

The Acts of the early believers

^{1:1}The previous account *which* I wrote, O Theophilus {"friend of God"}, *was* concerning all that Jesus began both to do and to teach ^{1:2}until the day in which he was received up, after he had given instructions to the ones he sent out, whom he had chosen through the Holy Spirit. ^{1:3}He also showed himself to them *as being* alive after his sufferings with many evidences, appearing to them during forty days and speaking *about* the things concerning the kingdom of God.

^{1:4}And, being there together *with them*, he ordered them not to leave Jerusalem but to wait for the promise of the Father which, he said, "You heard *about* from me. ^{1:5}For John, on one hand, baptized in water, but you, *on the other hand*, will be baptized {immersed} in the Holy Spirit not many days from now."

^{1:6}They, therefore, when they were together, asked him saying, "Lord, will you restore the kingdom to Israel at this time?" ^{1:7}And he replied to them, "It is not for you to know the times or seasons which the Father has set by His own authority. ^{1:8}But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses {or "martyrs"} both in Jerusalem, in all Judea, Samaria, and to the uttermost parts of the earth."

^{1:9}And when he had said these things, as they were watching, he was taken up and a cloud received him out of their sight. ^{1:10}And while they were gazing intently towards the heavens after his departure, look, two "men" stood near them in shining white clothing ^{1:11}who said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand *there* gazing into the

heavens? This *same* Jesus who was received up from you into the heavens will come back in the same way as you saw him going into the heavens.”

^{1:12}Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day’s journey away. ^{1:13}And when they got there, they went up to the upper chamber where they were staying. *These* included Peter and John, James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bar-Tholomew {son of Tholomew} and Matthew, James *the son* of Alphaeus, Simon the Zealot, and Judas *the son* of James. ^{1:14}These all with one passion, continued diligently in prayer with the women, Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers.

^{1:15}And in those days Peter stood up in the middle of the disciples (which was a group of about one hundred and twenty people *gathered* together) and said, ^{1:16}“Men and brethren, it was necessary that the Scripture would be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit predicted by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who was the guide for those who arrested Jesus. ^{1:17}For he was part of our number and received his portion in this service.

^{1:18}“(Now a field was bought with the wages of this man’s sin. And he [while trying to hang himself] fell down headfirst, split open in the middle, and all his bowels gushed out. ^{1:19}And this became known to all who lived in Jerusalem, so much so that in their language that field was called Akeldama, that is, ‘the field of blood.’)

^{1:20}“For it is written in the book of Psalms, ‘Let his dwelling become desolate and let no one live there.’ ‘And let another take his place’ (Ps 69:25; 109:8). ^{1:21}Therefore, of the men who have been with us the entire time that the Lord Jesus came and went among us – ^{1:22}beginning from the baptism of John to the day that he was received up from us – of these, one *of them* must become a witness with us of his resurrection.”

^{1:23}And they put forward two *men*, Joseph called Bar-Sabas {son of Sabas}, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias. ^{1:24}Then they prayed and said, “You, Lord, who know the hearts of all men, show which of these two is the

one whom you have chosen ^{1:25}to take part in this service and commission, which Judas abandoned so that he might go to his own place." ^{1:26}And they drew straws and the result indicated Matthias, and *so* he was included with the eleven sent ones.

CHAPTER 2

^{2:1}And when the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place. ^{2:2}And suddenly a sound like a tempestuous wind came from the heavens and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. ^{2:3}And divided flames like fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them. ^{2:4}And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other languages as the Spirit gave them the words.

^{2:5}Now there were devout men, Jews from every nation under heaven, staying in Jerusalem. ^{2:6}And when they heard this noise, a crowd gathered, and they were bewildered because everyone heard them speaking in his own language.

^{2:7}And they were all amazed and marveled saying to one another, "Look, aren't all these who are speaking Galileans? ^{2:8}So how is it that every one of us hears them in our own language with which we were born? ^{2:9}Parthians, Medes and Elamites, and the those from Mesopotamia, Judea, Cappadocia, Pontus, Asia, ^{2:10}Phrygia, Pamphylia, Egypt, and the parts of Libya near Cyrene, *including* those from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, ^{2:11}Cretans and Arabians, we all hear them speaking in our own languages *about* the mighty works of God."

^{2:12}And they were all amazed and perplexed, saying one to another, "What is this?" ^{2:13}But others said mockingly, "They are full of new wine."

^{2:14}But Peter, standing up with the eleven, raised his voice and spoke to them *saying*, "You men of Judea, and all you who are here in Jerusalem, I have something to tell you, so listen to my words. ^{2:15}For these people are not drunk as you suppose, since it is *only* the third hour of the day.

2:16“But this is the *fulfillment* of that which was spoken through the prophet Joel: 2:17’ And it will happen in the last days, says God, *that* I will pour out my Spirit upon all humanity. And your sons and your daughters will prophesy. Your young men will see visions and your old men will dream dreams.

2:18“ And besides *that*, I will pour out my Spirit [a second time] on my menservants and on my handmaidens in those *last* days and they will speak by divine inspiration {prophesy}. 2:19 And I will grant wonders in the heavens above, and signs on the earth beneath: blood, fire, and smokey mist. 2:20 The sun will be turned into darkness and the moon into blood before the long-*lasting* and glorious day of the Lord comes.* 2:21 And it will be *that* all – anyone – who calls on the name of the Lord will be being** saved’ (Joel 2:28-32).

2:22“Men, Israelites, hear these words! Jesus of Nazareth – a man from God – showed you mighty works, miracles, and signs which God did through him in your midst, just as you yourselves know. 2:23 This is the One you killed, who was delivered up following the confirmed counsel and foreknowledge of God, and was crucified by the hands of men breaking *God’s* law. 2:24 *He is* the One God raised up from the dead, having annulled the anguish of death because it was not possible for him to be restrained by it.

2:25“For David said concerning him, ‘I saw the Lord before me continually, for he is at my right hand so that I would not be overthrown. 2:26 Therefore, my heart was glad and my tongue rejoiced. Moreover, my body will also rest in hope 2:27 because you will not abandon my soul in Hades neither will you allow your Holy One to experience decay. 2:28 You have made known to me the ways of *your* life. You will fill me with joy with your countenance’ (Ps 16:8-11).

2:29“Brethren, may I speak to you freely about the patriarch David, that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is here with us until today. 2:30 Therefore, being a

*Biblically, the “day” of the Lord is a one-thousand-year-long day, also known as the “seventh day” and the “Millennium” which is truly “long-lasting.”

**The verb tense here in Greek indicates an action which is incomplete with action continuing on into the future.

prophet and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that from the fruit of his loins (according to human procreation) he would raise up the Anointed One to sit on his throne. ^{2:31}Foreseeing this, he spoke concerning the resurrection of the Anointed One, *i.e.* that neither was his soul left in Hades nor did his body experience decay.

^{2:32}"This *is* that Jesus *whom* God raised up, of which we all are witnesses. ^{2:33}Being, therefore, exalted to the place of supreme honor and authority of God and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this, which you see and hear.

^{2:34}"For David didn't ascended into the heavens but he said himself, 'The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit on my right hand ^{2:35}until I make your enemies as the footstool of your feet"' (Ps 110:1). ^{2:36}Consequently, let all the house of Israel know with certainty that God has made this Jesus whom you crucified both *the* Lord and the Anointed One."

^{2:37}Now when they heard *this*, they were pierced in their hearts and said to Peter and the rest of the sent ones, "Brethren, what should we do?"

^{2:38}And Peter said to them, "Repent and be being baptized {immersed} every one of you into the name of {into the reality of} Jesus the Anointed One, *resulting* in freedom from your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. ^{2:39}For the promise is to you and to your children and to all those who are far away, *even* as many as the Lord our God calls to himself."

^{2:40}And with many other words he testified and appealed to them saying, "Save yourselves from this perverse generation." ^{2:41}Those who truly received his word were baptized, and about three thousand souls were added *to them* that day.

^{2:42}So they continued attentively in the sent ones' teaching and fellowship, in eating together, and in prayer. ^{2:43}And fear came upon every soul. And many miracles and signs were done through the sent ones. ^{2:44}Then all who believed were together and had all things in common. ^{2:45}And they sold their possessions and goods and shared them with everyone, according to each one's need. ^{2:46}And

they were daily in the temple, continuing steadfastly with one passion. And also eating together in their homes they shared their provisions with gladness and simplicity of heart, ^{2:47}praising God and being well thought of by all the people. And the Lord daily added to the gathering of the called-out ones, those who were being saved.

CHAPTER 3

^{3:1}Now Peter and John were going up to the temple at the hour of prayer, *which was the ninth hour of the day.* ^{3:2}And a certain man who was lame from his mother's womb was carried every day and set down beside a gateway to the temple which is called "Beautiful" to ask alms from those who entered into the temple, ^{3:3}who, seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple, asked to receive a donation.

^{3:4}Then Peter, who was with John, fixed his gaze on him and said, "Look at us." ^{3:5}So he looked at them, expecting to receive something from them. ^{3:6}But Peter said, "I don't have any silver or gold, but what do I have I will give you. In the name of Jesus the Anointed One of Nazareth, rise up and walk!"

^{3:7}And he took him by the right hand and pulled him up. And immediately his feet and his ankle bones were strengthened. ^{3:8}So leaping up, he stood and began to walk. And he entered with them into the temple walking, leaping, and praising God.

^{3:9}So all the people saw him walking and praising God ^{3:10}and they recognized him as the one who sat begging at the Beautiful Gate of the temple. And they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him.

^{3:11}And as the one who was lame held onto Peter and John, all the people, *being* very astonished, gathered together around them in the porch that is called "Solomon's."

^{3:12}And when Peter saw it, he responded to the people, "You men of Israel, why are you amazed at *what happened to this man*? Or why do you look at us as though by our

own power or godliness we have made him walk? ^{3:13}The God of our fathers, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, has glorified his servant Jesus, whom you delivered up and denied in front of Pilate when he had decided to release him.

^{3:14}“But you denied the Holy and Righteous One and asked for a murderer to be granted to you ^{3:15}and killed the Fountain-head of *the Father’s* life, whom God raised from the dead of which we are witnesses.

^{3:16}“*It is* by the faith in his name, that this man whom you see here and recognize has been made strong. And the faith which is through him has given this man this perfect health in the presence of you all.

^{3:17}“And now, brethren, I know that you did it in ignorance, as your rulers also did. ^{3:18}But God used this to fulfill the things which he had predicted by the mouth of all the prophets that his Anointed One would suffer.

^{3:19}“Therefore, repent and turn back so that your sins may be erased so that times of revival may come from the presence of the Lord, ^{3:20}and so that he may send *back* the One who has been publicly announced to you, *even* Jesus the Anointed One. ^{3:21}*This is the One* whom heaven must receive until the time of the restoration of all things, about which God has been speaking since the beginning by the mouths of his holy prophets.

^{3:22}“Moses truly said, ‘The Lord God will raise up a Prophet for you from among your brethren who is like me. You must listen to him in everything that he says to you. ^{3:23}Furthermore, every soul who does not listen to that prophet will be utterly destroyed from among the people’ (Deut 18:15,18,19). ^{3:24}And also, all the prophets from Samuel to those who succeeded him, as many as have spoken, they also spoke about these days.

^{3:25}“You are the sons of the prophets and of the covenant which God made with your fathers, saying to Abraham, ‘And in your seed all the families of the earth will be blessed’ (Gen 18:18). ^{3:26}God, having raised up his Servant, sent him to you first to bless you by turning every one of you away from your sins.”

CHAPTER 4

^{4:1}But as they spoke to the people, the priests, the leader of the temple and the Sadducees came upon them, ^{4:2}being very disturbed because they taught the people and proclaimed through Jesus the resurrection from the dead. ^{4:3}So they arrested them [Peter and John] and put them in the jail until the next day, since it was already evening.

^{4:4}But many of those who heard the word believed, and the number of the men came to about five thousand. ^{4:5}And it happened on the next day that the rulers, elders, and scribes got together in Jerusalem. ^{4:6}Annas the high priest *was there*, along with Caiaphas, John, Alexander, and the rest of the family of the high priest.

^{4:7}And when they had set them in the midst, they asked, "By what power, or in what name have you done this?"

^{4:8}Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, "Rulers of the people and elders of Israel, ^{4:9}if today we are being questioned concerning a good work done to an infirm man – by what means this man was restored to health – ^{4:10}let it be known to you all and to all the people of Israel that in the name of Jesus the Anointed One, the Nazarene whom you crucified whom God raised from the dead, *even* through him this man stands here before you restored to health.

^{4:11}"He is the stone which was discarded by you, the builders, which was made the capstone of the arch. ^{4:12}And there is salvation in no other, for neither is there any other name under heaven, given among men, by which we are needing to be saved."

^{4:13}Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated and from the lower class, they were astonished and they recognized them, that they had been with Jesus. ^{4:14}And seeing the man who was healed standing there with them, they could say nothing against it. ^{4:15}But when they had ordered them to go and wait outside the council *chamber*, they conferred

among themselves ^{4:16}saying, "What can we do to these men? Since truly a well known miracle has been done through them *which* is apparent to all those who live in Jerusalem, we aren't able to deny it. ^{4:17}But so that it doesn't spread any further among the people, let's threaten them so that from now on they don't speak to anyone in this name."

^{4:18}So they called them and ordered them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus. ^{4:19}But Peter and John answered and said to them, "Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you rather than to God, you be the judge, ^{4:20}for we cannot keep quiet about the things which we have seen and heard."

^{4:21}So after they had threatened them further, they let them go, finding no way to punish them because of the people, for everyone glorified God for what had been done. ^{4:22}For the man to whom this miracle of healing happened was over forty years old. ^{4:23}And being released, they returned to their own *companions* and reported everything that the chief priests and the elders had said to them.

^{4:24}And when they heard it, they lifted up their voices to God with one accord and said, "Oh Lord, you are the God who made the heavens, the earth, the sea, and everything that is in them, ^{4:25}the One who through the mouth of our father David your servant said, 'Why did the Gentiles behave arrogantly and the peoples devise futile plans? ^{4:26}The kings of the earth along with the *religious* leaders, gathered themselves together against the Lord and against his Anointed One' (Ps 2:1,2).

^{4:27}"For truly in this city, both Herod and Pontius Pilate *along* with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel were gathered together against your holy Servant Jesus, whom you anointed, ^{4:28}to do what your hand and your council pre-determined to take place.

^{4:29}"And now, Lord, look upon their threats and grant your servants to speak your word with fearless courage, ^{4:30}while you stretch out your hand for healings and signs and wonders to be done through the name of your holy servant Jesus."

^{4:31}Then as they were praying, the place where they were gathered together was shaken and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and they spoke the word of God with boldness.

^{4:32}And the multitude of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and not one *of them* said that any of their possessions was his own, but they had all things in common. ^{4:33}And with great power the sent ones gave their testimonies *about* the resurrection of the Lord Jesus and abundant grace was upon them all.

^{4:34}Also, there was no one among them who lacked *anything* for as many as were land owners or had houses as part of their wealth sold them, brought the proceeds from the things that were sold, ^{4:35}and laid them at the sent ones' feet. And distribution was made to each one according to their individual needs.

