

1 Clement

Modern English version · SermonIndex

Clement of Rome · c. AD 95–96

A letter from the church at Rome to the church at Corinth, written about AD 95–96 to heal a division in which some of the congregation had removed their elders. Tradition names Clement, a leader of the Roman church, as its writer.

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Greeting

Gr. The church of God living as a stranger in Rome, to the church of God living as a stranger in Corinth, to those who are called and made holy by the will of God through our Lord Jesus Christ: may grace and peace from almighty God be multiplied to you through Jesus Christ.

Translator's note. The letter does not name its author. Dionysius of Corinth (about AD 170) speaks of a letter from Rome written “through Clement” (quoted by Eusebius, Church History 4.23). Irenaeus (about AD 180) names Clement as the third bishop of Rome after the apostles, following Linus and Anacletus. He also mentions this letter.

Chapter 1

1.1 Because of the sudden and repeated troubles and setbacks that have come on us, dear friends, we think we have been slow to turn our attention to the matters being disputed among you. We mean especially the shameful and unholy rebellion, so foreign and strange to God's chosen people. A few reckless and arrogant people have fanned it into such a flame of madness that your name, honored, famous, and worthy of everyone's love, has been badly slandered.

Translator's note. Many scholars take these “troubles” to be a persecution at Rome under the emperor Domitian (about AD 95–96). Others think the author means other difficulties. How severe any persecution under Domitian was is debated.

1.2 Who has stayed with you and not tested and approved your

faith, so full of every virtue and so firm? Who has not admired your sensible and gentle devotion in Christ? Who has not proclaimed the splendid character of your hospitality? Who has not called your complete and sure knowledge blessed?

1.3 You did everything without favoritism and lived by the laws of God. You submitted to your leaders and gave proper honor to the elders among you. You taught the young to think moderate and serious thoughts. You told the women to do everything with a blameless, serious, and pure conscience, loving their husbands as they should. You taught them to keep to the rule of submission and to manage their households with dignity and great self-control.

Translator's note. "Elders" translates presbyteroi. Because the young are mentioned next, the word may here mean simply the older men. Later in the letter the same word is used for church officers.

Chapter 2

2.1 You were all humble and not at all boastful. You submitted rather than demanded submission, and you were happier giving than receiving. You were content with the provisions Christ gave for the journey. You paid careful attention to his words and stored them deep in your hearts, and his sufferings were before your eyes.

Translator's note. "Happier giving than receiving" echoes the saying of Jesus quoted in [Acts 20:35](#): "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

2.2 So a deep and rich peace was given to all, along with a longing to do good that could never be satisfied, and the Holy Spirit was poured out in fullness on all of you.

2.3 Full of holy purpose, you stretched out your hands to almighty God with sincere eagerness and devout confidence. You begged him to be merciful if you had sinned in any way unintentionally.

2.4 You struggled day and night for the whole brotherhood, so that the number of God's chosen might be saved with mercy and conscience.

Translator's note. The phrase "with mercy and conscience" is obscure; some manuscripts read "fear" instead of "mercy," and translators render the second word in different ways, such as "compassion" or "conscientiousness."

2.5 You were sincere and innocent, and you held no grudges against one another.

2.6 Every rebellion and every division was hateful to you. You mourned over the failures of your neighbors and counted their shortcomings as your own.

2.7 You never regretted any kindness you did, and you were ready for every good work.

Translator's note. "Ready for every good work" closely resembles [Titus 3:1](#) ("to be ready for every good work"); compare [2 Timothy 2:21](#).

2.8 Adorned with a way of life that was excellent and honorable, you did everything in the fear of God. The Lord's commandments and requirements were written on the tablets of your hearts.

Translator's note. This echoes [Proverbs 7:3](#), which in the Greek Old Testament says literally "write them on the breadth of your heart." English Bibles have "the tablet of your heart."

Chapter 3

3.1 Every honor and every kind of growth was given to you, and the Scripture was fulfilled: "The beloved ate and drank, and grew broad and fat, and kicked."

Translator's note. The quotation is a free adaptation of [Deuteronomy 32:15](#) in the Greek Old Testament, where "the beloved" stands for the Hebrew "Jeshurun," a poetic name for Israel. The author applies it to the Corinthians.

3.2 From this came jealousy, envy, strife, rebellion, persecution, disorder, war, and captivity.

3.3 So the dishonored rose up against the honored, the unknown against the well known, the foolish against the wise, the young against the elders.

Translator's note. This echoes [Isaiah 3:5](#). The Greek word for "elders" (presbyteroi) is the same word used later in the letter for church officers.

3.4 For this reason righteousness and peace are far away, since each person has abandoned the fear of God, and the eyes of their faith have grown dim. They do not walk by the laws of his commands, and they do not live as citizens in a way fitting for Christ. Instead, each follows the desires of his own wicked heart, having taken up an unjust and ungodly jealousy, through which death also entered the world.

Translator's note. Compare Wisdom of Solomon 2:24: "through the devil's envy death entered the world." This book is part of the Catholic and Orthodox Old Testament. Protestants place it among the Apocrypha.

Chapter 4

4.1 For it is written like this: "And after some days, Cain brought an offering to God from the fruits of the earth, and Abel also brought from the firstborn of the sheep and from their fat."

Translator's note. This verse quotes [Genesis 4:3-4](#) from the Greek Old Testament (the Septuagint), and the quotation continues through [Genesis 4:8](#) in the following verses. Its wording differs a little from English Bibles, which are translated from the Hebrew.

4.2 “And God looked with favor on Abel and his gifts, but did not pay attention to Cain and his offerings.”

4.3 “And Cain was very sad, and his face fell.”

4.4 “And God said to Cain, ‘Why are you so sad, and why has your face fallen? If you offer rightly but do not divide rightly, have you not sinned?’”

Translator’s note. The Greek Old Testament has “divide rightly” (orthōs dielēs), probably meaning dividing the sacrifice properly. This is very different from the Hebrew of [Genesis 4:7](#), which English Bibles render “If you do well, will you not be accepted?”

4.5 “‘Be still. His turning is toward you, and you will rule over him.’”

4.6 “Cain said to his brother Abel, ‘Let us go out to the field.’ And when they were in the field, Cain rose up against his brother Abel and killed him.”

4.7 You see, brothers: jealousy and envy led to the murder of a brother.

4.8 Because of jealousy, our father Jacob ran away from his brother Esau.

Translator’s note. See [Genesis 27:41-45](#).

4.9 Jealousy caused Joseph to be persecuted almost to death and brought into slavery.

4.10 Jealousy forced Moses to flee from Pharaoh, king of Egypt, when he heard a fellow countryman say, “Who made you a judge or an arbiter over us? Do you want to kill me as you killed the Egyptian yesterday?”

Translator’s note. The quotation is from [Exodus 2:14](#).

Scripture: [Exodus 2:14](#)

4.11 Because of jealousy, Aaron and Miriam had to stay outside the camp.

Translator’s note. See [Numbers 12](#). There Miriam and Aaron speak against Moses, but only Miriam is struck with leprosy and shut outside the camp for seven days. Clement’s statement that both were put outside goes beyond the biblical account.

4.12 Jealousy brought Dathan and Abiram down alive into Hades, because they rebelled against Moses, the servant of God.

Translator’s note. See [Numbers 16](#), where the earth opens and swallows the rebels. Hades here translates the Greek Old Testament’s rendering of Sheol, the realm of the dead.

4.13 Because of jealousy, David was envied not only by foreigners but was also persecuted by Saul, king of Israel.

Chapter 5

5.1 But let us leave the ancient examples and come to the champions who lived closest to our own time. Let us take the noble examples of our own generation.

5.2 Because of jealousy and envy, the greatest and most righteous pillars were persecuted and struggled to the point of death.

Translator's note. "Pillars" recalls [Galatians 2:9](#), where James, Peter (Cephas), and John are described as pillars.

5.3 Let us put the good apostles before our eyes:

5.4 Peter, who because of unjust jealousy endured not one or two but many hardships, and having borne his witness in this way went to the place of glory that he was due.

Translator's note. This is one of the earliest written references to Peter's martyrdom. The letter does not say where or how Peter died. The next chapter speaks of a great crowd of martyrs gathered to Peter and Paul, which most scholars connect with the persecution under Nero at Rome.

5.5 Because of jealousy and strife, Paul showed the way to the prize for endurance.

5.6 Seven times he was in chains. He was driven into exile and stoned. He became a preacher in both the East and the West and won the noble fame of his faith.

Translator's note. Compare [2 Corinthians 11:23-27](#) and [Acts 14:19](#). The New Testament does not give the number of Paul's imprisonments as seven.

5.7 He taught righteousness to the whole world, and he reached the farthest limit of the West and bore witness before the rulers. In this way he was released from the world and taken up into the holy place, having become the greatest example of endurance.

Translator's note. "The farthest limit of the West" is usually taken to mean Spain, as Paul planned in [Romans 15:24](#), 28. Some scholars think it means Rome itself, since the author was writing from there. If Spain is meant, this is the earliest hint that Paul's plans were carried out.

Chapter 6

6.1 A great crowd of the chosen was gathered to these men who lived holy lives. Because of jealousy they suffered many insults and tortures, and they became the finest example among us.

6.2 Because of jealousy, women were persecuted as Danaids and Dircae and suffered terrible and unholy abuses. They reached the secure end of the race of faith and received a noble reward, though they were weak in body.

Translator's note. "Danaids and Dircae" are figures of Greek myth. The

Danaids were the daughters of Danaus, punished in the underworld, and Dirce was tied to a bull and dragged to death. The text may refer to Christian women who were made to act out these myths in the arena, or the words may be a corruption of the original. This passage is difficult.

6.3 Jealousy has separated wives from their husbands and changed what our father Adam said: “This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh.”

Translator’s note. The quotation is from [Genesis 2:23](#).

6.4 Jealousy and strife have overthrown great cities and uprooted great nations.

Chapter 7

7.1 We are writing this, dear friends, not only to warn you but also to remind ourselves. For we are in the same arena, and the same contest lies ahead of us.

7.2 So let us put away empty and pointless worries and turn to the glorious and honorable rule of our tradition,

7.3 and let us see what is good, what is pleasing, and what is acceptable in the sight of the one who made us.

7.4 Let us look closely at the blood of Christ and see how precious it is to his Father, because it was poured out for our salvation and brought the grace of repentance to the whole world.

7.5 Let us go through all the generations and learn that in every generation the Master has given a place for repentance to those who wanted to turn to him.

7.6 Noah preached repentance, and those who obeyed were saved.

7.7 Jonah announced destruction to the people of Nineveh. But when they repented of their sins, they won God’s favor by their pleading and received salvation, though they were strangers to God.

Translator’s note. See [Jonah 3](#).

Chapter 8

8.1 The servants of God’s grace spoke about repentance through the Holy Spirit.

8.2 And the Master of all things himself also spoke about repentance with an oath: “As I live, says the Lord, I do not want the death of the sinner so much as his repentance.” And he added a kind word:

Translator’s note. The quotation is from [Ezekiel 33:11](#), with some changes

| in wording.

8.3 “Repent, house of Israel, of your lawlessness. Say to the children of my people: Though your sins reach from earth to heaven, and are redder than scarlet and blacker than sackcloth, if you turn to me with your whole heart and say, ‘Father,’ I will listen to you as to a holy people.”

| *Translator’s note.* This passage combines [Ezekiel 18:30](#) with ideas from [Isaiah 1:18](#) and [Jeremiah 3:19](#). The exact source is not known, and it may be a free combination or a lost text.

8.4 And in another place he says this: “Wash and become clean. Remove the wickedness from your souls before my eyes. Stop your wickedness. Learn to do good. Seek justice. Rescue the wronged. Defend the orphan and do justice for the widow. Come, let us reason together, says the Lord. Though your sins are like crimson, I will make them white as snow. Though they are like scarlet, I will make them white as wool. If you are willing and listen to me, you will eat the good things of the land. But if you are unwilling and do not listen to me, the sword will devour you. For the mouth of the Lord has spoken this.”

| *Translator’s note.* The quotation is from [Isaiah 1:16-20](#), following the Greek Old Testament.

8.5 Since he wanted all those he loves to share in repentance, he confirmed it by his almighty will.

Chapter 9

9.1 So let us obey his glorious and splendid will. Let us fall before him as people begging for his mercy and kindness, and turn to his compassion. Let us give up the useless toil, the strife, and the jealousy that leads to death.

9.2 Let us fix our eyes on those who have served his magnificent glory perfectly.

9.3 Take Enoch. He was found righteous in obedience and was taken away, and no death of his was ever found.

| *Translator’s note.* See [Genesis 5:24](#) and [Hebrews 11:5](#).

| *Scripture:* [Hebrews 11:5](#)

9.4 Noah was found faithful, and through his service he proclaimed a new beginning to the world. Through him the Master saved the living creatures that entered the ark in harmony.

Chapter 10

10.1 Abraham, who was called “the friend,” was found faithful in becoming obedient to the words of God.

Translator's note. Abraham is called God's friend in [Isaiah 41:8](#), [2 Chronicles 20:7](#), and [James 2:23](#).

10.2 Through obedience he left his land, his relatives, and his father's house, so that by leaving a small land, a weak family, and a little house, he would inherit the promises of God. For God said to him:

Scripture: [Genesis 12:1-3](#)

10.3 "Leave your land, your relatives, and your father's house, and go to the land I will show you. I will make you into a great nation and bless you and make your name great, and you will be blessed. I will bless those who bless you and curse those who curse you, and in you all the tribes of the earth will be blessed."

Translator's note. The quotation is from [Genesis 12:1-3](#).

10.4 And again, when he had separated from Lot, God said to him: "Look up with your eyes and see from the place where you now are, to the north and south, east and west. For all the land that you see, I will give it to you and to your offspring forever."

Translator's note. The quotation is from [Genesis 13:14-15](#).

Scripture: [Genesis 13:14-16](#)

10.5 "I will make your offspring like the sand of the earth. If anyone can count the sand of the earth, your offspring too will be counted."

Translator's note. The quotation is from [Genesis 13:16](#).

10.6 And again he says: "God brought Abraham out and said to him, 'Look up to heaven and count the stars, if you can count them. So will your offspring be.' And Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness."

Translator's note. The quotation is from [Genesis 15:5-6](#). Compare [Romans 4](#) and [Galatians 3](#), where Paul builds on this verse.

Scripture: [Genesis 15:4-5](#)

10.7 Through faith and hospitality a son was given to him in his old age, and through obedience he offered him as a sacrifice to God on the mountain that God showed him.

Translator's note. The offering of Isaac is told in [Genesis 22](#). The mention of hospitality refers to [Genesis 18](#), where Abraham welcomed the three visitors.

Chapter 11

11.1 Because of his hospitality and godliness, Lot was saved from Sodom when the whole region was judged with fire and sulfur. The Master made it clear that he does not abandon those who hope in

him, but hands over to punishment and torment those who turn aside.

| *Translator's note.* See [Genesis 19](#).

11.2 Lot's wife went out with him, but she was of a different mind and not in agreement with him. So she was made a sign: she became a pillar of salt to this day. This was so that everyone would know that the double-minded and those who doubt God's power come under judgment and become a warning for all generations.

| *Translator's note.* See [Genesis 19:26](#). The Greek word *dipsychoi*, "double-minded" (literally "two-souled"), also appears in [James 1:8](#) and 4:8. Clement uses it again in chapter 23, and the theme of double-mindedness is prominent in the Shepherd of Hermas.

Chapter 12

12.1 Because of her faith and hospitality, Rahab the prostitute was saved.

| *Translator's note.* See [Joshua 2](#) and 6, [Hebrews 11:31](#), and [James 2:25](#).

12.2 When Joshua son of Nun sent spies to Jericho, the king of the land learned they had come to spy out his country, and sent men to arrest them, so they could be caught and put to death.

| *Scripture:* [Joshua 2:1-8](#)

12.3 The hospitable Rahab took them in and hid them in the upper room under the stalks of flax.

12.4 When the king's men came and said, "The spies of our land came in to you. Bring them out, for the king commands it," she answered, "The men you are looking for did come to me, but they left right away and are going along the road." She pointed them in the wrong direction.

12.5 She said to the men, "I know for certain that the Lord God is giving you this land, for fear and trembling of you have fallen on those who live in it. So when you take it, save me and my father's house."

| *Scripture:* [Joshua 2:9-10](#)

12.6 They said to her, "It will be as you have told us. When you know that we are approaching, gather all your people under your roof, and they will be saved. Anyone found outside the house will die."

12.7 And they added that she should hang a scarlet cord from her house as a sign. This showed ahead of time that redemption will come through the blood of the Lord to all who believe and hope in God.

Translator's note. This is the earliest surviving Christian reading of Rahab's scarlet cord as a picture of Christ's blood. Later writers such as Justin, Irenaeus, and Origen also used this image.

12.8 You see, dear friends, that in this woman there was not only faith but also prophecy.

Chapter 13

13.1 So let us be humble, brothers, putting away all arrogance, pride, foolishness, and anger. Let us do what is written, for the Holy Spirit says: "Let not the wise boast in their wisdom, nor the strong in their strength, nor the rich in their riches, but let the one who boasts boast in the Lord, to seek him out and to practice justice and righteousness." Above all, let us remember the words of the Lord Jesus, which he spoke when teaching gentleness and patience.

Translator's note. The quotation draws on [Jeremiah 9:23-24](#) and on the similar saying found in the Greek version of [1 Samuel 2:10](#), which ends with doing justice and righteousness. The words "let the one who boasts boast in the Lord" match Paul's wording in [1 Corinthians 1:31](#) and [2 Corinthians 10:17](#).

Scripture: [1 Corinthians 1:31](#)

13.2 For he said this: "Show mercy, so that you may receive mercy. Forgive, so that you may be forgiven. As you do, so it will be done to you. As you give, so it will be given to you. As you judge, so you will be judged. As you show kindness, so kindness will be shown to you. With the measure you use, it will be measured to you."

Translator's note. This saying combines sayings of Jesus from [Matthew 5:7](#), 6:14-15, 7:1-2 and [Luke 6:36-38](#) in a form that does not match any one Gospel exactly. Scholars have long debated whether Clement is quoting a Gospel from memory, an early collection of Jesus's sayings, or oral tradition.

13.3 Let us strengthen ourselves by this command and these instructions, so that we may live in obedience to his holy words, with humble minds. For the holy word says:

13.4 "Whom will I look on, except the gentle, quiet person who trembles at my words?"

Translator's note. The quotation is from [Isaiah 66:2](#). Where the Greek Old Testament reads "humble," Clement has "gentle" (or "meek"), which fits his theme.

Chapter 14

14.1 So it is right and holy, brothers, that we obey God rather than follow those who, in arrogance and disorder, are the ringleaders of a detestable jealousy.

14.2 We will bring on ourselves no ordinary harm, but rather great

danger, if we recklessly hand ourselves over to the wishes of people who launch themselves into strife and rebellion in order to pull us away from what is good.

14.3 Let us be kind to one another, following the compassion and sweetness of the one who made us.

14.4 For it is written: “The kind will live in the land, and the innocent will be left on it, but those who break the law will be wiped out from it.”

Translator’s note. The quotation follows [Proverbs 2:21-22](#) in the Greek Old Testament closely, with echoes of [Psalm 37](#) ([Psalm 36](#) in the Greek Old Testament).

14.5 And again it says: “I saw the ungodly man lifted up and raised high like the cedars of Lebanon. I passed by, and look, he was gone. I searched for his place, and I did not find it. Guard innocence and look upon what is upright, because there is a future for the peaceful person.”

Translator’s note. The quotation is from [Psalm 37:35-37](#) ([Psalm 36](#) in the Greek Old Testament).

Chapter 15

15.1 So let us hold on to those who keep the peace out of true godliness, not to those who only pretend to want peace.

15.2 For it says somewhere: “This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me.”

Translator’s note. The quotation is from [Isaiah 29:13](#), which Jesus also quotes in [Matthew 15:8](#) and [Mark 7:6](#).

15.3 And again: “They bless with their mouth, but curse with their heart.”

Translator’s note. The quotation is from [Psalm 62:4](#) ([Psalm 61](#) in the Greek Old Testament).

15.4 And again it says: “They loved him with their mouth and lied to him with their tongue, and their heart was not right with him, nor were they faithful to his covenant.”

Translator’s note. The quotation is from [Psalm 78:36-37](#) ([Psalm 77](#) in the Greek Old Testament).

15.5 Therefore, “Let the deceitful lips that speak lawlessness against the righteous be made silent.” And again: “May the Lord destroy all deceitful lips, the boasting tongue, those who say, ‘We will make our tongue great; our lips are our own. Who is lord over us?’”

Translator’s note. The quotations are from [Psalm 31:18](#) and [Psalm 12:3-4](#) ([Psalms 30](#) and 11 in the Greek Old Testament).

15.6 “Because of the misery of the poor and the groaning of the needy, I will now arise, says the Lord. I will set him in safety,

Translator’s note. The quotation is from [Psalm 12:5](#) ([Psalm 11](#) in the Greek Old Testament).

15.7 I will speak boldly for him.”

Translator’s note. The Greek of this line (also in the Greek Psalm, [Psalm 12:5](#) in English Bibles) is obscure; it may mean “I will act boldly in it [that is, in his rescue]” or “I will speak boldly about him.”

Chapter 16

16.1 For Christ belongs to those who are humble, not to those who raise themselves above his flock.

16.2 The scepter of God’s majesty, the Lord Jesus Christ, did not come with the show of boasting or arrogance, though he could have. He came in humility, just as the Holy Spirit said about him. For it says:

16.3 “Lord, who has believed our message? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed? We made our announcement before him: like a child, like a root in thirsty ground. He has no form or glory. We saw him, and he had no form or beauty. His appearance was without honor, falling short of the appearance of human beings. He was a man in the midst of blows and pain, who knew how to bear weakness, because his face was turned away. He was dishonored and not esteemed.

Translator’s note. This long quotation (16.3–14) is [Isaiah 53:1–12](#), following the Greek Old Testament, which differs in several places from the Hebrew. For example, the opening word “Lord” is not in the Hebrew. The letter’s use of [Isaiah 53](#) for Christ is among the earliest in Christian writing outside the New Testament.

16.4 “He bears our sins and suffers pain for us, and we thought of him as being in pain, under blows, and in affliction.

16.5 “But he was wounded for our sins and weakened for our lawless deeds. The discipline that brings our peace was on him; by his bruise we were healed.

16.6 “All of us like sheep went astray, each person went astray in his own way.

16.7 “And the Lord handed him over for our sins, and he, because of his affliction, does not open his mouth. Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter, and like a lamb silent before its shearer, so he does not open his mouth. In his humiliation his judgment was taken away.

16.8 “Who will describe his generation? For his life is taken away from the earth.

16.9 “He has come to death because of the lawless deeds of my people.

16.10 “And I will give the wicked in place of his burial, and the rich in place of his death, because he did no lawless deed, and there was no deceit found in his mouth. And the Lord wants to cleanse him from the wound.

16.11 “If you give an offering for sin, your soul will see long-lived offspring.

16.12 “And the Lord wants to take away the labor of his soul, to show him light and form him with understanding, to make righteous the righteous one who serves many well. And he himself will bear their sins.

16.13 “Therefore he will inherit many, and he will divide the spoils of the strong, because his soul was handed over to death, and he was counted among the lawless.

16.14 “And he himself bore the sins of many, and was handed over because of their sins.”

16.15 And again he says himself: “But I am a worm and not a man, a reproach of human beings and despised by the people.

Translator’s note. The quotation is from [Psalm 22:6-8](#) ([Psalm 21](#) in the Greek Old Testament), which the Gospels also apply to Jesus on the cross.

16.16 “All who saw me mocked me. They spoke with their lips and shook their heads: ‘He hoped in the Lord. Let him rescue him, let him save him, since he delights in him.’”

16.17 You see, dear friends, what example has been given to us. For if the Lord was this humble, what should we do, who have come through him under the yoke of his grace?

Chapter 17

17.1 Let us also imitate those who went about in goatskins and sheepskins, announcing the coming of Christ. We mean the prophets Elijah, Elisha, and also Ezekiel, and besides them, those who have been commended by God.

Translator’s note. Compare [Hebrews 11:37](#), “They went about in sheepskins and goatskins.” In the Greek Old Testament, Elijah’s cloak, later taken up by Elisha, is called a *mēlōtē* ([1 Kings 19:13](#), 19; [2 Kings 2:8](#), 13-14), the same word used here for “sheepskins.” The Bible does not say that Ezekiel wore skins, so the author may be drawing on a tradition we no longer have.

17.2 Abraham was highly commended and was called the friend of God. Fixing his gaze on the glory of God in humility, he says, “But I am dust and ashes.”

Translator's note. The quotation is from [Genesis 18:27](#). Abraham is called God's friend in [2 Chronicles 20:7](#), [Isaiah 41:8](#), and [James 2:23](#).

17.3 It is also written about Job: "Job was righteous and blameless, truthful, devout, and kept away from every evil."

Translator's note. The quotation is a free rendering of [Job 1:1](#) in the Greek Old Testament (compare [Job 1:8](#) and 2:3), with the descriptions in a different order.

17.4 But he accuses himself, saying, "No one is clean from filth, even if his life is only one day long."

Translator's note. The quotation is from [Job 14:4-5](#) in the Greek Old Testament. The Hebrew text is different.

17.5 Moses was called "faithful in all his house," and through his service God judged Egypt with plagues and punishments. Yet even he, though greatly honored, did not speak boastfully. When an oracle was given to him from the bush, he said, "Who am I that you are sending me? I am weak of voice and slow of tongue."

Translator's note. The words "faithful in all his house" are from [Numbers 12:7](#) (compare [Hebrews 3:2](#), 5). The other quotation is from [Exodus 3:11](#) and 4:10.

Scripture: [Exodus 4:10](#)

17.6 And again he says, "I am steam from a pot."

Translator's note. This saying is not found in the Old Testament as we have it. Its source is unknown. It may come from a Jewish writing that is now lost.

Chapter 18

18.1 What should we say about David, of whom such good testimony was given? Of him God said, "I have found a man after my own heart, David the son of Jesse. I anointed him with eternal mercy."

Translator's note. The Psalm says "with my holy oil." Clement's "mercy" (Greek *eleos*) sounds very like "oil" (*elaion*), which may explain the difference.

Scripture: [Acts 13:22](#)

18.2 But he himself says to God: "Have mercy on me, O God, according to your great mercy, and according to the multitude of your compassions wipe out my wrongdoing."

Translator's note. Sections 18.2-17 are [Psalm 51:1-17](#) ([Psalm 50](#) in the Greek Old Testament), quoted almost in full. The Greek wording differs in places from the Hebrew.

18.3 "Wash me even more from my lawlessness, and cleanse me from my sin. For I know my lawlessness, and my sin is always

before me.

18.4 “Against you alone I have sinned, and I have done what is evil in your sight, so that you may be justified in your words and win when you are judged.

| *Translator’s note.* Paul quotes this verse in [Romans 3:4](#).

18.5 “For look, I was conceived in lawless deeds, and in sins my mother conceived me.

18.6 “For look, you have loved truth. You have shown me the hidden and secret things of your wisdom.

18.7 “You will sprinkle me with hyssop and I will be clean. You will wash me and I will be whiter than snow.

18.8 “You will let me hear joy and gladness. The humbled bones will rejoice.

18.9 “Turn your face away from my sins, and wipe out all my lawless deeds.

18.10 “Create a clean heart in me, O God, and renew a right spirit in my inner parts.

18.11 “Do not cast me away from your presence, and do not take your Holy Spirit from me.

18.12 “Give me back the joy of your salvation, and strengthen me with a guiding spirit.

18.13 “I will teach the lawless your ways, and the ungodly will turn back to you.

18.14 “Deliver me from the guilt of shedding blood, O God, God of my salvation.

18.15 “My tongue will rejoice in your righteousness. Lord, you will open my mouth, and my lips will announce your praise.

18.16 “For if you had wanted sacrifice, I would have given it. You will not take pleasure in whole burnt offerings.

18.17 “A broken spirit is a sacrifice to God. God will not despise a broken and humbled heart.”

Chapter 19

19.1 So many people, so great and of such good report, were humble and submissive in their obedience. This has made better not only us but also the generations before us, who received God’s words in fear and truth.

19.2 Since we have shared in so many great and glorious deeds, let

us run back to the goal of peace that has been handed down to us from the beginning. Let us fix our eyes on the Father and Creator of the whole world, and hold on to his glorious and surpassing gifts of peace and his acts of kindness.

19.3 Let us see him with our minds and look with the eyes of our souls at his patient purpose. Let us understand how free from anger he is toward all of his creation.

Chapter 20

20.1 The heavens, which move by his direction, are subject to him in peace.

Translator's note. Chapter 20 is a hymn to the order of creation, much of it in the style of the Psalms and Stoic philosophy. Its language of harmony (homonoia, "concord") is chosen because the letter is addressed to a divided church.

20.2 Day and night run the course he has set, without getting in each other's way.

20.3 The sun and the moon and the choirs of stars, by his command, follow in harmony the courses assigned to them, without any deviation.

20.4 The earth, by his will, bears fruit in its proper seasons and brings forth abundant food for people, animals, and all the living creatures on it. It does so without dissent, and it changes none of his decrees.

20.5 The unsearchable depths of the abysses and the indescribable regions of the underworld are held together by the same commands.

20.6 The vast hollow of the boundless sea, gathered into its basins by his creative work, does not cross the barriers placed around it, but does just what he commanded.

Translator's note. The wording echoes [Genesis 1:9-10](#) in the Greek Old Testament, where the waters are "gathered" into one place.

20.7 For he said, "This far you will come, and your waves will be broken within you."

Translator's note. Compare [Job 38:11](#).

20.8 The ocean, which human beings cannot cross, and the worlds beyond it are governed by the same orders of the Master.

Translator's note. Ancient geography pictured the known lands as surrounded by an Ocean no one could cross, and some writers imagined other lands beyond it. Clement probably means such unknown regions.

20.9 The seasons of spring, summer, autumn, and winter give way

to one another in peace.

20.10 The winds from their stations do their work at the proper time without hindrance. The ever-flowing springs, made for enjoyment and health, never fail to offer their breasts to sustain human life. Even the smallest of living creatures gather together in harmony and peace.

20.11 The great Creator and Master of all things ordered all of this to exist in peace and harmony. He does good to all things, and above all to us who have fled to his mercies through our Lord Jesus Christ,

20.12 to whom be glory and greatness forever and ever. Amen.

Chapter 21

21.1 Take care, dear friends, that his many good gifts do not become a judgment on us, if we do not live worthily of him and do what is good and pleasing before him in harmony.

21.2 For it says somewhere: “The Spirit of the Lord is a lamp that searches the inmost parts of a person.”

Translator’s note. This is a loose quotation of [Proverbs 20:27](#). The Greek Old Testament reads: “The breath of man is a light of the Lord, which searches the storerooms of the belly.” Clement makes it a saying about the Spirit of the Lord. The Greek behind “inmost parts” is literally “the storerooms of the belly.”

Scripture: [Proverbs 20:27](#)

21.3 Let us see how near he is, and that none of our thoughts or reasonings is hidden from him.

21.4 It is right, then, that we should not desert his will like soldiers leaving their post.

Translator’s note. The verb is a military term for a soldier who leaves his place in the ranks.

21.5 Let us offend foolish, senseless, arrogant people, who boast in the pride of their speech, rather than God.

21.6 Let us revere the Lord Jesus Christ, whose blood was given for us. Let us respect our leaders, honor our elders, and teach the young the discipline of the fear of God. Let us guide our wives toward what is good.

Translator’s note. The household instructions in 21.6–8 resemble those in the New Testament letters. Compare [Ephesians 5:21–6:4](#), [Colossians 3:18–21](#), and [1 Peter 3:1–7](#).

21.7 Let them show the lovable character of purity. Let them demonstrate the sincere intention of their gentleness. Let them make the gentleness of their tongue plain through their silence. Let

their love not be given by favoritism, but equally and in holiness to all who fear God.

21.8 Let our children share in the training that is in Christ. Let them learn what humility can do before God, what pure love can do before God, and how good and great the fear of him is, saving all who live in it with holiness and a pure mind.

21.9 For he is the searcher of thoughts and desires. His breath is in us, and when he wishes, he will take it away.

Chapter 22

22.1 The faith that is in Christ confirms all of this. For he himself, through the Holy Spirit, calls us in this way: “Come, children, listen to me. I will teach you the fear of the Lord.

Translator’s note. Sections 22.1–7 quote [Psalm 34:11–17](#) ([Psalm 33](#) in the Greek Old Testament). Section 22.8 adds [Psalm 32:10](#). In the Psalm the speaker is the Psalmist, but the letter presents Christ himself as speaking through the Holy Spirit.

22.2 “Who is the person who wants life and loves to see good days?

22.3 “Keep your tongue from evil and your lips from speaking deceit.

22.4 “Turn away from evil and do good.

22.5 “Seek peace and pursue it.

22.6 “The eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and his ears are open to their prayer. But the face of the Lord is against those who do evil, to wipe out their memory from the earth.

22.7 “The righteous cried out, and the Lord heard him and rescued him from all his troubles.

22.8 “Many are the lashes that fall on the sinner, but mercy will surround those who hope in the Lord.”

Translator’s note. This verse is not from [Psalm 34](#). It is [Psalm 32:10](#) ([Psalm 31:10](#) in the Greek Old Testament), joined to the earlier quotation.

Chapter 23

23.1 The Father, who is merciful in everything and generous, has compassion on those who fear him. He gently and kindly gives his gifts to those who come to him with a sincere, undivided mind.

23.2 So let us not be double-minded, and let our soul not indulge in idle fancies about his surpassing and glorious gifts.

Translator’s note. The verb rendered “indulge in idle fancies” is rare and its exact sense is uncertain. It seems to mean letting the mind form

| doubtful or unreal imaginings.

23.3 Let this Scripture be far from us, where it says: “Wretched are the double-minded, those who doubt in their soul and say, ‘We heard these things even in the days of our fathers, and look, we have grown old, and none of them has happened to us.’

Translator’s note. Clement calls this “Scripture,” but it is not found in the Old Testament, and its source is unknown. The same passage is quoted in 2 Clement 11.2–4. Some scholars have suggested it comes from a lost book, Eldad and Modad, which the Shepherd of Hermas quotes elsewhere. This is only a guess.

23.4 “Foolish people, compare yourselves to a tree. Take a vine. First it sheds its leaves, then a shoot appears, then a leaf, then a flower, and after that an unripe grape, then a ripe cluster.” See how in a short time the fruit of the tree comes to ripeness.

23.5 Truly, his purpose will be completed quickly and suddenly, as Scripture also bears witness: “He will come quickly and will not delay,” and “The Lord will suddenly come to his temple, and the Holy One whom you are waiting for.”

Translator’s note. The first quotation resembles [Isaiah 13:22](#) in the Greek Old Testament (compare [Habakkuk 2:3](#)). The second is from [Malachi 3:1](#), where the second line speaks of “the messenger of the covenant” rather than “the Holy One.”

Chapter 24

24.1 Let us consider, dear friends, how the Master continually shows us that there will be a resurrection to come. He made the Lord Jesus Christ its firstfruits by raising him from the dead.

Translator’s note. For Christ as the “firstfruits” of the resurrection, compare [1 Corinthians 15:20](#).

24.2 Let us look, dear friends, at the resurrection that happens in its seasons.

24.3 Day and night show us a resurrection. Night goes to sleep, and day rises. Day goes away, and night comes.

24.4 Let us take the crops. How and in what way is sowing done?

24.5 The sower went out and threw each of the seeds into the ground. They fall into the ground dry and bare, and they decay. Then, out of that decay, the greatness of the Master’s providence raises them up, and from one seed many grow and produce fruit.

Translator’s note. “The sower went out” echoes Jesus’ parable ([Matthew 13:3](#)). For the seed that must die and the “bare” seed, compare [John 12:24](#) and [1 Corinthians 15:36–38](#).

Chapter 25

25.1 Let us look at the strange sign that happens in the eastern regions, that is, around Arabia.

Translator's note. Chapter 25 retells the ancient legend of the phoenix. In Clement's version the bird does not burn. Instead, a worm arises from its decaying body and becomes the new phoenix. That detail also appears in Pliny the Elder. Herodotus tells of the bird coming to Heliopolis every five hundred years, and Ovid also tells the story. Several later Christian writers used the phoenix as a picture of resurrection. Readers today may treat it as an illustration taken from the common knowledge of the author's time, not as a claim of the faith.

25.2 There is a bird called the phoenix. It is the only one of its kind and lives five hundred years. When the time comes for it to die, it makes a tomb for itself from frankincense, myrrh, and other spices. When its time is up, it enters the tomb and dies.

25.3 As the flesh decays, a certain worm is born, which is nourished by the moisture of the dead creature and grows wings. Then, once it has become strong, it picks up that tomb where the bones of its predecessor lie, and carries them from the land of Arabia to Egypt, to the city called Heliopolis.

25.4 In daylight, with everyone watching, it flies up to the altar of the sun, lays them there, and then heads back.

25.5 The priests then check the records of the dates and find that it has come when the five-hundredth year was complete.

Chapter 26

26.1 Do we think it is great and marvelous, then, if the Creator of all things will bring about the resurrection of those who served him in holiness with the confidence of good faith, when he shows us the greatness of his promise even through a bird?

26.2 For it says somewhere: "You will raise me up, and I will give thanks to you," and, "I lay down and slept, I rose up, because you are with me."

Translator's note. The source of the first quotation is uncertain; it may loosely recall [Psalm 28:7](#) (27:7 in the Greek Old Testament) or [Psalm 41:10](#). The second is based on [Psalm 3:5](#) (3:6 in the Greek Old Testament), where the verse ends "for the Lord sustains me"; the words "because you are with me" match [Psalm 23:4](#).

26.3 And again, Job says: "You will raise up this flesh of mine, which has endured all these things."

Translator's note. This is a loose quotation of [Job 19:26](#) in the Greek Old Testament, which speaks of raising up "my skin" rather than "my flesh."

Chapter 27

27.1 So, with this hope, let our souls be bound to the one who is faithful in his promises and just in his judgments.

27.2 The one who commanded us not to lie will certainly not lie himself. For nothing is impossible with God, except to lie.

Translator's note. Compare [Titus 1:2](#) and [Hebrews 6:18](#).

27.3 So let faith in him be rekindled in us, and let us understand that everything is near him.

27.4 By the word of his greatness he established all things, and by a word he is able to destroy them.

27.5 “Who will say to him, ‘What have you done?’ Or who will resist the might of his strength?” When he wants, and as he wants, he will do everything, and nothing that he has decreed will pass away.

Translator's note. The questions echo Wisdom of Solomon 12:12 and 11:21. Wisdom is in the Apocrypha and is not part of the Protestant Bible. Compare also [Job 9:12](#) and [Daniel 4:35](#).

27.6 Everything is before him, and nothing is hidden from his purpose,

27.7 since “the heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky announces the work of his hands. Day pours out speech to day, and night announces knowledge to night. There are no words or speeches whose voices are not heard.”

Translator's note. The quotation is from [Psalm 19:1-3](#) ([Psalm 18](#) in the Greek Old Testament).

Chapter 28

28.1 Since everything is seen and heard by him, let us fear him and give up the foul desires of wicked deeds, so that we may be sheltered by his mercy from the judgments to come.

28.2 For where can any of us escape from his strong hand? What world will take in anyone who deserts him?

28.3 For the Scripture says somewhere: “Where will I go, and where will I hide from your face? If I go up to heaven, you are there. If I go away to the ends of the earth, your right hand is there. If I make my bed in the depths, your spirit is there.”

Translator's note. The word translated “Scripture” (grapheion, “the Writing”) is unusual. Some scholars think it refers to the “Writings,” the third division of the Hebrew Bible, which includes the Psalms.

28.4 Where, then, can anyone go, or where can anyone run from the one who contains all things?

Chapter 29

29.1 So let us come to him with holiness of soul, lifting pure and undefiled hands to him, loving our gentle and compassionate Father, who has made us his own chosen portion.

Translator's note. Raising the hands was a common posture of prayer in the ancient world. Compare [1 Timothy 2:8](#).

29.2 For it is written this way: "When the Most High divided the nations, when he scattered the sons of Adam, he set the boundaries of the nations according to the number of the angels of God. The Lord's portion became his people Jacob, and Israel was the measured part of his inheritance."

Translator's note. The quotation is from [Deuteronomy 32:8-9](#), following the Greek Old Testament. The traditional Hebrew text reads "sons of Israel." A Dead Sea Scroll copy reads "sons of God," which is close to the Greek "angels of God."

29.3 And in another place he says: "Look, the Lord takes for himself a nation from the midst of nations, as a person takes the firstfruits of his threshing floor, and a holy of holies will come out of that nation."

Translator's note. No single verse matches this quotation. It seems to combine phrases from [Deuteronomy 4:34](#) and 14:2, [Numbers 18:27](#), and possibly [2 Chronicles 31:14](#) and [Ezekiel 48:12](#).

Chapter 30

30.1 Since we are the portion of the Holy One, let us do everything that belongs to holiness. Let us flee slander, foul and unclean embraces, drunkenness, rebellion, hateful desires, loathsome adultery, and hateful pride.

Translator's note. The word translated "rebellion" (neōterismos) usually means revolt or stirring up change, which fits the trouble at Corinth.

30.2 "For God," it says, "opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble."

Translator's note. The quotation is from [Proverbs 3:34](#) in the Greek Old Testament, which has "the Lord." Clement's "God" matches the form of the verse quoted in [James 4:6](#) and [1 Peter 5:5](#).

30.3 So let us join ourselves to those to whom God has given grace. Let us put on harmony, with humility and self-control, keeping ourselves far from all whispering and slander, being justified by deeds and not by words.

Translator's note. The author here speaks of being "justified by deeds" (ergois dikaïoumenoi). Yet in 32.4 he says we are justified "through faith," not through our works. He evidently saw no contradiction between the two. Compare Paul in [Romans 3-4](#) and James in [James 2:14-26](#).

30.4 For it says, "The one who talks much will also hear much in

return. Or does the fluent speaker think he is righteous?

Translator's note. The quotation, which continues in 30.5, is from [Job 11:2-3](#) in the Greek Old Testament. The Greek differs considerably from the Hebrew here.

30.5 Blessed is the one born of a woman who has a short life. Do not be full of words."

Translator's note. These lines are also part of [Job 11:2-3](#) in the Greek Old Testament. The phrase "born of a woman, short-lived" also appears in [Job 14:1](#).

30.6 Let our praise be in God and not from ourselves, for God hates those who praise themselves.

30.7 Let the witness of our good conduct be given by others, as it was given to our righteous fathers.

30.8 Rashness, arrogance, and audacity belong to those cursed by God. Gentleness, humility, and meekness are found with those blessed by God.

Chapter 31

31.1 So let us hold on to his blessing and see what the paths of blessing are. Let us unroll the record of what happened from the beginning.

31.2 Why was our father Abraham blessed? Was it not because he practiced righteousness and truth through faith?

31.3 Isaac, knowing with confidence what was coming, was gladly led as a sacrifice.

Translator's note. [Genesis 22](#) does not say that Isaac knew what was coming or went gladly. Clement follows a Jewish tradition of Isaac's willing self-offering, also found in Josephus (*Antiquities* 1.232).

31.4 Jacob left his land in humility because of his brother, and went to Laban and served him, and the twelve-tribed scepter of Israel was given to him.

Chapter 32

32.1 If anyone looks sincerely at each of these one by one, he will recognize the greatness of the gifts that were given by him.

32.2 From Jacob come the priests and all the Levites who serve at the altar of God. From him comes the Lord Jesus according to the flesh. From him come the kings, rulers, and leaders in the line of Judah. And his other tribes are held in no small honor, since God promised, "Your offspring will be like the stars of heaven."

Translator's note. The promise is found in [Genesis 15:5](#), 22:17, and 26:4.

The mention of Jesus' descent "according to the flesh" echoes [Romans 1:3](#) and 9:5.

32.3 All of them were glorified and made great not through themselves, or their works, or the righteous deeds they did, but through his will.

32.4 So we too, who have been called by his will in Christ Jesus, are not made righteous through ourselves. We are not made righteous through our own wisdom, understanding, or godliness, or through works we have done in holiness of heart. We are made righteous through faith, by which almighty God has made righteous all who have lived from the beginning. To him be glory forever and ever. Amen.

Translator's note. This is one of the clearest statements of being made righteous (justified) by faith in the Apostolic Fathers. It echoes Paul in [Romans 3-5](#) and [Ephesians 2:8-9](#). In the next chapter (33), Clement goes straight on to insist that this is no excuse for neglecting good works.

Chapter 33

33.1 What then should we do, brothers? Should we be lazy about doing good and give up love? May the Master never allow that to happen to us. Instead, let us hurry with energy and eagerness to complete every good work.

33.2 For the Creator and Master of all things himself rejoices in his works.

33.3 By his enormous strength he set up the heavens, and by his unfathomable understanding he arranged them. He separated the earth from the water surrounding it and set it firmly on the secure foundation of his own will. The animals that move on it he commanded to exist by his own order. He prepared the sea and the animals in it, and shut them in by his own power.

33.4 Above all, with his holy and faultless hands he formed the human being, the most excellent and, in understanding, the greatest of creatures, as the imprint of his own image.

33.5 For God says: "Let us make a human being in our image and in our likeness." And God made the human being; male and female he made them.

Translator's note. The quotation is from [Genesis 1:26-27](#).

Scripture: [Genesis 1:26-27](#)

33.6 Then, when he had finished all these things, he praised them and blessed them and said, "Grow and multiply."

Translator's note. See [Genesis 1:28](#).

33.7 Let us note that all the righteous have been adorned with

good works, and that the Lord himself, adorning himself with good works, rejoiced.

33.8 Since we have this example, let us give ourselves to his will without hesitation. With all our strength let us do the work of righteousness.

Chapter 34

34.1 The good worker receives the bread of his work with confidence. The lazy and careless worker cannot look his employer in the eye.

34.2 So we must be eager to do good, for everything comes from him.

34.3 For he tells us in advance: "Look, here is the Lord, and his reward is before his face, to give to each according to his work."

Translator's note. The quotation loosely combines [Isaiah 40:10](#) and [Isaiah 62:11](#) with the thought of [Proverbs 24:12](#). Compare [Revelation 22:12](#).

Scripture: [Isaiah 40:10](#); [Isaiah 62:11](#)

34.4 So he urges us who believe in him with our whole heart not to be lazy or careless in any good work.

34.5 Let our boasting and confidence be in him. Let us submit to his will. Let us think about the whole multitude of his angels, how they stand beside him and serve his will.

34.6 For the Scripture says: "Ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him, and a thousand thousands served him. And they cried out, 'Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts. All creation is full of his glory.'"

Translator's note. The quotation combines [Daniel 7:10](#) and [Isaiah 6:3](#). Clement reverses the order of Daniel's two lines. Where Isaiah says "the whole earth is full of his glory," Clement says "all creation."

Scripture: [Daniel 7:10](#)

34.7 So let us too, gathered together in harmony and united in conscience, cry out earnestly to him as if with one mouth, so that we may share in his great and glorious promises.

34.8 For he says, "Eye has not seen, and ear has not heard, and it has not entered the human heart, what the Lord has prepared for those who wait for him."

Translator's note. This quotation is close to [1 Corinthians 2:9](#), which draws on [Isaiah 64:4](#) and [Isaiah 65:17](#). The opening lines follow Paul's wording. But the ending, "those who wait for him," is closer to Isaiah's idea of waiting than to Paul's "those who love him."

Chapter 35

35.1 How blessed and wonderful are God's gifts, dear friends!

35.2 Life in immortality, splendor in righteousness, truth in boldness, faith in confidence, self-control in holiness. All these things already come within our understanding.

35.3 What, then, are the things prepared for those who wait? The Creator and Father of the ages, the all-holy one, himself knows how great and beautiful they are.

35.4 So let us strive to be found among the number of those who wait, so that we may share in the promised gifts.

35.5 How will this happen, dear friends? It will happen if our mind is faithfully fixed on God, and if we seek what is pleasing and acceptable to him. It will happen if we carry out what fits his blameless will and follow the way of truth, throwing away from ourselves all injustice and wickedness, greed, quarrels, malice and deceit, gossip and slander, hatred of God, pride and arrogance, vanity and lack of hospitality.

35.6 For those who do these things are hateful to God, and not only those who do them but also those who approve of them.

Translator's note. Compare [Romans 1:29-32](#), a similar vice list. Paul uses the related word "God-haters" (theostygeis) and the same Greek verb for "approve" (syneudokeō).

35.7 For the Scripture says: "But to the sinner God said, 'Why do you recite my statutes, and take my covenant on your lips?"

Translator's note. Sections 35.7-12 quote [Psalm 50:16-23](#) ([Psalm 49](#) in the Greek Old Testament).

35.8 "You hated discipline and threw my words behind you. If you saw a thief, you ran with him, and you threw in your lot with adulterers. Your mouth overflowed with evil, and your tongue wove deceit. You sat and spoke against your brother, and you put a stumbling block before your mother's son.

35.9 "You did these things, and I kept silent. You thought, lawless one, that I would be like you.

35.10 "I will rebuke you and set you before your own face.

35.11 "Understand this, you who forget God, or he may seize you like a lion, and there will be no one to rescue you.

35.12 "A sacrifice of praise will glorify me, and there is the way by which I will show him the salvation of God."

Chapter 36

36.1 This is the way, dear friends, in which we found our salvation, Jesus Christ, the high priest of our offerings, the defender and helper of our weakness.

36.2 Through him we look up to the heights of the heavens. Through him we see, as in a mirror, God's faultless and most exalted face. Through him the eyes of our hearts were opened. Through him our foolish and darkened mind blossoms again toward the light. Through him the Master wanted us to taste immortal knowledge. Christ is the radiance of God's majesty, and he is as much greater than the angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

Translator's note. "The eyes of our hearts" echoes [Ephesians 1:18](#).

Scripture: [Hebrews 1:3-4](#)

36.3 For it is written: "He makes his angels spirits and his servants a flame of fire."

Translator's note. The quotation is from [Psalm 104:4](#) ([Psalm 103](#) in the Greek Old Testament), as quoted in [Hebrews 1:7](#).

36.4 But of his Son the Master said: "You are my Son. Today I have begotten you. Ask of me, and I will give you the nations as your inheritance and the ends of the earth as your possession."

Translator's note. The quotation is from [Psalm 2:7-8](#). [Hebrews 1:5](#) quotes [Psalm 2:7](#).

36.5 And again he says to him: "Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet."

Translator's note. The quotation is from [Psalm 110:1](#) ([Psalm 109](#) in the Greek Old Testament), as in [Hebrews 1:13](#).

Scripture: [Hebrews 1:13](#)

36.6 Who then are the enemies? Those who are wicked and who oppose his will.

Chapter 37

37.1 So let us serve as soldiers, brothers, with all earnestness, under his faultless commands.

37.2 Let us think about the soldiers who serve under our commanders, and how orderly, how readily, and how obediently they carry out their orders.

Translator's note. The author points to the Roman army ("our commanders"). Corinth was itself a Roman colony, so the picture would be familiar there too. For soldier imagery, compare [2 Timothy 2:3-4](#).

37.3 Not all of them are prefects, or commanders of a thousand, or centurions, or commanders of fifty, and so on down the line.

Instead, each one in his own rank carries out the orders of the emperor and the commanders.

Translator's note. "Commanders of fifty" was not a regular Roman rank. The list seems to echo the biblical leaders "over thousands, hundreds, fifties" ([Exodus 18:21](#); [Deuteronomy 1:15](#)).

37.4 The great cannot exist without the small, nor the small without the great. There is a kind of blending together among them all, and this is what makes them useful.

37.5 Let us take our body as an example. The head is nothing without the feet, and the feet are nothing without the head. Even the smallest parts of our body are necessary and useful to the whole body. All of them work together and are subject to one order, so that the whole body may be preserved.

Translator's note. Compare Paul's body picture in [1 Corinthians 12:12-27](#) (especially verse 21 on the head and the feet) and [Romans 12:4-5](#).

Chapter 38

38.1 So let our whole body be preserved in Christ Jesus, and let each be subject to his neighbor, according to the gift he has been given.

38.2 Let the strong care for the weak, and let the weak respect the strong. Let the rich provide for the poor, and let the poor thank God for giving them someone to meet their need. Let the wise show his wisdom not in words but in good works. Let the humble not testify about himself, but let others testify about him. Let the one who is pure in the flesh not boast, knowing that it is someone else who gives him self-control.

38.3 Let us think, brothers, about what we were made from, what kind of people we were when we entered the world, and out of what tomb and darkness the one who shaped and made us brought us into his world, having prepared his gifts before we were born.

38.4 Since we have all of this from him, we should give thanks to him in everything. To him be glory forever and ever. Amen.

Chapter 39

39.1 Foolish, senseless, stupid, and uneducated people mock and ridicule us, wanting to lift themselves up in their own minds.

39.2 For what can a mortal do? What is the strength of one born of the earth?

39.3 For it is written: "There was no form before my eyes, but I heard a breath and a voice.

Translator's note. Verses 39.3-9 quote [Job 4:16-5:5](#), with a line from [Job](#)

15:15 in 39.5. The wording follows the Greek Old Testament, with some variation.

39.4 “What then? Will a mortal be pure before the Lord? Or a man blameless in his works, if he does not trust his servants and has found some crookedness in his angels?

39.5 “Heaven is not clean before him. How much less those who live in houses of clay, the same clay we ourselves are made of! He struck them like a moth, and from morning to evening they are no more. They perished because they could not help themselves.

39.6 “He breathed on them, and they died, because they did not have wisdom.

39.7 “Call, and see whether anyone will answer you, or whether you will see any of the holy angels. For wrath kills the foolish, and jealousy puts to death the one who has gone astray.

39.8 “I have seen fools putting down roots, but their dwelling was quickly eaten up.

39.9 “May their sons be far from safety. May they be crushed at the doors of lesser men, and no one will rescue them. For what was prepared for them the righteous will eat, but they themselves will not be rescued from evils.”

Translator’s note. The Greek verb translated “crushed” is rare, and its meaning is uncertain. It may mean “mocked” or “insulted.”

Chapter 40

40.1 Since these things are clear to us, and since we have looked into the depths of divine knowledge, we ought to do in order everything the Master commanded us to do at the appointed times.

40.2 He commanded that offerings and services be carried out, and not carelessly or in disorder, but at set times and hours.

Translator’s note. In the following sections (40–41) the author describes the order of the Old Testament priesthood and temple worship. He uses it as a pattern for good order in the church.

40.3 He himself decided, by his supreme will, where and by whom they are to be done. He did this so that everything would be done in holiness, according to his good pleasure, and be acceptable to his will.

40.4 So those who make their offerings at the appointed times are acceptable and blessed, for in following the Master’s laws they do not go wrong.

40.5 For the high priest has his own services assigned to him, and the priests have their own place appointed to them, and the Levites have their own duties laid on them. The lay person is bound by

rules for lay people.

Translator's note. