessalonians 5:8, Paul describes the armor of God as faith, charity and

hope. Earlier still, Jesus taught us to pray, “Lead us not into temptation...” The Spirit’s armor disappears when we succumb to temptation or lose our focus doing God’s will. (We will discuss this more in Ephesians 4 and 6.)

**Romans 13:13** “Let us behave decently, as in the daytime, not in carousing . . . drunkenness, . . . immorality . . . debauchery . . . dissension and jealousy” (NIV) In this verse, Paul lists seven more commandments to become better citizens of God’s kingdom that are also in the Old Testament.<sup>43</sup>

**Romans 13:14** “Rather, clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the flesh” (NIV) Paul’s twentieth command, to “clothe ourselves with the Lord,” is another of Paul’s favorites and is repeated in Galatians 3:27 and 5:16; This can include asking the Lord to help us live as we should. Paul’s twenty-first commandment in this chapter—to avoid lusts of the flesh—is also repeated in Galatians 5:17, and many letters. The word “*enduo*” or “clothe” is also the word for “endow.” As we put on the Lord’s clothing of light we are empowered with Jesus’ atonement and the robes of righteousness.

---

## ROMANS 14

---

### Striving for Unity in the Church

Paul turns from his general message of love to address specific issues that challenged the Roman saints. He offers thirty more commandments in the process. Most of their local challenges dealt with the Jewish purification rites, holy days, and dietary codes. The Epistle is filled with evidence that some of the Jewish-Christians clung to their Judaic oral laws even after converting to Christianity. These Judaizers tried to enforce the oral laws or Jewish traditions for all Christian converts. After Paul’s first apostolic mission, the Jerusalem Counsel attempted to settle that issue once and for all. Peter, and James the Evangelist, set the parameters for the entire church (Acts 15:7–20).<sup>44</sup> Earlier in this Epistle when Paul attacked the Judaizers he used Old Testament scripture, but here he paraphrases Jesus’ words to hopefully end the clash of opinions.



Fresco of early Christian holding chalice in the Agape Feast. Catacomb of Saints Pietro e Marcellino (Saints Marcellinus and Peter), Via Labicana, Rome, Italy. Image via Wikimedia Commons.

## No Contention

### *Romans 14:1-12*

**Romans 14:1** “Accept the one whose faith is weak, without quarreling over disputable matters” (NIV) The schism between the weak and strong saints may have started in AD 49 with the expulsion of the Jews from Rome. The early second century historian, Suetonius, looked back on the reign of **Claudius Caesar’s** reign (AD 41–54) and he recorded: “As the Jews were making constant disturbances at the instigation of Chrestus, he expelled them from Rome.”<sup>45</sup> If only the Jews were driven out of Rome, then the Christian church would have developed with only Gentile-Christian converts. When the Jewish–Christians were allowed to return to Rome after Claudius’ death, they were probably startled to find their fellow church members no longer living any Mosaic laws. It is to this divided group that Paul pleads to have patience, moderation, and compassion.

**Romans 14:2** “one believeth that he may eat all things: another, who is weak, eateth herbs . . .” Even though there was not a Jewish prohibition against *all meat*, some (like Daniel) abstained. Many Jews avoided meat in a gentile community because most of the meat sold in the market had been previously sacrificed to idols. Avoiding meat offered to idols was one of the four rules that the Jerusalem Council passed onto Christians (Acts 15:20). Many other groups also avoided meat at that time—Orphics, Dionysiac mystics, and Pythagoreans—and perhaps some of the Christians were from those groups as well.

**Romans 14:3–4** “Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not . . . who art thou that judgest another man’s servant?” Paul begins with an imperative or commanding voice (which he repeats dozens of times in these last four chapters). Paul cares more about the inappropriate judging and lack of fellowship than the dietary rules. The “servants” are Christ’s disciples, and the “other man” is the Lord. His message is that we should not judge God’s servants; they are trying to follow Him.

**Romans 14:5** “One person considers one day more sacred than another; another considers every day alike” (NIV) The Jewish holy days, including the Sabbath, had many traditions and rules depending on to which Jew-



Bust of Emperor Claudius via Wikimedia Commons.

ish sect one belonged. It sounds as though some Christians still observed them meticulously, and others did not. Paul himself continued to celebrate some of them (i.e. to be at the temple for Passover or Pentecost, Acts 18:21; 20:16), and yet he encourages the saints to let everyone decide for themselves. This is really the promise of Discipleship—everyone needs to “be fully persuaded in [their] own mind” (14:5). Trying to persuade anyone against their will “only requires more arduous backpacking and backtracking!”<sup>46</sup>

**Romans 14:6 “Whoever regards one day as special does so to the Lord. Whoever eats meat does so to the Lord, for they give thanks to God”** (NIV) I love the idea that every day belongs to the Lord. Every meal can honor God by giving Him thanks for the meal and dedicating our strength to His work.

**Romans 14:7–9 “For none of us lives to himself alone, and none of us dies to himself . . . for this reason Christ died and returned to life”** (BSB) We cannot choose when we live or die—that is God’s choice. We also do not live alone but have a community to influence, bless, and serve. We cannot selfishly go about each day, because we owe a debt to our Redeemer every day for our breath. The most important one in our life is Christ who lived and died to allow us to live more fully.

**Romans 14:10 “Why dost thou judge thy brother? . . . for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ”** Paul challenges the saints to greater heights by putting the matter of judgment into the hands of the Lord. He confronts his readers with the same questions that Jesus did: “For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged” (Matthew 7:2). In Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount, he followed “judge not” with a cross-examination of why we see only the faults of others: “And why do you look at the splinter in your brother’s eye, but not notice *the* beam in your *own* eye?” (Matthew 7:3–5, BLB). Paul’s parallels conform in words and content to two sections of Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount. This example, and previous extensive use of the Sermon on the Mount, suggest that it was available in some form to Christians such as Paul, even before Matthew wrote his Gospel.

**Romans 14:11 “For I live, saith the Lord as it is written, and every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall swear to God”** (JST) This great day may be at the Second Coming. Paul adds another Old Testament quote from Isaiah 45:23 (which he repeats in Philippians 2:10). Similar promises are found in modern revelation, too (D&C 76:110; 88:104). Even telestial inhabitants will have to acknowledge Jesus as the Christ, but unfortunately, they will not have made His gospel part of their lives. Elder Maxwell repeatedly elaborated this verse:

Submitting, but only episodically, is a telltale sign. Such reluctance is evidence of weak faith. So is putting off obedience. Sufficient submissiveness to kneel now means we will not be strangers to that posture later when “every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus is the Christ” . . . It will take no faith to renounce worldly things when these are among the ashes of a melted planet . . .”<sup>47</sup>

**Romans 14:12** “then every one of us shall give account of himself to God” In Paul’s mind the judgment is going to include a stewardship accounting from each person to God.

## Christ’s Rules

### *Romans 14:13–21*

**Romans 14:13** “Let us no longer judge one another” (CSB) While the Bible tells us not to judge each other, we also learn from our own experiences how to judge between good and evil. We find the tool to accomplish both in the Book of Mormon: “the light by which ye may judge . . . is the light of Christ, see that ye do not judge wrongfully; for with the same judgment which ye judge ye shall also be judged. . . search diligently in the light of Christ that ye may know good from evil; and if ye will lay hold upon every good judgment” (Moroni 7:18). The antithesis of righteous judgment is pride. It is the root of all evil.

**“Instead decide never to put a stumbling block or pitfall in the way of your brother or sister”** Intentionally wanting someone to fall or trying to step on another to raise oneself up comes from pride—the root of unrighteous judgment (Mormon 8:38, 36).<sup>48</sup> Among the attributes of charity is building others up (1 Corinthians 13:5). Rather than judging one another unkindly, the Spirit can teach us how to love. Elder Carlos Asay quoted this verse and then encouraged, “Look for the good in others and learn. Give sincere credit where credit is due. Spend less time fault-finding and more time identifying strengths. Yes, try to catch others doing good! Don’t put a stumbling block before others; instead, give them a step upward in the form of a recognized success.”<sup>49</sup>

**Romans 14:14** “by the Lord Jesus, that *there is nothing unclean of itself*” To Paul’s Jewish audience this had connotations of clean vs. unclean in foods and washings. To Christians, though, the Lord’s cleansing left nothing unclean. The Greek word here for “unclean/*koinos*” means “common.” It also looks as if Paul were familiar with Jesus’ judgments on ritual purity (recorded now in Mark 7:15), “There is nothing from without a man, that entering into him can defile him.” The parallel between Paul and Mark is even closer in Greek. Mark’s use of “*defile*” means, “to make unclean or common.” In the KJV of Romans 14:14, “persuaded by the Lord Jesus,” the Greek preposition “*by/en /in*” is regularly “through” or “persuaded because of the Lord Jesus.” Paul’s ideas probably came from reflecting about Jesus’ statement—objects do not cause impurity of themselves. Paul quotes Jesus to sensitively address this subject rather than fight it on his own.

**Romans 14:15** “If your brother or sister is distressed because of what you eat, you are no longer acting in love . . .” (NIV) Paul asks them to put matters of these indifferent things into the perspective of the redemption. If your behavior offends a fellow saint, especially a “weak member,” stop it. Allowing people to fall away over little matters of indifference is wrong. There should be no vaunting by the strong causing falling of the weak.<sup>50</sup>

**Romans 14:17–19** “The kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace,



**and joy in the Holy Spirit**” (BSB) These verses also point to the early church’s problem of unity among the unique cultural backgrounds of the converts. At times when other’s differences or faults become annoying, it helps to keep an eternal perspective of life and emphasize what really matters. “The essence of the kingdom does not consist in freedom from such things as dietary regulations, but in the freedom of the Christian to react to the promptings of the indwelling Spirit.”<sup>51</sup>

**Romans 14:20–21 “Do not destroy the work of God for the sake of food”** (BSB) In conclusion of this specific problem, Paul repeats the same message he gave in verse 13, “Please do not offend your fellow disciples over these little issues!” Christianity was becoming an international church, and the Jewish saints had to learn to take a broader view.

**Romans 14:22 “Do you have a conviction? Keep it!”** (AB) The Anchor Bible referred to these issues of Jewish dietary and holiday practices as “conviction.” Separating out what really matters, with enteral implications, from a social practice is good advice for our day, too.

**Romans 14:23 “But whoever has doubts is condemned if they eat, because their eating is not from faith; and everything that does not come from faith is sin”** (NIV) Paul teaches that doubt is spiritual poison. He also teaches that whatever we do without faith—or whatever we do that is *not* motivated by our dedication to Jesus Christ—is spiritually inert and is ultimately a sin. On the other hand, our actions and thoughts that are motivated by the Spirit will empower the believer. The same is true of the fruits of the Spirit; they lift and lighten.

---

## REVIEW OF ROMAN’S VOCABULARY

---

The book of Romans has Paul’s greatest treatises on the need for grace, as well as the need for good works. Twenty percent of the Epistle deals with grace, and thirty percent on the need for good works. Romans 13 falls into the good works category. In chapters 13 and 14 he includes over fifty Christian commandments.

Paul used some words repeatedly, which allows the modern reader to get a better understanding of his definition when we study them. Here are three theologically-packed words that he used often:

4. **Salvation/*soteria***: Romans 1:16; 10:10; 11:11; 13:11; 2 Corinthians 7:10; Philippians 2:12; and Ephesians 1:13.<sup>32</sup>
5. **Justification/*dikaiosis-dikaioo***: Romans 2:13; 3:20, 30; 4:25; 5:1, 9, 16, 18; 8:30.
6. **Grace/*charis***: Romans 1:5, 7; 3:24; 4:4; 4:16; 5:2; 15, 17, 20, 21; 6:1, 14, 15; 11:5, 6; 12:3, 6.

## ENDNOTES

---

1. Robert Millet, ed., *Studies in Scriptures: Acts to Revelation* (SLC, UT: Deseret Book, 1987), 50.
2. The “depravity of man” means that because Adam and Eve fell, every human infant to adult is enslaved to sin. In their fallen nature of God they are completely unable to choose. Only God can help them. They cannot refrain from evil on their own. The Book of Mormon denounced this doctrine in Mosiah 3:16–18, and Moroni 8:8–14.
3. This will be demonstrated in more detail in discussions on 1 Corinthians 11 and 14.
4. Millet, *Acts to Revelation*, 50.
5. Jeffery R. Holland, “How Ever Long and Hard the Road,” Brigham Young University Devotional, January 18, 1983, 58. <https://speeches.byu.edu/talks/jeffrey-r-and...t-holland/however-long-hard-road/> (accessed 7-20-19).
6. We will discuss the handful of troubling verses that seem to detour from this practice as they come up in 1 Corinthians, etc.
7. Russel M. Nelson, “We can Do Better Be Better,” General Conference April 2019.
8. E. Brooks Holifield, *Theology in America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 269. John Wesley’s teachings on adoption and how it related to the witness of the Spirit dominated Methodist thought in the nineteenth century, and may be why Joseph was interested in it initially. Methodists interpreted a spiritual adoption as an immediate and inward testimony of the Holy Spirit, giving an assurance of forgiveness. This was the doctrine through which they interpreted the ecstatic emotional experiences of the revivals. The witness of the Spirit assured them their salvation was “immediate, palpable, and emotional.” Methodists saw a dual nature in the role of the Spirit: first conversion and second sanctification. It was the Spirit that allowed them to experience perfection after their “new birth.”
9. Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation* (SLC, UT: Bookcraft, 1954–56), 3:245–46.
10. Andrew F. Ehat, and Lyndon W. Cook, *The Words of Joseph Smith* (Orem, Utah: Grandin, 1991), for original text from four scribal accounts. Spelling here from Joseph F. Smith, *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, 545–546.
11. Millet, *Acts to Revelation*, 119.
12. John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, ed. John T. McNeill, trans. Ford Lewis Battles, (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press, 1960), 3.21.5.
13. Joseph Smith, *History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Book, 1844. Reprint 1980), 6.252–253: “The doctrine [of election] that the Presbyterians and Methodists have quarreled so much about—once in grace, always in grace, or falling away from grace, I will say a word about. They are both wrong. Truth takes a road between them both, for while the Presbyterian says ‘once in grace, you cannot fall,’ the Methodist says: ‘You can have grace today, fall from it tomorrow, next day have grace again; and so follow on, changing continually.’ But the doctrine of the Scriptures and the spirit of Elijah would show them both false, and take a road between them both; for, according to the Scripture, if men have received the good word of God, and tasted of the powers of the world to come,

- if they shall fall away, it is impossible to renew them again, seeing they have crucified the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame; so there is a possibility of falling away; you could not be renewed again, and the power of Elijah cannot seal against this sin, for this is a reserve made in the seals and power of the Priesthood.” (For original spelling see Ehat and Cook, Words of Smith, 334.)
14. *The Westminster Confession* 3.6 (finished in 147), reads, “As God hath appointed the elect unto glory, so hath he, by the eternal and most free purpose of his will, fore-ordained all the means thereunto.” Again in 12.1 and 3: “All those whom God hath predestinated unto life, and those only, he is pleased, in his appointed and accepted time, effectually to call, by his Word and Spirit, out of that state of sin and death . . . this effectual call is of God’s free and special grace alone, not from anything at all foreseen in man, who is altogether passive therein, until being quickened and renewed by the Holy Spirit.”
  15. Smith, *History of the Church*, 5:343.
  16. *Ibid.*, 4:266 The article continued: “‘Giving all diligence to make your calling and election sure’ (2 Peter 1:10); for this is that sealing power spoken of in Ephesians (1:13, 14)—‘in whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth; the gospel of your salvation, in whom also, after that ye believed ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession, until the praise of His glory’ (2 Peter 1:11); ‘For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.’”
  17. Millet, *Acts to Revelation*, 53.
  18. Smith, *History of the Church*, 4:359–360.
  19. Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *The Anchor Bible: Romans* (NYC, NY: Doubleday, 1993), 545.
  20. Kelly Ogden, xx, 180.
  21. “John Calvin’s doctrine of predestination, the unconditional election of the House of Israel to eternal life, was repulsive to Joseph Smith. Founded in the doctrine of human depravity, this notion asserted that God in his almighty wisdom had elected some men to eternal salvation and relegated others to eternal torment. Joseph Smith believed that the Saints might make their calling and election sure through the righteous use of free agency” (WJS, Ehat and Cook, p.94).
  22. Fitzmyer, *Anchor Bible: Romans*, 572
  23. The Septuagint is the earliest Greek translation of the Hebrew scriptures. It is estimated that the first five books of the Hebrew Bible were translated in the mid-3rd century BC and the remaining texts were translated in the 2nd century BC. It was so universal by the 1st century, that very few Jews knew the Hebrew version.
  24. James Strong, *The New Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible* (Nashville, Atlanta, London: Thomas Nelson, 1995, reprint); all Greek and Hebrew translations in my commentaries come from this source.
  25. Joseph Smith Papers for D&C 95:7 read the same as was published. “Sabaoth, which is by interpretation . . .” <https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/>
  26. Russell M. Nelson, “We can Do Better and Be Better,” General Conference April 2019.
  27. The JST reversed the order of phrases to help elucidate Paul’s meaning. “Wherefore they stumbled at that stumbling stone, not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law.”

28. Anderson, *Understanding Paul*, 173.
29. Smith, *History of the Church*, 4.605.
30. Elder Dallin H. Oaks, “Have You Been Saved?” General Conference April 1998. “Good Christian people sometimes attach different meanings to some key gospel terms like saved or salvation. If we answer according to what our questioner probably means in asking if we have been “saved,” our answer must be “yes.” If we answer according to the various meanings, we attach to the terms saved or salvation, our answer will be either ‘yes’ or ‘yes, but with conditions.’ . . . Every sincere Latter-day Saint is ‘saved’ according to this meaning.” The definition in the text box is taken from Strong’s Concordance accessed 8/2/19, via: <https://biblehub.com/greek/4982.htm>
31. Ehat and Cook, *Words of Joseph Smith*, 9–10; 42, 110, 210, 327–331.
32. Smith, *History of the Church*, 3:379.
33. Millet, *Acts to Revelation*, 54.
34. Stephen D. Richs and John W. Welch, eds., *The Allegory of the Olive Tree: The Olive , the Bible, and Jacob 5* (SLC, UT: Deseret Book and FARMS, 1994), 524.
35. *Allegory of the Olive Tree*, 363.
36. Anderson, *Understanding Paul*, 192.
37. *Ibid.*, 173.
38. In the scribal notes from Joseph’s Smith’s rendition of the Book of Romans, we find only three clear changes in Romans 13 (verses: 1, added “in the church,” 2, added punishment, and 14—gratify), and possibly one word in verse 4 (rod). See original papers in: <https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/new-testament-revision-2/192>
39. Joseph Fitzmyer, *The Anchor Bible: Romans, A New Translation* (NYC, NY: Doubleday, 1993), 35.
40. William Tyndale, one of the first translators of the Bible into English, noted the lack of responsibilities listed for the leaders in Romans 13. On October 2, 1528, he published a pamphlet to address Rom13, known as, *Obedience of the Christian Man*. He spoke of the constraints on leaders and subjects. He counseled those who held powers as kings, the ultimate ruling authority: “If kings would be Christian in deed and not only name, then let them give themselves altogether to the wealth of their realms, following the example of Christ. Let them remember that the people are God’s, and not theirs – indeed, they are Christ’s inheritance and possession, bought with his blood. The most despised person in his realm is still the king’s brother, a fellow-member with him, and equal with him in the kingdom of God and of Christ. Let him therefore not think himself too good to render service to his people, or seek anything other in them than a father seeks in his children, indeed, than Christ sought in us. The king, in the temporal regiment, stands in the place of God, and represents God himself, and is better than his subjects, without compare. Yet let him put that off, and become a brother, doing and leaving undone all things with regard to the commonwealth, so that all men may see that he seeks nothing but the profit of his subjects.”
41. Fitzmyer, *Anchor Bible: Romans*, 35.
42. The order does not coincide with the Greek Septuagint version—LXX, of the Bible, but not the later Hebrew Mesoric Text (MT) which the KJV translated.
43. #13 Walk honestly (in old English, “honestly” meant “honorably”), #14 No rioting or revelry, #15 Nor drunkenness, #16

- & #17 No chambering and “wantonness” (meaning sexual immorality), #18 No strife or contention, #19 No envy
44. Acts 15:20; 1. abstain from idols, 2. fornication, 3. things strangled, and 4. eating blood.
  45. Fitzmyer, *Anchor Bible: Romans*, 37.
  46. Neal A. Maxwell, *Not My Will, But Thine* (SLC, UT: Deseret Book, 2001). 12.
  47. Ibid. Also, “We do not now know precisely how God handles things in the spirit world so that life there is an extension of walking by faith. Death does not suddenly bestow upon the disbeliever full awareness of all reality, thereby obviating the need for any faith. Instead, what follows death is a continuum of the basic structure in mortality—until the Judgment Day, when every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus is the Christ (see Romans 14:11; Philippians 2:10; D&C 76:110). Until then, we ‘walk by faith, not by sight’” (*That Ye May Believe*, (SLC, UT: Bookcraft, 1992). 94.
  48. Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine* (SLC, UT: Bookcraft, 1966), 593, “Pride.”
  49. Elder Carlos Asay
  50. Fitzmyer, *Anchor Bible: Romans*, 696.
  51. Ibid.
  52. The Pauline letters have been scrutinized by textual scholars for generations. His Epistles may have fallen into at least various categories: he wrote the letter, he dictated the letter to a scribe record his dictations, he delegated a trusted disciple to record his thoughts, or he gave someone an assignment to send an Epistle. The Epistles that are most consistent and contain his name and style are: Romans, 1 & 2 Corinthians, 1 Thessalonians, Galatians, Philippians, Philemon. Ephesians is within the category of a “Deutero-Pauline,” or letters probably edited or written by another in Paul’s behalf. Ephesians was the only Epistle that did not fall within the literary stylometry test of authored by Paul. Unpublished research by John L. Hilton and Bruce Schaalje, Brigham Young University.