^{4:36}And Joseph, who was surnamed Bar-Nabas by the sent ones (which is, being interpreted, "son of encouragement"), a Levite from Cyprus, ^{4:37}having a field, sold it and brought the money and laid it at the sent ones' feet.

CHAPTER 5

^{5:1}So a certain man named Ananias *together* with his wife Sapphira, sold a property. ^{5:2}But he and his wife conspired to keep back *part* of the proceeds and brought *only* a certain part *of it* and laid it at the sent ones' feet.

^{5:3}But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back *part* of the proceeds of the land? ^{5:4}While it was yet in your possession, wasn't it still your own? And after it was sold, wasn't it still under your control? Why is it that you have conceived this thing in your heart? You have not lied to men, but to God."

^{5:5}And Ananias hearing these words fell down and died, and great fear came upon all who heard *about* it. ^{5:6}And the young men rose up, wrapped him up, carried him out, and buried him.

^{5:7}Then about three hours later, his wife, not knowing what had happened, came in. ^{5:8}And Peter questioned her,

"Tell me whether you sold the land for this price." And she said, "Yes, for that price." ^{5:9}But Peter said to her, "Why is it that you have agreed together *with your husband* to test the Spirit of the Lord? Look, the feet of those who have buried your husband are at the door and they will carry you out too."

^{5:10}And she immediately fell down at his feet and died. And when the young men came in and found her dead, they carried her out and buried her beside her husband. ^{5:11}And great fear came upon the whole gathering of the called-out ones and upon everyone who heard these things.

^{5:12}And there were many signs and wonders done by the hands of the sent ones among the people. And they got together *daily*, all sharing one passion, in Solomon's porch. ^{5:13}No one else dared to join with them, however the people regarded them very highly. ^{5:14}And more who were believing in the Lord were added *to their number*, multitudes of both men and women.

^{5:15}*The miracles which were done* were such that they even carried the sick out into the city squares and laid them on pallets and litters so that as Peter went by, at least his shadow might fall on some of them. ^{5:16}And large numbers of people from the cities around Jerusalem also came, bringing the sick and those who were troubled with unclean spirits and they were all healed.

^{5:17}But the high priest, being filled with jealousy, rose up, *along with* all those who were with him (which was the sect of the Sadducees) ^{5:18}and *they* arrested the sent ones and put them in the public prison. ^{5:19}But an angel of the Lord opened the prison doors during the night, led them out, and said, ^{5:20}"Go, stand in the temple and speak to the people all the words of the *Father's* life." ^{5:21}And when they heard *this*, they went at dawn into the temple and taught.

But the high priest and those who were with him came and called the council together, along with the entire council of elders of the children of Israel, and sent *officers* to the prison to have them brought *before them*. ^{5:22}Yet the officers who went didn't find them in the prison, so they returned

and reported ^{5:23}saying, "We found the prison securely locked and the guards standing at the doors, but when we opened them, we found no one inside.

^{5:24}Now when the captain of the temple and the chief priests heard these words, they were very perplexed about what might be going on. ^{5:25}Then someone came and told them, "Look, the men whom you put in the prison are in the temple, standing there and teaching the people."

^{5:26}Then the captain went with the officers and brought them [the disciples], *but* without violence because they were afraid that the people might stone them. ^{5:27}And when they had brought them, they set them before the council. And the high priest asked them ^{5:28}saying, "We strictly ordered you not to teach in this name, and look, you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and intend to bring *the guilt for this man's blood upon us.*"

^{5:29}But Peter and the sent ones answered and said, "We must obey God rather than men. ^{5:30}The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom you killed by hanging him on a cross. ^{5:31}He is the One whom God has exalted with his right hand *to be* a Prince and a Savior to bring repentance to Israel and deliverance {liberation} from sins. ^{5:32}And we are his witnesses of these things, as is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who submit in obedience to him." ^{5:33}But when they heard this, there were torn apart with vexation and deliberated about how to kill them.

^{5:34}But someone stood up in the council, a Pharisee named Gamaliel, *who was* a doctor of the *Jewish* law and *was* held in honor by all the people, and ordered the men to be put outside for a little while.

^{5:35}And he said to them, "You men of Israel, be careful with these men concerning what you are about to do. ^{5:36}For before these days, *someone named* Theudas rose up saying he was someone special, to whom a number of men, about four hundred, joined themselves. He was killed and all those who had been persuaded by him were dispersed, and *it all* came to nothing.

^{5:37}"After this a man, Judas of Galilee, rose up in the days of the census and drew away *a number of* people after

himself. He also died and everyone who had been persuaded by him was dispersed. ^{5:38}And now I say to you, stay way from these men and leave them alone. For if this endeavor is the work of man, it will be broken up, ^{5:39}but if it is of God, you will not be able to destroy it. In no way do you want to be discovered to be fighting against God.”

^{5:40}So they were persuaded by him. And they called the sent ones, had them beaten, ordered them not to speak in the name of Jesus, and released them. ^{5:41}They, therefore, left the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were considered worthy to suffer dishonor for the Name. ^{5:42}And every day, in the temple and from house to house, they did not stop teaching and preaching the good news of Jesus the Anointed One.

CHAPTER 6

^{6:1}Now in these days, when the number of the disciples was growing, there arose a complaint by the Grecian Jews against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution *of food*.

^{6:2}So the twelve called a large number of the disciples together and said, “We don’t want to leave the word of God to serve tables. ^{6:3}Therefore, brethren, select from among yourselves seven men who have a good reputation, who are full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint to take care of this necessity. ^{6:4}But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word.”

^{6:5}And these words pleased the whole group and so they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit; Philip; Prochorus; Nicanor; Timon; Parmenas; and Nicolaus, a proselyte from Antioch, ^{6:6}whom they set before the sent ones. And having prayed, they laid their hands on them.

^{6:7}And the word of God increased and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, including a large number of priests who were obedient to the faith. ^{6:8}And Stephen, full of faith and power, worked impressive miracles and signs among the people.

^{6:9}But there arose certain ones who disputed with Stephen, who were from the synagogue called the *synagogue* of the Libertines, and *also* from the Cyrenians, Alexandrians, and some from Cilicia and Asia. ^{6:10}But they were not able to resist the wisdom and the Spirit with which he spoke.

^{6:11}Then they bribed some men to say, "We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses and *against* God." ^{6:12}And they stirred up the people, *along with* the elders and the scribes, *who* came and arrested him and brought him to the council. ^{6:13}And they set up false witnesses who said, "This man never stops speaking words against this holy place and the law. ^{6:14}For we have heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place and will change the customs which Moses delivered to us."

^{6:15}And when they looked at him, all who sat on the council saw his face as if it were the face of an angel.

CHAPTER 7

^{7:1}And the high priest said, "Are these things true?" ^{7:2}So he responded, "Men, brethren, and fathers, hear *me*. The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia before he lived in Haran ^{7:3}and said to him, 'Leave behind your land and your relatives and come to the land which I will show you' (Gen 12:1).

^{7:4}"So he then left the land of the Chaldeans and lived in Haran. And from there, after his father was dead, *God* moved him to this land where you now live. ^{7:5}But he gave him no inheritance in it, no, not even enough to stand on. Yet he promised that he would give it to him as a possession and to his seed after him when he *still* had had no child.

^{7:6}"And this is what God said: that his seed would sojourn in a foreign land where they would enslave them and mistreat *them* for four hundred years. ^{7:7}And the nation which enslaves them I will judge,' says God, 'And after all this, they will come out and serve me in this place' (Gen 15:14; Ex 3:12). ^{7:8}Then he gave him the covenant of circumcision. And so *Abraham* begot Isaac and circumcised him the

eighth day, and Isaac *begot* Jacob, and Jacob the twelve patriarchs. ^{7:9}And the patriarchs, being filled with envy towards Joseph, sold him into Egypt. But God was with him ^{7:10}and delivered him out of all his afflictions and gave him favor and wisdom before Pharaoh king of Egypt, *who then* made him governor over Egypt and all his household.

^{7:11}“Now a famine came upon the entire land Egypt and Canaan, *causing* great distress for our fathers couldn’t find any food. ^{7:12}But when Jacob heard that there was grain in Egypt, he sent out our fathers the first time. ^{7:13}And the second time, Joseph made *himself* known to his brethren, and Joseph’s family became known to Pharaoh.

^{7:14}“And Joseph sent and called his father Jacob *to come* there along with all his relatives, a total of seventy-five souls. ^{7:15}So Jacob went down to Egypt where he died; he, and our fathers. ^{7:16}*Later*, they were carried to Shechem and laid in the tomb that Abraham bought for a sum of silver from the sons of Hamor in Shechem.

^{7:17}“And as the time for the promise to be *fulfilled* drew near, about which God had sworn an oath to Abraham, the people grew *numerous* and multiplied in Egypt ^{7:18}until another king rose up who didn’t know Joseph. ^{7:19}This is the one who acted treacherously with our relatives and oppressed our fathers, forcing them to throw out their babies so that they wouldn’t live.

^{7:20}“It was at that time that Moses was born who was very beautiful, and so he was nursed three months in his father’s house. ^{7:21}And *finally*, when he was put out, Pharaoh’s daughter took him and raised him as her own son. ^{7:22}So Moses was educated in all the wisdom of the Egyptians and he was powerful in his words and deeds.

^{7:23}“But when he was almost forty years old, *the desire* entered into his heart to visit his brethren, the children of Israel. ^{7:24}And seeing one *of them* being treated unjustly, he defended him and took revenge for the one who was being treated roughly, striking *and killing* the Egyptian. ^{7:25}For he supposed that his brethren would understand that God would give them deliverance by his hand. But they didn’t understand it.

7:26“ And the next day he came upon two of them fighting with each other and he forced them to make peace saying, ‘Men, you are relatives. Why do act unjustly towards one another?’ 7:27But the one who had been unjust with his neighbor pushed him away saying, ‘Who made you a ruler and a judge over us? 7:28Are you going to kill me as you killed the Egyptian yesterday?’

7:29“Now when Moses heard this, he fled and became a foreigner in the land of Midian where he begot two sons. 7:30And when forty years had passed, the Angel of the Lord appeared to him in the desert of Mount Sinai as a flame of fire in a bush. 7:31And when Moses saw it, he was astonished at the sight. *But* as he came near to examine it, the voice of the Lord said to him, 7:32‘I am the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob.’ And Moses became terrified and didn’t dare look closely.

7:33“And the Lord said to him, ‘Take the sandals off your feet, for the place where you stand is holy ground. 7:34I have surely seen the affliction of my people who are in Egypt and have heard their groaning, and I have come down to deliver them. So now come, *for* I will send you to Egypt’ (Ex 2:24,25).

7:35“This Moses whom they refused saying, ‘Who made you a ruler and a judge,’ he is the one whom God sent *to be* both a ruler and a deliverer by the hand of the Angel who appeared to him in the bush. 7:36This man led them out, having done wonders and signs in Egypt, in the Red Sea, and in the wilderness for forty years. 7:37This is that Moses, who said to the children of Israel, ‘God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your brethren.’

7:38“This is he who received living oracles to give to us when he was in the assembly of the called-out ones in the wilderness with the Angel who spoke to him and to our fathers from Mount Sinai. 7:39*This was he* to whom our fathers would not be obedient but pushed him away from them and turned their hearts back towards Egypt, 7:40saying to Aaron, ‘Make us gods that will go before us. But as for this Moses who led us out of the land of Egypt, we don’t know what has become of him’ (Ex 32:1,23).

^{7:41}“So they made an image of a calf in those days, brought a sacrifice to the idol, and were euphoric about the works of their own hands. ^{7:42}Then God turned *away from them* and gave up on them so that they served the celestial army of *fallen angels*. This is in agreement with what was written in the book of the prophets, ‘Was it *really* to me that you offered dead animals and sacrifices for forty years in the wilderness, you house of Israel? ^{7:43}Actually, *in your hearts* you carried the tabernacle of Moloch and the star of your god Rephan, *even* the images which you made for yourselves to worship. Therefore, *for my part*, I will carry you away beyond Babylon’ (Amos 5:25-27).

^{7:44}“Our fathers had the tabernacle of the testimony in the wilderness, following *the pattern* which he who spoke to Moses prescribed, so that he would make it according to the model that he had seen. ^{7:45}Our fathers also, in their turn, brought it into the land with Joshua when they took over the possessions of the nations which God drove out in front of our fathers until the days of David.

^{7:46}“*He is the one* who found favor in God’s sight and asked to make a habitation for the God of Jacob. ^{7:47}But Solomon *is the one who* built him a house. ^{7:48}However, the Most High doesn’t live in *houses* which are made with *human* hands, as the prophet said, ^{7:49}‘The heaven is my throne and the earth is the footstool of my feet. What kind of house could you build for me, says the Lord? Or what sort of place *could you construct* where I could be at rest? ^{7:50}Wasn’t it my hand that made all these things?’ (Is 66:1,2).

^{7:51}“You stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, you always resist the Holy Spirit. You act just as your fathers did. ^{7:52}Which of the prophets didn’t your fathers persecute? And they killed those who predicted beforehand the coming of the Righteous One, of whom you have now become betrayers and murderers. ^{7:53}You are those who received the law which came through angels yet didn’t keep it.”

^{7:54}Now when they heard these things, *the word* cut through their hearts like a saw, and they ground their teeth

with anger against him. ^{7:55}But he, being full of the Holy Spirit, looked up intently towards the heavens and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing in the place of supreme honor and authority of God. ^{7:56}So *he* said, "Look, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing in the place of supreme honor and authority of God."

^{7:57}But they cried out with a loud voice, plugged their ears, and rushed at him with one purpose. ^{7:58}And having dragged him out of the city, they stoned him. And the witnesses laid their *outer* garments down at the feet of a young man named Saul. ^{7:59}And they stoned Stephen *while he was* calling on *the Lord* and saying, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." ^{7:60}So he kneeled down and cried with a loud voice, "Lord, don't charge them with this sin." And when he had said this, he passed away.

CHAPTER 8

^{8:1}And Saul was consenting to his death. Then that time a great persecution began against the gathering of the called-out ones which was in Jerusalem, and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the sent ones. ^{8:2}And devout men buried Stephen and beat their breasts with great sorrow over him. ^{8:3}But Saul devastated the gathering of the called-out ones, entering into their homes and arresting both men and women and turning them over to be imprisoned.

^{8:4}The ones who were being scattered, therefore, preached the word as they went. ^{8:5}And Philip, going down to a city in Samaria, proclaimed the Anointed One to them. ^{8:6}And when they heard *the word* and saw the signs which he did, the crowds grasped and applied to themselves with one passion the things which were spoken by Philip. ^{8:7}For unclean spirits, crying out with loud voices, came out from many of those who were possessed, and many who were disabled or lame were healed. ^{8:8}And this was the source of much joy in that city.

^{8:9}But there was a certain man named Simon who had been practicing magic in the city and had greatly impressed the people of Samaria, boasting that he was

someone special. ^{8:10}They all had become devoted to him, from the least to the greatest, saying, "This man has the power of the great God." ^{8:11}And they paid attention to him because he had amazed them with his magic for a long time. ^{8:12}But when they believed the good news concerning the kingdom of God and *in* the name of Jesus the Anointed One *which* Philip *was* preaching, they were baptized, both men and women.

^{8:13}And even Simon himself believed. And being baptized, he continued with Philip, and seeing the works of power and *the* signs which were done, he was amazed.

^{8:14}Now when the sent ones who were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them. ^{8:15}When they came, *Peter and John* prayed for them, so that they would receive the Holy Spirit, ^{8:16}for until then it had fallen upon none of them, but they had only been baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. ^{8:17}Then laid they their hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit.

^{8:18}Now when Simon saw that through the sent ones' laying their hands on them, the Holy Spirit was imparted, he offered them money ^{8:19}saying, "Give me this power too, so that on whomever I lay my hands, *they* would receive the Holy Spirit." ^{8:20}But Peter said to him, "May your silver be destroyed along with you because you supposed you could buy the gift of God with money. ^{8:21}You have no participation or part in this matter, for your heart is not right before God. ^{8:22}Therefore, repent of your evil intentions and cry out to God so that the thoughts of your heart will be forgiven. ^{8:23}For I see that your *heart* is poisoned by bitterness and bound by sin."

^{8:24}And Simon answered and said, "Cry out to the Lord for me, that none of the things which you have said come upon me." ^{8:25}Therefore, when they finished testifying and speaking the word of the Lord, *they also* preached the gospel to many villages of the Samaritans, while returning to Jerusalem.

^{8:26}Then an angel of the Lord spoke to Philip saying, "Get up and go south along the road that goes down from

Jerusalem to Gaza where it is desert." ^{8:27}So he got up and went. And look, *he saw* a man from Ethiopia who had come to Jerusalem to worship, a eunuch with great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians who was responsible for all her treasure. ^{8:28}He was returning *home*, and sitting in his chariot *he* was reading the prophet Isaiah.

^{8:29}And the Spirit said to Philip, "Go near and accompany that chariot." ^{8:30}So Philip ran to him, heard him reading Isaiah the prophet, and said, "Do you understand what you are reading?" ^{8:31}And he said, "How can I unless someone gives me some instruction?" So he asked Philip to come up and sit with him.

^{8:32}Now the passage of the Scripture which he was reading was this, "He was led as a sheep to the slaughter, and as a lamb before his shearer is dumb, so he didn't open his mouth. ^{8:33}In his humiliation, justice was denied him. Who will *be able to* talk about those he fathered, for his life was taken from the earth?"

^{8:34}And the eunuch spoke to Philip and said, "I ask you, who is this prophet speaking about? About himself or about someone else?" ^{8:35}So Philip opened his mouth, and beginning from this scripture, preached Jesus to him. ^{8:36}And as they went along the road, they came upon some water and the eunuch said, "Look, *here is some water*. What would prevent me from being baptized?"

^{8:38}So he commanded the chariot to stop and they went down into the water, both Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him. ^{8:39}And when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught Philip away and the eunuch never saw him again. But he went on his way rejoicing.

^{8:40}But Philip found *himself* at Azotus. So going on from there, he preached the gospel in every city while on the way to Caesarea.

CHAPTER 9

^{9:1}But Saul, still breathing out death threats against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest ^{9:2}and asked him for letters to the synagogues in Damascus so that if he found any who were of the "Way", whether men or

women, he could bind them and bring them to Jerusalem. ^{9:3}And while he journeyed, as he neared Damascus, it happened that a light from the heavens suddenly enveloped him. ^{9:4}Then having fallen down on the ground, he heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?" ^{9:5}And he said, "Who are you, Lord?" And he answered, "I am Jesus whom you are persecuting. Isn't it hard for you to kick against the goads?"

^{9:6}Then trembling and upset, he said, "Lord, what do you want me to do?" And the Lord said to him, "Get up, go into the city, and you will be told what you must do." ^{9:7}And the men who journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing the sound but seeing no one.

^{9:8}Then Saul got up from the ground but when he opened his eyes, he couldn't see anything, so they led him by the hand and brought him to Damascus. ^{9:9}And he was three days without being able to see, and neither did he eat nor drink.

^{9:10}Now there was a certain disciple in Damascus named Ananias. And the Lord called to him in a vision, "Ananias." And he said, "Look, *here I am*, Lord." ^{9:11}And the Lord *said* to him, "Get up and go to the street which is called "Straight," and ask at the house of Judas for someone named Saul, a man of Tarsus. See, he is praying ^{9:12}and he has seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in and laying his hands on him so that he can recover his eyesight."

^{9:13}But Ananias answered, "Lord, I have heard from many *about* this man about how much evil he did to the ones set apart for you at Jerusalem ^{9:14}and *that he* has come here with authority from the chief priests to arrest all those who call on your name." ^{9:15}But the Lord said to him, "Go! For he is a chosen vessel of mine to lift up my name before nations, kings, and the children of Israel. ^{9:16}For I will show him how many things he must suffer for my name."

^{9:17}So Ananias went and entered into the house. And laying his hands on him said, "Brother Saul, the Lord who appeared to you on the road by which you came has sent me so that you may recover your sight and be filled with

the Holy Spirit.”^{9:18} And immediately something like scales fell from his eyes and he received his eyesight. So he rose up and was baptized.^{9:19} He then ate some food and was strengthened. And he stayed with the disciples who were at Damascus for some time.

^{9:20} And immediately *thereafter*, he was in the synagogues proclaiming that Jesus is the Son of God.^{9:21} And all who heard him were surprised and said, “Isn’t this the one who raised havoc with those who called on this name in Jerusalem? And he had come here for this purpose, so that he could arrest them and bring them bound before the chief priests.”

^{9:22} But Saul became very bold and confounded the Jews who lived in Damascus, proving *from the scriptures* that this is the Anointed One.^{9:23} And when some time had passed, the Jews plotted together to kill him,^{9:24} but their plot became known to Saul. And they watched the gates of *the city* day and night so that they could kill him.^{9:25} But the disciples took him at night and let him down through the wall, lowering him in a basket.

^{9:26} And when he had come to Jerusalem, he tried to join the disciples, but they were all afraid of him, not believing that he was a disciple.^{9:27} But Bar-Nabas {son of encouragement} took him, brought him to the sent ones and described to them how he had seen the Lord on the road and what he had said to him and how at Damascus he had spoken confidently in the name of Jesus.

^{9:28} So he was with them, coming and going at Jerusalem^{9:29} and speaking out boldly in the name of the Lord. And he spoke and disputed with the Grecian Jews, but they began to plan *how* to kill him.^{9:30} So when the brethren learned of it, they brought him down to Caesarea and sent him off to Tarsus.

^{9:31} So the gathering of the called-out ones throughout all Judea, Galilee, and Samaria had peace, being built up. And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the encouragement of the Holy Spirit, their number was increased.^{9:32} And it happened as Peter travelled though every place *where the gospel had been received*, he came down to those set

apart for God who lived in Lydda also. ^{9:33}And there he found a certain man named Aeneas, who had been bedridden for eight years because he was paralyzed.

^{9:34}And Peter said to him, "Aeneas, Jesus the Anointed One heals you. Get up and make your bed." And right away he got up. ^{9:35}And all who lived in Lydda and Sharon saw him and they turned to the Lord.

^{9:36}Now at Joppa there was a certain disciple named Tabitha, which being interpreted was called "Dorcas." This woman was full of good works and acts of mercy which she did. ^{9:37}And it happened in those days that she became sick and died. And when they had washed her, they laid her in an upper chamber.

^{9:38}And since Lydda was near Joppa, the disciples, hearing that Peter was there, sent two men to him asking him to come to them without delay. ^{9:39}So Peter rose up and went with them. Then when he had arrived they brought him to the upper chamber. And all the widows stood near him weeping and showing *him* the coats and garments which Dorcas had made *for them* while she was with them.

^{9:40}But Peter put them all out and kneeled down and prayed. Then turning to the body, he said, "Tabitha, arise!" And she opened her eyes, and when she saw Peter, she sat up. ^{9:41}So he gave her his hand and raised her up. And calling those set apart for God and the widows, he presented her alive. ^{9:42}So this became known throughout all Joppa, and many believed on the Lord. ^{9:43}And it happened that he stayed in Joppa a long time with someone *named* Simon *who was* a hide tanner.

CHAPTER 10

^{10:1}Now *there was* a certain man in Caesarea named Cornelius who was a centurion of the band called the Italian *band*. ^{10:2}He was a devout man who feared God along with all his household and performed many charitable acts for the people and continually prayed to God.

^{10:3}About the ninth hour of the day he saw in a vision an angel of God coming to him and saying to him, "Cornelius." ^{10:4}And he, being frightened, fixed his eyes on

him and said, "What is it, Lord?" And he said to him, "Your prayers and your charitable deeds have ascended up as a memorial before God. ^{10:5}And now, send some men to Joppa and bring back Simon who is called Peter. ^{10:6}He is staying with someone named Simon, a hide tanner whose house is by the seaside."

^{10:7}Then when the angel who spoke to him left, he called two of his household servants and a devout soldier from those who attended to him continually, ^{10:8}and having described everything to them, he sent them to Joppa.

^{10:9}Now on the next day, as they were on their journey and came near the city, Peter went up on the housetop to pray at about the sixth hour *of the day*. ^{10:10}And he became hungry and wanted to eat something. But while they were preparing it, he fell into a trance ^{10:11}and he saw the heaven opened and something like a sail coming down, similar to a large sheet, lowered down by four corners onto the earth. ^{10:12}In it were all kinds of four-footed creatures, wild animals, reptiles, and birds of the heaven.

^{10:13}And a voice came to him *saying*, "Get up Peter, kill and eat!" ^{10:14}But Peter said, "By no means Lord, for I have never eaten anything that is unholy or unclean." ^{10:15}And a voice came to him again the second time *saying*, "What God has made clean, you must not consider unclean." ^{10:16}And this was done three times. And the piece of cloth was taken back up into heaven.

^{10:17}Now while Peter was perplexed about what the vision which he had seen could mean, just then the men who were sent by Cornelius – having asked directions to Simon's house – arrived outside the gate. ^{10:18}And *they* called out asking, "Is Simon, the one who was called Peter, staying here?" ^{10:19}And while Peter was pondering about the vision, the Spirit said to him, "Look, three men are *here* looking for you. ^{10:20}So get up, go down, and go with them without hesitation, for I have sent them."

^{10:21}So Peter went down to the men and said, "See here, I am the one who you are looking for. Why have you come?" ^{10:22}And they said, "Cornelius – a centurion and a righteous man who fears God and is well spoken of by the

whole nation of the Jews – received a divine message, brought by a holy angel, to send for you to come to his house and to hear what you have to say.”

^{10:23}So he invited them in and arranged a place for them to stay. And on the next day, he went with them *along with* some of the brethren from Joppa who accompanied him. ^{10:24}And on the following day they came to Caesarea where Cornelius was waiting for them, having called together his relatives and close friends.

^{10:25}And it happened that as Peter entered, Cornelius met him and fell down at his feet and worshipped him. ^{10:26}But Peter lifted him up saying, “Stand up. I myself am also a man.” ^{10:27}And going with him, he went inside and found many gathered together.

^{10:28}Then he said to them, “You know that it against *Jewish* law for someone who is a Jew to make friends with or to visit a Gentile and yet God has shown me that I should not call anyone unholy or unclean. ^{10:29}Therefore, also I came without questioning when you sent for me. What then is the reason for sending for me?”

^{10:30}Then Cornelius said, “Four days ago, I was fasting until about this time and at the ninth hour was praying in my house. And suddenly, a man stood in front of me in shining clothing ^{10:31}and said, ‘Cornelius, your prayer has been heard and your charitable gifts have been remembered before God. ^{10:32}Therefore, send to Joppa and call Simon who is called Peter to come to you. He is staying in the house of Simon, a hide tanner by the seashore. When he comes, he will tell you *something important*.’

^{10:33}“Therefore, I sent for you immediately and you have done a good thing by coming. Now, therefore, we are all here present in the sight of God to hear everything that the Lord has given to you to say.”

^{10:34}So Peter opened his mouth and said, “I perceive that it is true that God does not discriminate between people, ^{10:35}but those in any nation who fear him and practice righteousness are acceptable to him. ^{10:36}The word *which I have is the one* which he sent to the children of Israel *through the preaching of the good news, which is peace with God*

through Jesus the Anointed One, who is Lord of all. ^{10:37}You yourselves know about this message which was declared throughout all Judea beginning in Galilee, coming after the *message of baptism* which John preached. ^{10:38}*This news concerns* Jesus of Nazareth who went around doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, *for* God anointed him with the Holy Spirit and with power and was *present* with him.

^{10:39}“And we are witnesses of all the things which he did, in both the region of the Jews and in Jerusalem. *Yet* they put *him* to death by suspending him on a wooden beam. ^{10:40}*This is* the One *whom* God raised up on the third day and allowed him to be revealed – ^{10:41}not to everyone but to witnesses who were chosen by God, *even* to us who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead.

^{10:42}“And he commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that this is he, the One who is ordained by God *to be* the Judge of the living and the dead. ^{10:43}All the prophets give evidence concerning him, *showing* that through his name, everyone who is believing into him will be receiving deliverance {liberation} from sins.”

^{10:44}While Peter was still speaking these things, the Holy Spirit fell on all those who heard the word. ^{10:45}And the believers of the circumcision – all those who had come with Peter – were amazed because the gift of the Holy Spirit was also poured out on the Gentiles. ^{10:46}For they heard them speak in *different* languages magnifying God.

Then Peter responded, ^{10:47}“Can anyone prohibit these who have received the Holy Spirit just as we did from being baptized in water?” ^{10:48}So he arranged for them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. They then asked him to stay *with them* for some time.

CHAPTER 11

^{11:1}Now the sent ones and the brethren who were in Judea heard that the Gentiles had also received the word of God. ^{11:2}So when Peter had come back to Jerusalem, those who were of the circumcision *faction* contended with him ^{11:3}saying, “You went into *the homes* of men who were

uncircumcised and ate with them." 11:4 So Peter began and explained *the situation* to them in order saying, 11:5 "I was in the city of Joppa praying, and in a trance I saw a vision. Something like a sail, similar to a large sheet, was being lowered down from the heavens by its four corners. And it came close to me. 11:6 When I looked intently at it, I saw all kinds of four-footed creatures, wild animals, reptiles, and birds of the heaven.

11:7 "And I also heard a voice saying to me, 'Get up, Peter, kill and eat!' 11:8 But I said, 'By no means, Lord, for I have never eaten anything that is unholy or unclean.' 11:9 But a voice answered the second time out of heaven, 'What God has made clean, you must not consider unclean.' 11:10 And this was done three times and *then* everything was withdrawn into the heavens.

11:11 "And see here, at that very moment three men stood in front of the house where we were, having been sent from Caesarea to *find* me. 11:12 And the Spirit told me to go with them without hesitation. And these six brethren also went with me and we entered into the man's house.

11:13 "Then he told us how he had seen an angel standing in his house and saying, 'Send to Joppa and bring Simon who is called Peter. 11:14 He will speak words to you through which you will be being saved, you and your whole household.'

11:15 "And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell on them just as *it fell* on us at the beginning. 11:16 Then I remembered the words which the Lord said: 'John truly baptized with water, but you will be baptized in the Holy Spirit.'

11:17 "If then God gave to them the same gift that *he* also gave to us when we believed on the Lord Jesus the Anointed One, who was I that I could resist God?" 11:18 And when they heard these things, they kept silent and glorified God saying, "Then God has also granted to the Gentiles repentance into *the Father's* life."

11:19 Then the ones who were dispersed abroad because of the persecution which arose about Stephen travelled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch, speaking the word to no one except Jews. 11:20 But there were some of them,

men from Cyprus and Cyrene, who when they came to Antioch, spoke to the Greeks preaching the Lord Jesus. 11:21 And the hand of the Lord was with them so that a large number of *them* believed, turning to the Lord.

11:22 And the news about them came to the ears of the gathering of the called-out ones which was in Jerusalem. So they sent out Bar-Nabas as far as Antioch. 11:23 When he had come and seen the grace of God, he was filled with joy and he encouraged them all to determine in their hearts to remain faithful to the Lord. 11:24 For he was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and faith. And many people were added to the Lord.

11:25 Then he went to Tarsus to look for Saul, 11:26 and when he found him, he brought him to Antioch. And it happened *that* they spent a whole year together with the gathering of the called-out ones and taught many people. And it was at Antioch that the disciples were first called "Christians" {little Anointed Ones}.

11:27 Now in those days some prophets from Jerusalem came to Antioch. 11:28 And one of them named Agabus stood up and made known by the Spirit that there would be a great famine over all the [Roman] world which took place in the days of Claudius. 11:29 So the disciples decided to send relief to the brethren who lived in Judea, each one *giving* according to his financial conditions. 11:30 They then did this, sending *their offering* to the older, *spiritually* mature brethren through the hands of Bar-Nabas and Saul.

CHAPTER 12

12:1 Now about that time, Herod the king began to use his power to harm some of the gathering of the called-out ones. 12:2 He also killed James the brother of John with the sword. 12:3 Then when he saw that it made the Jews happy, he went on to arrest Peter also. And *this took place during* the days of unleavened bread.

12:4 When he had arrested him, he put him in prison, putting a guard of four squads of soldiers around him, with the intention of bringing him out to the people after the Passover. 12:5 Peter, therefore, was kept carefully guard-

ed in the prison. But the gathering of the called-out ones prayed earnestly to God for him.

^{12:6}Then when Herod was about to bring him out, on that very night Peter was sleeping bound with two chains between two soldiers. And *there were other* guards outside the door who watched over the prison. ^{12:7}And look, an angel of the Lord stood beside him, a light shone in the cell, and he struck Peter on the side and woke him up saying, "Get up quickly." Then the chains fell off his hands. ^{12:8}And the angel said to him, "Dress yourself and tie on your sandals." And he did so. Then he said to him, "Throw your cloak around you and follow me."

^{12:9}So he followed the angel outside. Yet he didn't understand that what the angel did was real, but *instead* thought that he was seeing a vision. ^{12:10}But when they had gone past the first and second *group of* guards, they came to the iron gate leading into the city, which opened to them by itself. Then, when they had escaped and gone down one street, suddenly the angel left him.

^{12:11}And when Peter became aware of *what had really happened* to him, he said, "Now I know with certainty that the Lord sent out his angel and rescued me from the hand of Herod and from everything which the Jewish people were expecting. ^{12:12}And while considering the situation, he came to the house of Mary the mother of John whose surname was Mark where many were gathered together praying.

^{12:13}And when he knocked at the door of the gate, a maid named Rhoda came to answer. ^{12:14}But when she recognized Peter's voice, she was overcome with joy, *yet* she didn't open the gate but ran inside and reported that Peter was standing outside the gate. ^{12:15}And they said to her, "You're crazy." But she kept insisting that it was true. So they said, "It must be his angel."

^{12:16}But Peter continued knocking, and when they had opened the gate, they saw him and were astounded. ^{12:17}But he, motioning to them with his hand to be quiet, described to them how the Lord had brought him out of the prison. And he said, "Tell these things to James and to the brethren." So he left and went to another place. ^{12:18}Now as

soon as it was daylight, there was no small disturbance among the soldiers about what had become of Peter.

^{12:19}And when Herod had sought for him and didn't find him, having questioned the guards, *he* ordered them be put to death. And he went down from Judea to Caesarea and stayed there.

^{12:20}Now he was very angry with those of Tyre and Sidon. But they came to him with one purpose, and having persuaded Blastus the king's officer who was in charge his bed chamber *to help them*, they asked for peace because their country was sustained by the king's country.

^{12:21}And on an appointed day, Herod dressed himself in royal robes, sat on the throne and made an speech to them. ^{12:22}And the people shouted *saying*, "It's the voice of a god and not a man." ^{12:23}And immediately an angel of the Lord struck him because he didn't give God the glory. And he became filled with maggots and passed away.

^{12:24}But the word of God grew and multiplied. ^{12:25}And Bar-Nabas {son of encouragement} and Saul, when they had completed their service, returned from Jerusalem taking with them John who is called Mark.

CHAPTER 13

^{13:1}Now there were some at Antioch among the assembly of the called-out ones, prophets, and teachers: Bar-Nabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen a childhood companion of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. ^{13:2}And as they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, "Now *is the time* to set apart Bar-Nabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." ^{13:3}So, when they had fasted, prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.

^{13:4}So they, being sent out by the Holy Spirit, went down to Seleucia and from there they sailed to Cyprus. ^{13:5}And when they were at Salamis, they proclaimed the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews, and they also had John as their assistant. ^{13:6}And when they had gone through the island as far as Paphos, they encountered a certain astrologer *who was* a false prophet *and* a Jew named

Bar-Jesus. ^{13:7}He was associated with the proconsul Sergius Paulus, who was an intelligent man. This proconsul summoned Bar-Nabas and Saul, earnestly desiring to hear the word of God.

^{13:8}But Elymas the sorcerer (for this is how his name is interpreted) opposed them, seeking to turn the proconsul away from the faith. ^{13:9}But Saul, who is also called Paul,* being filled with the Holy Spirit, fastened his eyes on him ^{13:10}and said, "Oh you who are completely full of deceit and cunning, you son of the devil, you enemy of all that is righteous, won't you ever stop twisting the straight ways of the Lord? ^{13:11}And now look, the hand of the Lord is upon you and you will be blind, not seeing the sun for a time."

And immediately a kind of mistiness and darkness fell on him and he went around seeking for someone to lead him by the hand. ^{13:12}Then the proconsul, when he saw what had happened believed, being struck with astonishment at the teaching of the Lord.

^{13:13}Now Paul and his company set sail from Paphos and came to Perga in Pamphylia. But John left them and returned to Jerusalem. ^{13:14}But they, passing through from Perga, came to Antioch of Pisidia. There they went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day and sat down. ^{13:15}And after the reading of the law and the prophets, the rulers of the synagogue sent to them saying, "Brethren, if you have any word of consolation for the people, you may say it."

^{13:16}So Paul stood up and motioning with his hand said, "Men of Israel and you who fear God, listen. ^{13:17}The God of this people Israel chose our fathers and exalted the people when they sojourned in the land of Egypt, and with lofty power led he them out of it. ^{13:18}And for a period of about forty years, he was patient with them in the wilderness. ^{13:19}Then, when he had destroyed seven nations in the land of Canaan, he gave them their land for an inheritance. ^{13:20}And after these things, for about four hundred and fifty

*Saul was probably named after king Saul of the Old Testament, the tallest and most impressive of the Israelites. Perhaps, naturally speaking, Paul lived up to this name. But here his name has changed to Paul, meaning "little one," or "humble." So we see that God has done a work in his character, changing him from big and important to small and humble.

years, he gave *them* judges until Samuel the prophet. ^{13:21}Yet afterwards, they asked for a king. So God gave them Saul the son of Kish, a man from the tribe of Benjamin, for the period of forty years. ^{13:22}Then, when he had removed him, he raised up David to be their king, about whom also he testified and said, 'I have found David the son of Jesse *to be a man after my heart who will do all my will.*'

^{13:23}"From this man's seed God has brought a Deliverer, Jesus, to Israel according to his promise. ^{13:24}*This is the one whom* John publicly proclaimed before his coming *by his baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel.* ^{13:25}And as John was completing his course, he said, 'Who do you suppose that I am? I am not *he*. But look, someone is coming after me, the sandals of whose feet I am not worthy to untie.'

^{13:26}"Brethren, children of the race of Abraham, and those among you who fear God, this word of salvation has been sent to us. ^{13:27}Yet those who live in Jerusalem and their rulers – because they did not know him or the voices of the prophets which are read every Sabbath – fulfilled *them* by condemning *him*. ^{13:28}And though they found no justification for death, yet they begged Pilate for him to be put to death.

^{13:29}"And when they had fulfilled all *the* things that were written about him, they took him down from the wooden beam and laid him in a tomb. ^{13:30}But God raised him from the dead ^{13:31}and he was seen for many days by those who came with him from Galilee to Jerusalem *and* who are now his witnesses to the people. ^{13:32}And we announce to you good news! The promise made to the fathers has taken place! ^{13:33}This is what God has fulfilled for us and our children *by* having raised up Jesus! And as also it is written in the second psalm, 'You are my Son; today have I begotten you' (Ps 2:7).

^{13:34}"And concerning his raising him from the dead, never to return to *the* decay of *death*, he has spoken in this way, 'I will give you the holy and trustworthy *blessings* of David' (Is 53:3). ^{13:35}Therefore, he also says in another *psalm*, 'You will not allow your Holy One to see *the* decay of *death*'

(Ps 16:10). ^{13:36}For David, after he had served his own generation according to the will of God, died, joining his forefathers, and saw *the decay of death*. ^{13:37}But he who God raised up saw no *such* decay. ^{13:38}Therefore, let it be known to you, brethren, that through this man deliverance from sins is announced to you, ^{13:39}and that by him, everyone who is believing is being considered just, even from all the things from which you could not be justified by the law of Moses.

^{13:40}“Therefore, understand this, so that that which was spoken in the prophets doesn’t come upon *you*. ^{13:41}Look, you despisers, be astonished and disappear. For I will do a work in your days – a work which you will never believe, *even* if someone would explain it to you.”

^{13:42}And leaving the synagogue of the Jews, the Gentiles begged them that these words might be spoken to them on the next Sabbath. ^{13:43}Now when the synagogue *meeting* was dismissed, many of the Jews and the devout proselytes followed Paul and Bar-Nabas, who, speaking to them, urged them to continue in the grace of God. ^{13:44}And the next Sabbath almost the whole city was gathered together to hear the word of God.

^{13:45}But when the Jews saw the crowds, they were filled with jealousy and contradicted the things which were spoken by Paul, disputing their words and slandering *them*. ^{13:46}But Paul and Bar-Nabas spoke boldly and said, “It was necessary for the word of God to be spoken to you first. But since you reject it and decide that you are unworthy of *God’s* eternal life, look, we will turn to the Gentiles. ^{13:47}For this is the command which God gave us, saying, ‘I have set you as a light for the Gentiles, so that you would be for salvation to the ends of the earth’” (Is 49:6).

^{13:48}And when the Gentiles heard this, they rejoiced and glorified the word of the Lord. And as many as were appointed to *receive God’s* eternal life believed. ^{13:49}So the word of the Lord was spread throughout the whole region.

^{13:50}But the Jews stirred up *trouble* among the devout women, along with the wealthy and influential men of the city, and raised up a persecution against Paul and Bar-Nabas and drove them out of their district. ^{13:51}But they,

having shaken off the dust of their feet *as a testimony* against them, came to Iconium. ^{13:52}But the disciples were filled with joy and *with* the Holy Spirit.

CHAPTER 14

^{14:1}And it happened in Iconium that they went into the synagogue of the Jews together and spoke in such a way that a large number of both Jews and Greeks believed. ^{14:2}But the Jews who refused to believe rose up and poisoned the minds of the Gentiles against the brethren.

^{14:3}In spite of this, they spent time there speaking boldly in the Lord who testified to the word of his grace *by* granting signs and miracles to be done by their hands. ^{14:4}But the populace of the city was divided. And one part sided with the Jews and *the other* part with the sent ones.

^{14:5}But when a violent attack was planned by both the Gentiles and Jews *together* with their leaders to mistreat them and stone them, ^{14:6}the *sent ones* became aware of it and fled to the cities of Lycaonia, Lystra, Derbe, and the surrounding region. ^{14:7}And they preached the gospel there.

^{14:8}And at Lystra a certain man sat *there* who was paralyzed in his feet, being a cripple from his mother's womb who never had walked. ^{14:9}This one heard Paul speaking, who, looking intently at him and seeing that he had faith to be healed, ^{14:10}said with a loud voice, "Stand upright on your feet." And he leaped up and walked.

^{14:11}So when the crowd saw what Paul had done, they raised their voices, *saying* in the Lycaonian *language*, "The gods have become like men and have come down to us." ^{14:12}And they called Bar-Nabas "Jupiter" and Paul "Mercury" because he {Paul} was the primary speaker. ^{14:13}Then the priest of Jupiter whose *temple* was above the city, brought oxen and garlands to the gates and wanted to make a sacrifice with the crowds.

^{14:14}But when the sent ones, Bar-Nabas and Paul, heard about it, they tore their clothes and rushed into the multitude, crying out ^{14:15}and saying, "Men, why are you doing this? We are men like you with similar passions. But we are preaching this important message to you so that you

would turn from these useless things to a God who is *actually* living: *the One* who made the heavens, the earth, and the sea, and everything that is in them, ^{14:16}who in past generations allowed all the nations to walk in their own ways. ^{14:17}And yet he didn't leave himself without a testimony by doing good *to you* and giving you rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling your hearts with food and gladness." ^{14:18}And with these words they barely restrained the crowds from sacrificing to them.

^{14:19}But Jews from Antioch and Iconium came there and, having convinced the crowds, they stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city, supposing that he was dead. ^{14:20}But as the disciples stood around him, he rose up and entered into the city. Then the next day he went with Barnabas to Derbe.

^{14:21}And when they had preached the gospel in that city and had made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, to Iconium, and to Antioch, ^{14:22}strengthening the souls of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith, and saying that it is necessary to go through many afflictions to enter into the kingdom of God.

^{14:23}And when they had pointed out for them the older, more *spiritually* mature brothers in every gathering of the called-out ones and had prayed with fasting, they entrusted them to the Lord on whom they had believed.

^{14:24}And having gone through Pisidia, they came to Pamphylia. ^{14:25}And when they had spoken the word in Perga, they went down to Attalia. ^{14:26}Then from there they sailed to Antioch, from where they had been committed to the grace of God for the work which they had *now* fulfilled.

^{14:27}And when they had come and had gathered the called-out ones together, they rehearsed all things which God had done with them and how he had opened a door of faith to the Gentiles. ^{14:28}So they spent a considerable time there with the disciples.

CHAPTER 15

^{15:1}And certain men came down from Judea and taught the brethren *saying*, "Unless you are circumcised

following the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved.”
15:2 But when Paul and Bar-Nabas took a stand against them and it resulted in no small dispute, *the brethren* arranged for Paul, Bar-Nabas, and certain others of them to go up to Jerusalem to the sent ones and the older, *spiritually* mature brothers about this question.

15:3 They, therefore, being sent on their way by the gathering of the called-out ones, passed through both Phoenicia and Samaria, telling in detail *about* the conversion of the Gentiles. And this caused great joy for all the brethren.

15:4 And when they came to Jerusalem, they were well received by the gathering of the called-out ones, the sent ones, and the older, *spiritually* mature brothers and they recounted everything that God had done with them.

15:5 But certain ones of the sect of the Pharisees who had believed rose up saying, “It is necessary to circumcise them and to order them to keep the law of Moses.” 15:6 So the sent ones and the older, *spiritually* mature brothers got together to consider this question.

15:7 And when there had been much discussion, Peter rose up and said to them, “Brethren, you know that God previously chose *from* among us that *it would be* that by my mouth that the Gentiles would hear the word of the gospel and believe. 15:8 And God, who knows the hearts, gave his testimony by giving them the Holy Spirit just as he did to us. 15:9 And he made no distinction between us and them, cleansing their hearts by faith.”

15:10 “Now, therefore, why do you test God by placing a yoke upon the necks of the disciples which neither we nor our fathers were able to bear? 15:11 But by the grace of the Lord Jesus the Anointed One, we are believing that we will be saved in the same way as they *will be*.”

15:12 So the whole assembly kept quiet. And they listened to Bar-Nabas and Paul describe how many signs and wonders God had done among the Gentiles through them.

15:13 And after they had finished speaking, James responded saying, “Brethren, listen to me. 15:14 Simon has described how God first visited the Gentiles to take out

from them a people for his name. ^{15:15}And this agrees with the words of the prophets, as it is written, ^{15:16}After these things I will return, and I will rebuild the tabernacle of David which has fallen. For I will build again the things which have been razed and I will set it up, ^{15:17}so that the remnants of men will seek after the Lord, even all the Gentiles who have called *themselves* by my name, ^{15:18}says the Lord who does all these things' (Amos 9:11,12).

^{15:19}"Therefore, my judgment is that we don't cause trouble for those who turn to God from among the Gentiles ^{15:20}but that we write to them that they abstain from the pollutions of idols, from sex outside of the marriage bond, from *eating* what is strangled and from blood. ^{15:21}For many generations have had those who preach Moses, *his writings* being read in the synagogues of every city on every Sabbath."

^{15:22}Then it seemed good to the sent ones and the older, *spiritually* mature brothers along with the whole gathering of the called-out ones to choose men from among them and send them to Antioch with Paul and Bar-Nabas, *namely*, Judas called Bar-Sabbas and Silas, who were esteemed men among the brethren.

^{15:23}So they wrote this *to them*: "The sent ones, the older, *spiritually* mature brothers, and brethren; to the brethren who are of the Gentiles in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia: greetings. ^{15:24}Since we have heard that certain ones who went out from us have troubled you with words, saying that you must be circumcised and keep the law, thereby subverting your souls – to whom we gave no such orders – ^{15:25}it seemed good to us, having come to unanimity, to choose men and send them to you with our beloved Bar-Nabas and Paul.

^{15:26}"*These are* men who have handed their lives over for the name of our Lord Jesus, the Anointed One. ^{15:27}We have, therefore, sent Judas and Silas, who also will tell you themselves the same things by word of mouth.

^{15:28}"For it seemed to be good to the Holy Spirit and to us to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things: ^{15:29}that you keep your distance from idolatrous sac-

rifices, from blood, from *eating* things which are strangled, and from sex outside of the marriage bond. If you keep yourselves from these things, you will do well. Be strong.”*

^{15:30}So they, when they were sent off, came down to Antioch, and having gathered the group together, they delivered the letter. ^{15:31}And when they had read it, they rejoiced for the encouragement. ^{15:32}And Judas and Silas, who were also prophets, instructed the brethren with many words and strengthened them. ^{15:33}Then, after they had spent some time *there*, the brethren let them go in peace to *return to* those who had sent them. ^{15:34}But it seemed right to Silas to stay there.

^{15:35}But Paul and Bar-Nabas spent more time in Antioch, teaching and preaching the word of the Lord, *along* with many others also. ^{15:36}Then after some time Paul said to Bar-Nabas, “Let’s go back now and visit the brethren in every city where we preached the word of the Lord *and see* how they are doing.”

^{15:37}And Bar-Nabas resolved to take John, who is also called Mark, with them also. ^{15:38}But Paul thought it wasn’t good to take someone with them who had deserted them in Pamphylia and didn’t stay with them in the work.

^{15:39}Therefore, an angry argument took place, so that they separated from each other. Then Bar-Nabas took Mark with him and sailed across to Cyprus. ^{15:40}But Paul choose Silas and went off, being commended by the brethren to the grace of the Lord. ^{15:41}And he went through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the gatherings of the called-out ones.

*Although these brothers imply that the Holy Spirit led them to this conclusion, there is some serious doubt about this assertion. It cannot be that God values these four little laws above all the hundreds or even thousands of others contained in the Old Covenant such as: not to murder, lie, commit adultery, rape, covet, worship idols, etc. It is impossible that eating a strangled chicken, for example, is more evil in God’s eyes, and therefore a more important law for the Gentile believers to keep, than these and many other extremely serious offenses. There is no compelling logic as to why the Gentiles should keep only these four rules and no others. James was correct when he said it was, “my judgment” (verse 19) that they should keep these four laws.

Furthermore, three of the four of these “laws” seem to pertain to what we should or should not eat. Yet Jesus taught that it is not what enters into our mouth which defiles us, but what comes out of it (Mk 7:15,17). What we must conclude is that James, who seems to still have had a strong connection with the Jewish ceremonial law, suggested this, and since it seemed to be a light burden, the others went along with the compromise which gave them a sense of spiritual peace. Later however, Paul contradicts this admonition, at least concerning food sacrificed to idols (I Cor 8:1-8).

CHAPTER 16

16:1 Then he came to Derbe and Lystra. And look, a certain disciple was there named Timothy who was the son of a Jewess who believed. But his father was a Greek. 16:2 Since the brethren who were at Lystra and Iconium spoke very highly of him 16:3 Paul wanted him to travel with him. So he took him and circumcised him because of the Jews who were in those places, for they all knew that his father was a Greek.

16:4 And as they went on their way through the cities, they told them about the *four* dogmas they were supposed to keep, which had been decided by the sent ones and older, *spiritually* mature brothers who were at Jerusalem. 16:5 So the gatherings of the called-out ones were strengthened in the faith and increased in number daily.

16:6 So they went through the regions of Phrygia and Galatia, having been prevented by the Holy Spirit from speaking the word in Asia. 16:7 Then, having come down to Mysia, they attempted to go to Bithynia, but the Spirit did not allow them *to go*. 16:8 So passing by Mysia, they came down to Troas.

16:9 And Paul had a vision during the night. *In it*, there was a man from Macedonia standing *there*, pleading with him and saying, "Come over to Macedonia and help us!" 16:10 And when he had seen the vision, immediately we decided to go to Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them.

16:11 Therefore, having embarked from Troas, we sailed directly to Samothrace and the next day to Neapolis. 16:12 Then from there we went to Philippi, which is the most prominent city in that area of Macedonia, being a *Roman* colony. And we spent some time in that city.

16:13 Then on the Sabbath day we went outside the gate beside a river where there was a customary place of prayer. So we sat down and spoke to the women who had gathered together. 16:14 And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple *cloth {or perhaps dye}* from the city of Thyatira *and* one who worshipped God, heard us.

And the Lord opened up her heart to pay attention to the things which were spoken by Paul. ^{16:15}So when she was baptized along with her household, she pleaded with us saying, "If you think of me as *someone* faithful to the Lord, come and stay at my house." And she compelled us.

^{16:16}And it happened, as we were going *to the place* of prayer, that a certain young, female slave who had a spirit of divining the future {*or*, a spirit of "Python"} encountered us, *being someone* who brought her masters a lot of profit by fortune telling. ^{16:17}She following closely behind Paul and us, crying out saying, "These men who proclaim to you the way of salvation are servants of the Most High God!"

^{16:18}And she did this for many days. But Paul, becoming irritated *by this*, turned and said to the spirit, "I order you in the name of Jesus the Anointed One to come out of her." And it came out at that time.

^{16:19}But when her masters saw that their hope of profit was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace before the rulers. ^{16:20}Then when they had brought them to the magistrates, they said, "These men, being Jews, are disrupting our city ^{16:21}and teaching a set of beliefs which we, being Romans, are not permitted to accept or to practice." ^{16:22}And the mob rose up as one against them.

Then the magistrates, having torn off their clothes, commanded them to be beaten with rods. ^{16:23}And after they had stuck them with many blows, they threw them into prison, ordering the jailer to keep them secure. ^{16:24}He, having received such an order, threw them into the inner prison and locked their feet in the wooden stocks.

^{16:25}Now about midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God and the *other* prisoners were listening to them. ^{16:26}And suddenly there was a great earthquake so that the foundations of the prison were shaken and immediately all the doors opened and everyone's chains were loosed.

^{16:27}And the jailer, being awakened out of sleep and seeing the prison doors open, drew his sword and was about to kill himself, supposing that the prisoners had

escaped. ^{16:28}But Paul cried with a loud voice saying, "Don't harm yourself, for we are all here!"

^{16:29}And asking for lights, he rushed in and trembling with fear, fell down before Paul and Silas. ^{16:30}Then having brought them outside said, "Masters, what must I do to be saved?" ^{16:31}And they said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus and you will be being saved, you and your household." ^{16:32}And they spoke the word of the Lord to him, *together* with all those who were in his household.

^{16:33}Then he took them that same hour of the night and washed their wounds and was immediately baptized, he and all his *family*. ^{16:34}So, having brought them into his house, he made them a meal. And *he* was very joyful, *along* with all his household, having believed in God.

^{16:35}But when daylight came, the magistrates sent their subordinates *back there saying*, "Let those men go." ^{16:36}And the jailer reported the words to Paul saying, "The magistrates have ordered you be to released. Now then, come out and go in peace." ^{16:37}But Paul said to them, "They have beaten us publicly without a trial, men who are Roman *citizens*, and have thrown us into prison. And now they want to let us go secretly? No indeed, but let them come themselves and bring us out."

^{16:38}So the subordinates reported these words to the magistrates and they became afraid when they heard that *these prisoners* were Roman *citizens*. ^{16:39}So they came and tried to appease them, and when they had brought them out, they asked them to leave the city. ^{16:40}And having left the prison they went to *the house* of Lydia. Then when they had seen the brethren, they encouraged them and departed.

CHAPTER 17

^{17:1}Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica where there was a synagogue of the Jews. ^{17:2}And Paul, as his habit was, went in and reasoned with them from the scriptures for three *consecutive* Sabbath days, ^{17:3}opening up *the scriptures* and laying out *clearly* the necessity for the Anointed One to suffer and to rise again from the dead, and that this Jesus,

"Whom," *he said*, "I proclaim to you, is the Anointed One." 17:4 And some of them were persuaded and associated *themselves* with Paul and Silas, including a great number of devout Greeks and more than a few of the influential women.

17:5 But the Jews, being motivated by jealousy, gathered to themselves certain evil men who hung out on the streets and, inciting a riot, set the city in an uproar. And assaulting the house of Jason, they planned to bring them out to the people.

17:6 But when they didn't find them, they dragged Jason and certain brethren before the rulers of the city, crying out, "These who have turned the world upside down have come here too, 17:7 whom Jason has welcomed into his home. And all of them act contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is another king, one Jesus!" 17:8 And the crowd, *along with* the rulers of the city, were disturbed when they heard these things. 17:9 So when they had taken a security *bond* from Jason and the others, they let them go.

17:10 And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night to Berea. And when they got there they went to the synagogue of the Jews. 17:11 Now these were more noble than those in Thessalonica in that they received the word with all eagerness, examining the scriptures daily *to see whether or not* these things were so. 17:12 Many of them, therefore, believed, along with more than a few of the influential Greek women and men.

17:13 But when the Jews of Thessalonica found out that the word of God was *being* preached by Paul at Berea also, they came there too, agitating the crowds. 17:14 Therefore, the brethren sent Paul off immediately to go as far as the sea while Silas and Timothy stayed there [in Berea].

17:15 And those who went with Paul brought him as far as Athens. But Silas and Timothy, receiving instructions that they should come to him as quickly as possible, *also* departed.

17:16 Now while Paul waited for them at Athens, his spirit was provoked within him seeing the city so full of idols. 17:17 On one hand, he reasoned in the synagogue with

Jews who worshipped there and, *on the other hand*, reasoned in the marketplace every day with those whom he encountered.

^{17:18}And some of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers conversed with him. But some said, "What is this babbler saying?" And others said, "He seems to be a proclaimer of strange gods" because he preached the good news of Jesus and the resurrection.

^{17:19}So they took him and brought him to the Areopagus saying, "We want to know what this new teaching is about which you are speaking. ^{17:20}For some of the things you are saying sound very strange to us. Therefore, we would like to understand what these things mean." ^{17:21}(Now all the Athenians and the emigrants living there spent their time doing nothing except either telling or hearing about some new thing).

^{17:22}So Paul stood in the middle of the Areopagus and said, "You men of Athens, I perceive that you worship many different kinds of gods. ^{17:23}For as I walked along and observed the objects of your worship, I also found an altar with this inscription, TO AN UNKNOWN GOD. What, therefore, you worship in ignorance, this is what I proclaim to you.

^{17:24}"The God who made the world and all the things in it, he, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made with *human* hands. ^{17:25}Neither does he need men's hands attending to him since he doesn't need anything *and since* he himself gives life and breath and everything *else*.

^{17:26}"And he made with one blood every nation of mankind who lives on the face of the earth, having determined beforehand *their* times and the boundaries of their *empires*. ^{17:27}*This was* so that they would seek the Lord, if perhaps they might grope after him and find him, though truly he is not far from each one of us. ^{17:28}For in him we live and move and have our being, as also even certain of your own poets have said, 'For we are also his offspring.'

^{17:29}"Being then the offspring of God, we should not imagine that the Father is like gold, silver, or stone, which

is carved by *the* art, craft, and the imagination of men. ^{17:30}These times of ignorance God overlooked *until* now, but at this time he commands all men everywhere to repent ^{17:31}because he has set a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by the man whom he has ordained. He has given assurance of this to everyone by raising him from the dead." ^{17:32}Now when they heard about the resurrection of the dead, some scoffed, but others said, "We want to hear *from* you again concerning this." ^{17:33}And this is the way Paul left them.

^{17:34}But certain men joined themselves to him and believed, among whom were Dionysius the Areopagite, a woman named Damaris, and also others with them.

CHAPTER 18

^{18:1}After these things, Paul left Athens and came to Corinth. ^{18:2}There he found a certain Jew named Aquila, a man of Pontus by race, *who had* recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to leave Rome. So he came to them, ^{18:3}and because he was of the same trade, he stayed with them. So they worked *together* for they were *both* tentmakers by trade. ^{18:4}And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath persuading both Jews and Greeks.

^{18:5}But when Silas and Timothy came down from Macedonia, Paul felt an urgency in his spirit to testify to the Jews that Jesus was the Anointed One. ^{18:6}But when they resisted *the word* and spoke slanderously, he shook out his *outer* garment and said to them, "Your blood is upon your own heads. I am innocent. From now on I will go to the Gentiles."

^{18:7}So he left there and went to the house of a certain man named Titus the Just, someone who worshipped God whose house was right next to the synagogue. ^{18:8}And Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed in the Lord with all his household. And many of the Corinthians who heard believed and were baptized.

^{18:9}And the Lord said to Paul in the night by a vision, "Don't be afraid, but speak and don't keep quiet, ^{18:10}for I

am with you and no man will attack you to harm you because many people in this city are mine." 18:11 And he stayed *there* one year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.

18:12 But when Gallio became proconsul of Achaia, the Jews rose up together against Paul and brought him before the rostrum 18:13 saying, "This man persuades men to worship God contrary to the *Jewish* law." 18:14 But when Paul was about to open his mouth, Gallio said to the Jews, "Look you Jews, if this were really a matter of some offense or of an evil crime, it would make sense to put up with you. 18:15 But since these are questions about words and names and your own law, take care of it yourselves. I am not inclined to be a judge of these questions." 18:16 And he drove them from the rostrum.

18:17 So they all grabbed Sosthenes, the ruler of the synagogue and beat him in front of the rostrum. But Gallio didn't pay any attention to these things.

18:18 So Paul, having stayed there for some time after this, said goodbye to the brethren *and* sailed across to Syria. And Priscilla and Aquila *went* with him. (He had shaved his head while in Cenchreae because he had made a vow *following the Jewish tradition*).

18:19 Then when he came to Ephesus, he left them [Priscilla and Aquila] there. But he himself entered into the synagogue and had discussions with the Jews. 18:20 But when they asked him to stay a longer time, he didn't agree to it. 18:21 Instead, he said goodbye to them, explaining, "It is very necessary for me to keep the upcoming feast in Jerusalem, but I will come back to you again if God is willing."

So he sailed from Ephesus. 18:22 And when he had landed at Caesarea, he went up and greeted the gathering of the called-out ones and went on to Antioch. 18:23 And having spent some time *there*, he left and went through the regions of Galatia and Phrygia in order, strengthening all the disciples.

18:24 Now a certain Jew named Apollos came to Ephesus. *He was* an Alexandrian by nationality, an elo-

quent man and powerful in the scriptures. ^{18:25}This man had been instructed in the way of the Lord. So being fervent in spirit, he spoke and taught accurately the things concerning the Lord, *but* only knowing *about* the baptism of John. ^{18:26}And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue.

But when Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately. ^{18:27}So when he decided to go over into Achaia, the brethren encouraged him and wrote to the disciples to receive him. *He*, when he had come, was a big help to those who had believed through grace, ^{18:28}for he powerfully refuted the Jews in public *by* demonstrating from the scriptures that Jesus was the Anointed One.

CHAPTER 19

^{19:1}And it happened that while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul, having passed through some remote parts, came to Ephesus and found certain disciples ^{19:2}so he asked them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" And they *replied* to him, "We have not even heard that the Holy Spirit was *given*."

^{19:3}Then he said, "Into what, then, were you baptized?" And they said, "Into John's baptism." ^{19:4}So Paul said, "John baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying to the people that they should believe on the One who was coming after him, that is, into Jesus the Anointed One."

^{19:5}And when they heard this, they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. ^{19:6}Then, when Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them and they spoke in *different* languages and prophesied. ^{19:7}These were about twelve men *in number*.

^{19:8}And he entered into the synagogue and spoke boldly for three months, reasoning and persuading *them about* the things concerning the kingdom of God. ^{19:9}But when some became stubborn and refused to be persuaded, speaking evil *things* about "the Way" in front of the whole group, he left them, separated the disciples, and preached daily in the school of Tyrannus. ^{19:10}And this went on for

two years so that all who lived in Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks.

^{19:11}And God did extraordinary miracles through the hands of Paul ^{19:12}so that even when handkerchiefs or aprons from his body were brought to the sick, they were healed and the evil spirits went out of them.

^{19:13}But some *others*, part of the group of traveling Jewish exorcists, also attempted to use the name of the Lord Jesus over those who had the evil spirits saying, "I charge you by Jesus whom Paul preaches."

^{19:14}And there were seven sons of Sceva, a Jew *who was* a chief priest, who did this. ^{19:15}And the evil spirit answered and said to them, "Jesus I know, and Paul I know, but who are you?"

^{19:16}And the man in whom the evil spirit was jumped on them, overcame them, and prevailed against them so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded. ^{19:17}And this became known to everyone, both Jews and Greeks, who lived at Ephesus. So fear fell upon them all and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified.

^{19:18}Many also of those who had believed came confessing and declaring their deeds. ^{19:19}And a significant number of those who practiced magical arts brought their books together and burned them in front of everyone. Then they added up the their value and it came to fifty thousand pieces of silver.

^{19:20}So the word of the Lord grew powerfully and prevailed. ^{19:21}Now after these things were finished, Paul, when he had gone through Macedonia and Achaia, purposed in the spirit to go to Jerusalem saying, "After I have been there I must see Rome also."

^{19:22}And having sent two of his assistants, Timothy and Erastus, to Macedonia, he stayed for a little more time in Asia.

^{19:23}It happened about that time that there arose no small disturbance concerning "the Way." ^{19:24}For a certain man named Demetrius, a silversmith who made silver shrines of *the goddess* Diana, brought the craftsmen more than a little work.

^{19:25}So he got them together, *along* with other workmen of similar occupations and said, "Men, you know that we make our living by this business. ^{19:26}Yet you see and hear that not only at Ephesus but throughout almost all of Asia, this Paul has persuaded and turned many people away *from our images*, saying that anything made with *human* hands are not really gods.

^{19:27}"Therefore, not only is there a danger that our trade will fall into disrepute, but also that the temple of the great goddess Diana, whom all Asia and the whole world worships, will not be respected *anymore* and that her magnificence will be diminished."

^{19:28}And when they heard this, they were filled with rage and cried out saying, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians!"

^{19:29}So the city was filled with the confusion, and they rushed together into the theatre having seized Gaius and Aristarchus, men of Macedonia who were Paul's traveling companions.

^{19:30}But when Paul wanted to go in *and speak* to the people, the disciples wouldn't allow him. ^{19:31}And certain ones, also of the Asiarchs who were his friends, sent to him and pleaded with him not to give himself over *to those* in the theatre.

^{19:32}Some, therefore, cried out one thing and some another, for the assembly was in confusion and most of them didn't even know why they had gotten together. ^{19:33}So the Jews forced Alexander out from the crowd. And Alexander motioned with his hand, wanting to make a defense to the people. ^{19:34}But when they saw that he was a Jew, everyone with one voice cried out for about two hours, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians!"

^{19:35}And when the town clerk had quieted the crowd, he said, "You men of Ephesus, who is there who doesn't know that the city of the Ephesians is custodian of the temple of the great Diana, even of the *image* which fell down from Jupiter? ^{19:36}Seeing then that these things are indisputable, you ought to show restraint and not do anything rash.

19:37“For you have brought these men *here*, who are neither temple robbers nor blasphemers of our goddess. 19:38If, therefore, Demetrius and the craftsmen who are with him, have a complaint against anyone, the courts are open, and there are proconsuls. Let them accuse one another. 19:39But if there are any other matters you wish to address, they can be settled in the regular assembly.

19:40“For really we are in danger to be accused of insurrection because of today’s *events*, since there is no reason for it which we can use to explain this tumult to the *higher authorities*.” 19:41And having said these things, he dismissed the assembly.

CHAPTER 20

20:1Then, after the uproar ceased, Paul having sent for the disciples and embraced them, left to go to Macedonia. 20:2And when he had gone through those areas and had given them many words of encouragement, he came to Greece. 20:3After spending three months *there*, a plot was made against him by the Jews, just as he was about to set sail for Syria, so he decided to return through Macedonia.

20:4So *these men* went with him as far as Asia: Sopater of Berea, *the son* of Pyrrhus; Aristarchus and Secundus, who were Thessalonians; Gaius of Derbe; Timothy and Tychicus, and Trophimus from Asia. 20:5But these had gone on ahead and were waiting for us at Troas. 20:6So we sailed across from Philippi after the days of unleavened bread and came to them five days later in Troas, where we *then* stayed seven days.

20:7And on the first Sabbath day, when we were gathered together to eat a meal, Paul spoke to them, intending to leave on the next day, and continued speaking until midnight. 20:8Consequently, there were many lights in the upper chamber where we were gathered together. 20:9And a certain young man named Eutychus who sat in the window fell into a deep sleep.

And since Paul kept speaking for a long time he, being in a deep sleep, fell down from the third story and was lift-

ed up dead. ^{20:10}So going down there, Paul fell on him, embraced him and said, "Don't become upset, for his life is still in him."

^{20:11}And when he had gone back up, broken bread, and eaten, *he* conversed with them an even longer time – continuing until dawn – and left. ^{20:12}And they brought the youth *up* alive and were more than a little comforted.

^{20:13}But we had gone on ahead in the ship which set sail for Assos, intending to pick Paul up there, for he had planned to go by land himself. ^{20:14}And when he met us at Assos, we took him onboard and came to Mitylene.

^{20:15}And sailing from there, we came near Chios the following day. Then the next day we reached Samos and the day after that we came to Miletus. ^{20:16}For Paul had decided to sail past Ephesus so that he would not have to spend time in Asia, for he was in a hurry to be at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost, if it were possible for him.

^{20:17}And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called for the older, *spiritually* mature brothers of the gathering of the called-out ones.

^{20:18}And when they had come to him, he said to them, "You know, from the first day that I set foot in Asia, what kind of life I lived with you all that time, ^{20:19}servicing the Lord with all humility, with tears, and with trials which happened to me through the plots of the Jews.

^{20:20}"*You know too* how I kept back nothing which was advantageous to you, but have declared *everything* to you and taught you, both publicly and from house to house, ^{20:21}testifying to both Jews and Greeks the things of God, *i.e.* repentance and faith in our Lord Jesus the Anointed One.

^{20:22}"And now, look, I am going bound in the spirit to Jerusalem, not knowing what will happen to me there ^{20:23}except that in every city the Holy Spirit testifies to me, saying that bonds and afflictions await me.

^{20:24}"But I do not take this word into account or consider my life precious to me so that I may finish my course with joy and *complete* the service which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God. ^{20:25}And now, look, I know that you all, among whom I

went about preaching the kingdom of God, will not see my face again. ^{20:26}Therefore, I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all *men*. ^{20:27}For I didn't shrink back from declaring to you the whole counsel of God.

^{20:28}"Give careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock in which the Holy Spirit has placed you as watchmen to feed the gathering of the Lord's called-out ones which he purchased with his own blood. ^{20:29}I know that after my departure, mercenary wolves will enter in among you, not sparing the flock. ^{20:30}For from among you, men will rise up speaking twisted words *in order* to draw away the disciples after themselves.

^{20:31}"Therefore, be watchful, remembering that for a period of three years I admonished every one of you with tears, day and night without ceasing. ^{20:32}And now I turn you over to God and to the word of his grace which is able to build *you* up and to give *you* the inheritance among the ones who have been made holy.

^{20:33}"I lusted after no one's silver, gold, or clothing. ^{20:34}You yourselves know that these hands of *mine* ministered to my own needs and to *the needs* of those who were with me. ^{20:35}In everything I gave you an example that it is right to help the poor by working *to earn money* and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus which he himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"

^{20:36}And when he had said this, he kneeled down and prayed with them all. ^{20:37}Then they all wept profusely and fell on Paul's neck and kissed him, ^{20:38}being especially grieved because the word which he had spoken that they would not see his face again. And they sent him on his way to the ship.

CHAPTER 21

^{21:1}And then *after* we parted company with them and set sail, we took a direct course to Cos, the next day to Rhodes, and from there to Patara. ^{21:2}Then, having found a ship crossing over to Phoenicia, we went aboard and set sail.

^{21:3}Then when we had come within sight of Cyprus, passing it on the left hand, we sailed to Syria and landed at Tyre, since the ship was to unload her cargo there. ^{21:4}And having discovered the disciples, we stayed there seven days. These *disciples* said to Paul through the Spirit that he should not go to Jerusalem.

^{21:5}And it happened that when we had finished that stay and were leaving to continue our journey that they all, with wives and children, went with us until we were outside the city. Then kneeling down on the beach, we prayed. ^{21:6}So, having said goodbye to each other, we went onboard the ship. But they returned home again.

^{21:7}So when we had completed the voyage from Tyre, we arrived at Ptolemais. And we greeted the brethren and stayed with them one day. ^{21:8}And on the next day we left and came to Caesarea, and entering into the house of Philip the evangelist who was one of the seven, we stayed with him. ^{21:9}Now this man had four virgin daughters who prophesied.

^{21:10}And as we stayed there for several days, a certain prophet named Agabus came down from Judea. ^{21:11}And having come to us, he took Paul's belt and bound his own feet and hands *with it*, and said, "This is what the Holy Spirit says, 'The man who owns this belt will be bound in this same way by the Jews at Jerusalem and they will deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles.'"

^{21:12}And when we heard these things, both we and those who were there begged him not to go up to Jerusalem. ^{21:13}Then Paul answered, "Why are you weeping and breaking my heart? For I am ready not only to be bound, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus." ^{21:14}And when he would not be persuaded, we stopped, saying, "May the will of the Lord be done."

^{21:15}And after this time, we took our baggage and went up to Jerusalem. ^{21:16}And *certain* of the disciples from Caesarea also went with us bringing *with them* one Mnason of Cyprus, an early disciple with whom we would stay.

^{21:17}And when we had come to Jerusalem, the brethren received us gladly. ^{21:18}Then the next day Paul went in with

us to see James, and all the older, *spiritually* mature brothers were present. ^{21:19}And when he had greeted them, he described, one by one, the things which God had done among the Gentiles through his service.

^{21:20}And when they heard it, they glorified God and they said to him, "You see, brother, how many thousands of believing Jews there are who are all zealous for the law.

^{21:21}"But they have been informed concerning you that you teach all the Jews who are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, telling them not to circumcise their children or to follow the customs. ^{21:22}What will we do then? For they will certainly hear that you have come. ^{21:23}Therefore, do what we tell you. We have four men who have taken a vow upon themselves. ^{21:24}Take them and purify yourself along with them and pay their expenses so that they can shave their heads. In this way, everyone will know that there is no truth in the things they have been told about you but that you yourself also conform, keeping the law.

^{21:25}"But concerning the Gentiles who have believed, we wrote giving *our* judgment that they should keep themselves from things sacrificed to idols, from blood, from what is strangled, and from fornication."

^{21:26}Then Paul took the men, and the next day after purifying himself along with them, went into the temple, announcing the fulfillment of the time of purification until the offering was offered for each one of them.

^{21:27}But the when seven days were almost up, *some of* the Jews from Asia, having seen him in the temple, caused a tumult with the crowd and grabbed him, ^{21:28}crying out, "Men of Israel, help! This is the man who teaches everyone, everywhere against this people, the law, and this place. And, furthermore, he also brought Greeks into the temple and has defiled this holy place." ^{21:29}For they had seen him before in the city with Trophimus the Ephesian, whom they supposed Paul had brought into the temple.

^{21:30}And the whole city was set in motion so that there was a stampede of people. So they grabbed Paul and dragged him out of the temple. And immediately the doors were shut.

^{21:31}And as they were seeking to kill him, the news came to the chief captain of the band that all Jerusalem was in confusion. ^{21:32}He immediately took soldiers and centurions and ran down to *the mob*. When they saw the chief captain and the soldiers, they stopped beating Paul.

^{21:33}Then the chief captain came near, took hold of him, commanded him to be bound with two chains and asked about who he was and what he had done. ^{21:34}But some among the crowd shouted one thing and some another. So not being able to know with certainty because of the uproar, he commanded him to be brought into the castle. ^{21:35}And when he came to the stairs, Paul had to be carried by the soldiers due to the violence of the mob, ^{21:36}for the multitude of people followed *them*, crying out, "Away with him!"

^{21:37}And as Paul was about to be brought into the castle, he said to the chief captain, "May I say something to you?" And he replied, "Do you know Greek? ^{21:38}Aren't you the Egyptian, who shortly before led a rebellion and led the four thousand men of the Assassins out into the wilderness?"

^{21:39}But Paul said, "I am a Jew, of Tarsus in Cilicia, a citizen of no unimportant city, and I beg you, allow me to speak to the people." ^{21:40}And when he had given him permission, Paul, standing on the stairs, motioned with his hand to the people, and when there was a great silence, he spoke to them in the Hebrew dialect saying:

CHAPTER 22

^{22:1}"Men, brethren and fathers, hear the defense which I will now make to you." ^{22:2}And when they heard that he spoke to them in the Hebrew dialect, they were even quieter. So he said, ^{22:3}"I am a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, instructed according to the strict manner of the law of our fathers, being zealous for God just as you all are today.

^{22:4}"I was one who persecuted this 'Way' to the death, binding and delivering both men and women to prisons.

22:5 As also the high priest can testify concerning me *along with* all the council of the elders, from whom I also received letters to the brethren in Damascus where I went to bring those who were there to Jerusalem in chains to be punished also.

22:6 "And it happened that as I travelled and came near Damascus, about noon a bright light from heaven suddenly shone all around me. 22:7 And I fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to me, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?' 22:8 And I answered, 'Who are you, Lord?' And he said to me, 'I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom you are persecuting.'

22:9 "And those who were with me saw a light, but they didn't understand the words of the One speaking to me.

22:10 "So I said, 'What must I do, Lord?' And the Lord said to me, 'Get up and go to Damascus and there all the things which have been arranged for you to do will be told to you.' 22:11 And since I couldn't see anything because of the brilliance of that light, I came into Damascus being led by the hand by those who were with me.

22:12 "And a certain devout man according to the law named Ananias, who was well spoken of by all the Jews who lived in Damascus, 22:13 came to me and standing beside me said to me, 'Brother Saul, receive your sight.' And at that very time I was able to see him.

22:14 "And he said, 'The God of our fathers has chosen you to know his will, to see the Righteous One, and to hear a voice from his mouth. 22:15 For you will be a witness for him to all men of what you have seen and heard. 22:16 And now what are you waiting for? Get up and be baptized and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord.'

22:17 "Then it happened that when I had returned to Jerusalem, while I was praying in the temple, I fell into a trance 22:18 and saw him saying to me, 'Get going and get out of Jerusalem quickly because they will not receive your testimony concerning me.' 22:19 And I said, 'Lord, they know that I imprisoned and beat in every synagogue those who believed on you 22:20 and *that* when the blood of Stephen your martyr was poured out, I also was standing

nearby, consenting to his death and holding the *outer* garments of those who killed him.’ 22:21 And he said to me, ‘Go! For I will send you far away to the Gentiles.’”

22:22 And they paid attention to him until he said this, and then they raised their voices and said, “Take such a one from the earth, for it is not proper that he would live!”

22:23 And as they cried out, stripped off their *outer* clothes and threw dust into the air, 22:24 the chief captain commanded him to be brought into the castle, ordering him to be interrogated by scourging, so that he might find out why they shouted against him. 22:25 And when they had tied him up with the leather straps, Paul said to the centurion who stood nearby, “Is it lawful for you to beat a man who is a Roman *citizen* with a whip, who has not yet been condemned *by a trial*?”

22:26 And when the centurion heard it, he went to the chief captain and told him saying, “Be careful with what you are about to do, for this man is a Roman *citizen*.” 22:27 So the chief captain came and said to him, “Tell me, are you a Roman *citizen*? And he said, “Yes.” 22:28 And the chief captain answered, “I obtained this citizenship with a large sum *of money*.” And Paul said, “But I am a *citizen* by birth.”

22:29 Then those who were about to interrogate him immediately drew back. And the chief captain also became afraid when he knew that he was a Roman and because he had tied him up. 22:30 But on the next day, desiring to know with certainty what he was accused of by the Jews, he freed him from his bonds, commanded the chief priests and all the council to come together, and brought Paul down and set him in front of them.

CHAPTER 23

23:1 And Paul, looking intently at the council said, “Brethren, I have lived before God in all good conscience until this day.” 23:2 And the high priest Ananias commanded those who stood near him to strike him on the mouth. 23:3 Then said Paul to him, “God will strike you, you white-washed wall. And do you sit to judge me according to the law and *yet* command me to be struck contrary to the law?”

^{23:4}Then those who stood nearby said, "Do you revile God's high priest?" ^{23:5}And Paul said, "I didn't know, brethren, that he was high priest. For it is written, 'You shall not speak evil of a ruler of your people.'"

^{23:6}But when Paul perceived that the one part of the group were Sadducees and the other Pharisees, he cried out in the council, "Brethren, I am a Pharisee, a son of Pharisees. *It is* concerning the expectation of the resurrection of the dead I am being judged."

^{23:7}And when he had said this, a dissension arose between the Pharisees and Sadducees and the assembly was divided. ^{23:8}For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, neither angel nor spirit, but the Pharisees acknowledge all of them.

^{23:9}So there arose a great shouting match and some of the scribes connected with Pharisees stood up and disputed violently saying, "We find nothing evil in this man. But what if a spirit has spoken to him or an angel? We must not fight against God!"

^{23:10}And when there arose a great commotion, the chief captain acted with caution so that Paul would not be torn in pieces by them, and commanded the soldiers to go down and take him by force from among them and bring him to the castle.

^{23:11}And the next night the Lord stood beside him and said, "Be encouraged, for as you have testified concerning me at Jerusalem, so you must also give your testimony in Rome."

^{23:12}And when it was daylight, some of the Jews banded together and bound themselves under a curse, saying that they would neither eat nor drink until they had killed Paul. ^{23:13}And there were more than forty who made this conspiracy. ^{23:14}So they came to the chief priests and the elders and said, "We have bound ourselves under a great curse to taste nothing until we have killed Paul. ^{23:15}Now, therefore, go with the council to the chief captain and *ask him* to bring him down to you *again*, as if you would judge his case more accurately. And we, before he gets near, are ready to kill him."

^{23:16}But Paul's sister's son heard about their ambush, so he came, went into the castle, and told Paul. ^{23:17}And Paul called one of the centurions and said, "Bring this young man to the chief captain because he has something to tell him."

^{23:18}So he took him and brought him to the chief captain and said, "Paul the prisoner called me and asked me to bring to you this young man who has something to tell you." ^{23:19}And the chief captain took him by the hand and going aside asked him privately, "What is it that you have to tell me?"

^{23:20}So he said, "The Jews have agreed to ask you to bring Paul down tomorrow to the council, as though they would ask him some more specific questions. ^{23:21}Don't be persuaded by them, for a group of more than forty men – who have bound themselves under a curse, neither to eat nor drink until they have killed him – are setting an ambush for him. And now are they all ready, waiting for the word from you."

^{23:22}So the chief captain let the young man go, exhorting him *saying*, "Don't tell anyone that you have told me these things."

^{23:23}And he called two of the centurions and said, "Prepare two hundred soldiers to go as far as Caesarea, *along with* seventy horsemen and two hundred spearmen at the third hour of the night." ^{23:24}And *he told them* to have horses so that they could put Paul on one and bring him safely to Felix the governor.

^{23:25}And he wrote a letter saying: ^{23:26}"Claudius Lysias to the most excellent governor Felix, greetings. ^{23:27}This man was seized by the Jews and was about to be killed by them when I came upon them with the soldiers and rescued him, having learned that he was a Roman *citizen*. ^{23:28}And wanting to know the charges about which they accused him, I brought him down to their council.

^{23:29}"But I found him to be accused about questions of their *own* law but to have done nothing worthy of death or of imprisonment. ^{23:30}And when it became known to me that there would be a plot against the man by the Jews, I

immediately sent him to you, telling his accusers to bring their charges against him before you. Be in health."

^{23:31}So the soldiers, following their orders, took Paul and brought him to Antipatris at night. ^{23:32}But on the next day, they left the horsemen to continue with him and returned to the castle. ^{23:33}Then, arriving at Caesarea, they delivered the letter to the governor and also presented Paul before him.

^{23:34}And when he had read it, he asked from which province he [Paul] was, and when he understood that he was of Cilicia *he said*, ^{23:35}"I will hold a hearing for you when your accusers have come also." So he commanded him to be kept in Herod's palace.

CHAPTER 24

^{24:1}Then five days later, the high priest Ananias came down with certain elders and *with* an orator, one Tertullus, to lay out their case against Paul to the governor. ^{24:2}And when he was called, Tertullus began to accuse him saying, "Seeing that through you we enjoy much peace and that through your forethought great things are happening in this nation, ^{24:3}we accept *your rule* in all ways and in all places, most excellent Felix, with all thankfulness.

^{24:4}"But, so I don't become tedious to you, I appeal to you to hear a few words from us through your clemency. ^{24:5}For we have found this man to be a plague, a promotor of strife among the Jews throughout the world, and a leader of the sect of the Nazarenes. ^{24:6}This one, furthermore, attempted to profane the temple, so we seized him and would have judged him according to our law.

^{24:7}"But the chief captain Lysias came and took him out of our hands with great violence ^{24:8}*and then* commanded *us*, his accusers, to come before you. *Now* by questioning him yourself about these things, you will be able to understand what we are accusing him of." ^{24:9}And the Jews also joined in, saying that these things were so.

^{24:10}And when the governor had motioned to him to speak, Paul answered, "Knowing that you have been a judge to this nation for many years, I am happy to make

my defense. ^{24:11}As you know, not more than twelve days ago I went up to worship at Jerusalem. ^{24:12}And they never found me disputing with anyone in the temple, neither was I stirring up a crowd, either in the synagogues or in the city. ^{24:13}They have *absolutely* no proof of the things about which they now accuse me.

^{24:14}“But I confess this to you, that according to the ‘Way,’ which they call a sect, I serve the God of our fathers, believing all things which are according to the law and which are written in the prophets, ^{24:15}having hope in God, (for which these themselves also wait) that there will be a resurrection of the dead – both of the just and the unjust. ^{24:16}And toward this end I also continually discipline myself to have a conscience free of offense toward God and *towards* men.

^{24:17}“Now after some years, I came to bring alms and offerings to my nation. ^{24:18}And they found me purified in the temple with no crowd or tumult. But *this happened because of* certain Jews from Asia, ^{24:19}who ought to have been here before you themselves to make an accusation, if they had anything against me. ^{24:20}Or else let these men themselves say what offense they found in me when I stood before the council, ^{24:21}other than for this one declaration that I shouted out *while* standing among them *saying*, ‘It is concerning the resurrection of the dead I am being judged before you today!’”

^{24:22}But Felix, after hearing these things, and having accurate knowledge about the “Way,” put them off saying, “When Lysias the chief captain comes down *here*, I will decide your case.”

^{24:23}And he gave orders to the centurion that he should keep Paul but arrange for a less rigorous confinement and not forbid any of his friends to assist him or to visit him.

^{24:24}But after some time, when Felix came with Drusilla his wife who was a Jewess, he sent for Paul and heard him concerning the faith in the Anointed One, Jesus. ^{24:25}And as he reasoned about righteousness, self-control, and the coming judgment, Felix became terrified and answered, “Go! That’s enough for now. But when I have some time, I will call you back.”

^{24:26}Yet at the same time, he hoped that Paul would give him money to be released. Therefore, he sent for him more frequently and conversed with him. ^{24:27}But when two years had passed, Felix was succeeded by Porcius Festus. And wanting to gain favor with the Jews, Felix left Paul bound.

CHAPTER 25

^{25:1}Then Festus, having come to the province, went up to Jerusalem from Caesarea three days later. ^{25:2}And the chief priests and the principal men of the Jews laid out their accusations against Paul and they appealed to him, ^{25:3}asking a favor of him that he would send for him to *come to Jerusalem because* they had laid an ambush to kill him on the way.

^{25:4}However, Festus answered that Paul was kept in confinement at Caesarea and he himself was about to go *there* shortly. ^{25:5}“Let those, therefore,” he said, “who are in authority among you go with me and if there is anything wrong in the man, let them accuse him.”

^{25:6}And when he had stayed among them no more than eight to ten days, he went down to Caesarea, and on the next day he sat on the judgment seat and commanded Paul to be led in.

^{25:7}And when he had come in, the Jews who had come down from Jerusalem stood around him, bringing against him many severe accusations which they couldn't prove. ^{25:8}*But* Paul said in his defense, “I have committed no sin, either against the law of the Jews, or against the temple, or against Caesar.”

^{25:9}But Festus, desiring to gain favor with the Jews, answered Paul and said, “Are you willing to go to Jerusalem and be judged by me there concerning these things?”

^{25:10}But Paul said, “I am standing before Caesar's judgment seat where I ought to be judged. I have done nothing wrong to the Jews as you also know very well. ^{25:11}If then I am a criminal and have done anything worthy of death, I don't refuse to die. But if there is no truth in those things

about which they accuse me, no one can hand me over to them. I appeal to Caesar.”

^{25:12}Then Festus, after he had conferred with the council, answered, “You have appealed to Caesar, to Caesar you will go.”

^{25:13}Now when some time had gone by, Agrippa the King and Bernice arrived at Caesarea and visited Festus. ^{25:14}And when they stayed there many days, Festus laid Paul’s case before the King saying, “There is a certain man who was left a prisoner by Felix, ^{25:15}about whom, when I was at Jerusalem, the chief priests and the elders of the Jews informed *me*, asking for sentence against him.

^{25:16}“I told them that it is not the custom of the Romans to hand anyone over to death before the accused comes face-to-face with his accusers and has had the opportunity to make his defense concerning the charges.

^{25:17}“Therefore, when they got here, I didn’t put them off but on the *very* next day sat on the judgment seat and commanded the man to be brought *in*. ^{25:18}Yet when the accusers stood up, they brought none of the accusations which I had imagined ^{25:19}but had certain disagreements with him about their own religion and about someone *called* Jesus who was dead, *but* whom Paul claims to be alive.

^{25:20}“And I, being perplexed about this matter, asked whether he would be willing go to Jerusalem and be judged there about these questions. ^{25:21}But when Paul appealed *for his case* to be reserved for the decision of *the emperor* Augustus, I ordered him to be kept *here* until I could send him to Caesar.”

^{25:22}And Agrippa *said* to Festus, “I would like to hear the man myself.” “Tomorrow,” he said, “you will hear him.” ^{25:23}So on the next day, when Agrippa and Bernice had come with great pomp and had entered into the auditorium *together* with the chief captains and principal men of the city, at Festus’ command Paul was brought in.

^{25:24}And Festus said, “King Agrippa, and all those who are here present with us, you see this man, about whom all the multitude of the Jews kept bothering me both at

Jerusalem and here, crying out that he shouldn't be permitted to live any longer.

^{25:25}“But I found that he had done nothing worthy of death, yet since he himself appealed to *the emperor* Augustus, I have decided to send him, ^{25:26}of whom I have nothing definite to write to my Sovereign.

“Therefore, I have brought him here before you – and especially before you, king Agrippa – so that after this examination, I may have something to write. ^{25:27}For it seems unreasonable to me to send a prisoner without stating the charges against him.”

CHAPTER 26

^{26:1}And Agrippa said to Paul, “You are permitted to speak for yourself.” Then Paul stretched out his hand, [a typical Roman posture when making a speech] and stated his defense. ^{26:2}“I consider myself blessed, king Agrippa, for being able to make my defense today before you concerning all the things of which I am accused by the Jews. ^{26:3}*This is especially true* because you are expert in all sorts of Jewish customs and considerations. Therefore, I request that you hear me patiently.

^{26:4}“The truth is that all the Jews know my manner of life from my youth up, which all took place since my beginnings here in my own nation and at Jerusalem. ^{26:5}Therefore, having known me since my childhood, if they were willing to testify *they would acknowledge* that I have lived as a Pharisee, following the strictest sect of our religion.

^{26:6}“And now, I stand here to be judged because of the hope of the promise which God gave to our fathers, ^{26:7}which *promise* our twelve tribes, earnestly serving God night and day, hope to attain. It is concerning this hope that I am accused by the Jews, O king! ^{26:8}Why would you think it incredible if God raises the dead?

^{26:9}“I, at one time, was convinced that I should do many things against the name of Jesus the Nazarene, ^{26:10}which is what I did in Jerusalem. So, having received authority from the chief priests, I locked up many of the

ones set apart for God in prison and when they were put to death, I voted against them. ^{26:11}And punishing them frequently in every synagogue, I compelled them to blaspheme, and being in a great rage against them, I persecuted them even as far as foreign cities.

^{26:12}“This is why I was traveling to Damascus with the authority and commission of the chief priests. ^{26:13}But while I was on my way, at noon, O king I saw a light from heaven, much brighter than the sun, shining all around me and those who traveled with me.

^{26:14}“And when we had all fallen to the ground, I heard a voice saying to me in the Hebrew dialect, ‘Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me? Isn’t it hard for you to kick against the goads.’ ^{26:15}And I said, ‘Who are you, Lord?’ And the Lord said, ‘I am Jesus whom you persecute. ^{26:16}But get up and stand upon your feet. I have appeared to you because I have specially selected you to be a servant and a witness, both of what you *now* see and of the things which I will show you later on.

^{26:17}“*I will* protect you from the people and from the Gentiles, to whom I now send you, ^{26:18}to open their eyes, to turn them from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God so that they may receive deliverance {liberation} from sins and an inheritance among those who are being made holy through faith in me.’

^{26:19}“Therefore, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision, ^{26:20}but declared first *to those* in Damascus and then to those in Jerusalem, the whole of Judea, and also to the Gentiles that they should repent and turn to God, doing works *which are* characteristic of repentance. ^{26:21}For this reason the Jews seized me in the temple and tried to kill me.

^{26:22}“Therefore, having experienced God’s help until now, I have remained firm, testifying to both the insignificant and the important, saying nothing other than what the prophets and Moses said would happen, ^{26:23}*i.e.* how the Anointed One must suffer, *and* how he, through first rising from the dead, would bring light, both to the people and to the Gentiles.”

^{26:24}Then as he finished his defense in this way, Festus said with a loud voice, "Paul, you have lost your mind! Your intense studying has made you crazy!" ^{26:25}But Paul said, "I am not crazy, most excellent Festus, but I declare words *which* are true and reasonable. ^{26:26}For the king knows about these things, which is why I can also speak freely. For I am persuaded that he is not unaware of any of these things, for none of this has been done in a corner. ^{26:27}King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know that you believe."

^{26:28}And Agrippa said to Paul, "You almost persuade me to become a Christian." ^{26:29}And Paul said, "I pray to God that by whatever means, not only you, but also all who hear me today might become as I am except for these chains."

^{26:30}Then the king rose up, *along with* the governor, Bernice, and those who sat with them. ^{26:31}And when they left, they conversed with one to another saying, "This man has done nothing worthy of death or of imprisonment." ^{26:32}And Agrippa said to Festus, "This man could have been set free if he hadn't appealed to Caesar."

CHAPTER 27

^{27:1}And when it was decided that we would sail for Italy, they delivered Paul and certain other prisoners to a centurion named Julius, of the Augustan band. ^{27:2}And embarking in a ship of Adramyttium which was about to sail to some places on the coast of Asia, we put to sea. Aristarchus, a Macedonian of Thessalonica, *also* came with us. ^{27:3}And the next day we landed at Sidon.

And Julius treated Paul kindly and permitted him to visit his friends and refresh himself. ^{27:4}Then putting to sea from there, we sailed under the lee of Cyprus because the winds were contrary. ^{27:5}And when we had sailed across open water which is off Cilicia and Pamphylia, we came to Myra, *a city* of Lycia. ^{27:6}From there, the centurion found a ship from Alexandria sailing for Italy and he put us on it.

^{27:7}And after many days of slow sailing *because of* the wind being contrary, we just managed to come near

Cnidus *and then* we sailed under the lee of Crete, near Salmone. ^{27:8}Then with difficulty, we sailed along the coast and came to a certain place called Fair Havens near the city of Lasea.

^{27:9}Now since a lot of time had gone by and it was already becoming a dangerous voyage because the Fast had already passed, Paul earnestly advised them ^{27:10}saying, "Men, I perceive that this voyage will result in damage and much loss, not only of the cargo and the ship, but also of our lives."

^{27:11}But the centurion paid more attention to the captain and the owner of the ship than to what Paul said. ^{27:12}And because the harbor was not suitable to winter in, most advised to put to sea from there, if by any means they could reach Phoenix, *which is* a harbor of Crete facing northeast and southeast, and winter *there*.

^{27:13}So when the south wind blew gently, they supposed they had obtained their purpose *and* they weighed anchor and sailed along Crete, close in to shore. ^{27:14}But after a short time, a stormy wind called "Euroclydon" hit us ^{27:15}and it caught the ship so that it couldn't tack into the wind, so we gave up and were driven *before it*.

^{27:16}And running under the lee of a small island called Cauda, we were able to secure the skiff with difficulty. ^{27:17}And after they had hoisted it up, they used ropes, tying them underneath *and around* the ship. Then, fearing that they would run aground on the Syrtis [a shallow sandy area], they took down the rigging and so were driven *before the wind*.

^{27:18}And being vehemently tossed about by the storm, the next day they began to throw *some of the* cargo overboard. ^{27:19}Then on the third day we threw out the ship's tackle with our own hands. ^{27:20}And when neither sun nor stars appeared for many days and no small storm pressed upon us, all hope that we would be saved was taken away.

^{27:21}And when they had been a long time without food, Paul then stood up among them and said, "Men, you should have listened to me and not have set sail from Crete, *consequently* suffering this injury and loss. ^{27:22}And

now I exhort you to cheer up for there will be no loss of life among you, but *only* of the ship.

27:23“For an angel of the God whose I am and whom I also serve, stood beside me this night 27:24saying, ‘Don’t be afraid, Paul. You must stand before Caesar. And look, God has granted you all those who sail with you.’ 27:25Therefore, men, cheer up, for I believe God that it will happen exactly as it has been spoken to me. 27:26But we will be shipwrecked on a certain island.”

27:27But when the fourteenth night had come, as we were carried about in the Adriatic sea, about midnight the sailors sensed that they were drawing near some land. 27:28So they made a sounding *for depth* and found *it to be* forty meters. Then after a short time, they sounded again and found *it to be* thirty meters. 27:29And fearing that we might be thrown ashore onto rocks, they put out four anchors from the stern and prayed for daylight.

27:30And as *some of* the sailors were seeking to flee from the ship and had lowered the skiff into the sea under the pretense of putting out anchors from the prow, 27:31Paul said to the centurion and the soldiers, “Unless these stay in the ship, you will not be able to be saved.”

27:32Then the soldiers cut through the ropes of the boat, and let it fall. 27:33And since daylight was coming, Paul appealed to them all to eat some food saying, “This is the fourteenth day that you have been fearful and fasted, eating nothing. 27:34Therefore, I encourage you to eat some food, for your deliverance is at hand and not even a hair from your head will be lost.”

27:35And having said this and picking up some bread, he gave thanks to God in the presence everyone, broke it, and began to eat. 27:36Then they all felt encouraged and ate some food also. 27:37And the total number of those in the ship was two hundred seventy-six. 27:38And when they had eaten and were satisfied, they lightened the ship, throwing out the wheat into the sea.

27:39And when it was daylight, they didn’t recognize the land but they saw a certain bay with a beach, and they discussed among themselves if they could drive the ship

up on it. ^{27:40}So casting off the anchors, they left them in the sea. At the same time they untied the rudders, hoisted up the foresail to the wind, and headed for the beach. ^{27:41}But the vessel ran aground, striking a *shallow* place where two seas met, and the prow struck and remained unmovable but the stern began to break up by the violence of *the waves*.

^{27:42}And the soldiers' plan was to kill the prisoners so that none of *them* could swim away and escape. ^{27:43}But the centurion, wanting to save Paul, restrained them from their purpose and commanded that those who could swim would throw themselves overboard and get to land first. ^{27:44}Then the rest would come on planks and on *other* things from the ship. And it happened that they all escaped safely to land.

CHAPTER 28

^{28:1}And when we had escaped, then we found out that the island was called Malta. ^{28:2}And the natives showed us exceptional kindness, for they lighted a fire because of the rain and the cold and received us all in a friendly way.

^{28:3}But when Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks and laid them on the fire, a poisonous snake came out because of the heat, bit into his hand, and held on. ^{28:4}And when the natives saw the *venomous* creature hanging from his hand, they said one to another, "No doubt this man is a murderer *and* though he has escaped from the sea, yet Justice has not allowed him to live." ^{28:5}However, he shook off the creature into the fire and was not harmed.

^{28:6}But they expected that he would swell up or suddenly fall down dead. Yet when they waited a long time and saw that nothing horrible happened to him, they changed their minds and said that he was a god.

^{28:7}Now in the surrounding area, there was some property which belonged to the chief man of the island named Publius, who received us and took care of us courteously for three days. ^{28:8}And it happened that the father of Publius lay sick with a fever and dysentery. So Paul entered into where he was, and having prayed, laid his hands on him *and* healed him.

28:9 Then after this happened, everyone else on the island who also had diseases came and was cured. 28:10 These also honored us with many presents. And when we sailed, they put on board the things which we needed.

28:11 And after three months, we set sail in a ship from Alexandria which had wintered at the island whose ensign was The Twin Brothers. 28:12 Then, we landed at Syracuse, staying there three days.

28:13 From there we made a circuit and arrived at Rhegium. And one day later a south wind sprang up, and on the second day we came to Puteoli 28:14 where we found brethren who begged us to stay with them seven days. And so at last, we came to Rome.

28:15 And when the brethren heard about us, they came to meet us from as far *away* as The Market of Appius and The Three Taverns. When Paul saw them, he thanked God and was encouraged. 28:16 And when we got to Rome, the centurion delivered the prisoners to the commander of the garrison, but Paul was allowed to live by himself with the soldier who guarded him.

28:17 And it happened that after three days he called together those who were the leaders of the Jews. So when they had gotten together, he said to them, "Men and brethren, though I had done nothing against the people or the customs of our fathers, yet I was taken prisoner in Jerusalem and delivered into the hands of the Romans.

28:18 "After having questioned me, he wanted to free me because they found no reason to put me to death. 28:19 But when the Jews opposed it, I was compelled to appeal to Caesar, not that I have anything of which to accuse my nation. 28:20 Therefore, this is the reason I asked to see you and to speak with you, for because of the Hope of Israel, I am bound with this chain."

28:21 And they said to him, "We have not received *any* letters from Judea concerning you, or have any of the brethren come here with *this* news nor spoken badly about you. 28:22 But we want to hear from you what you think, for concerning this sect, we know that it is spoken against everywhere."

^{28:23}And when they had scheduled him a day, many of them came to where he was staying. To these he expounded *the matter* from morning until evening, testifying about the kingdom of God and persuading them concerning Jesus, both from the law of Moses and from the prophets. ^{28:24}And some believed the things which were spoken and some disbelieved.

^{28:25}So when they couldn't agree among themselves, they left after Paul had spoken one *final* word *saying*, "The Holy Spirit spoke perfectly through Isaiah the prophet to your fathers ^{28:26}*when he said*, 'Go to this people and say, "You will hear with your hearing yet will in no way understand, and you will see with your eyes, yet will in no way perceive.'"

^{28:27}"For this people's heart has gotten fat, their ears have difficulty hearing and they have closed their eyes, so that they will never perceive with their eyes hear with their ears, or understand with their hearts and turn around so that I would heal them' (Is 6:9,10; 42:1;49:6). ^{28:28}Therefore, let it be known to you that this salvation of God has been sent to the Gentiles and they will hear it." ^{28:29}And when he had said these words the Jews left, having a sizable debate among themselves.

^{28:30}So he stayed *there* two whole years in his own rented house and received all who came to him, ^{28:31}preaching the kingdom of God and teaching the things concerning the Lord Jesus the Anointed One with all boldness without any restrictions.

Words in this translation found in *italics* are words which are implied by the Greek text but do not represent actual words in the Greek text. This practice is common in almost all modern translations. Occasionally, this translator has added words to the translation which represent his own ideas and opinions which, although they are based on his own biblical understanding, are not part of the actual Greek text. Such words are enclosed in brackets, like this []. The reader should understand these words as being the opinion of the translator. In contrast to this, the words in these braces { } indicate legitimate, alternative translations or explanations. Words within parentheses () are part of the original Greek text. Such parentheses are often used in other New Testament translations also.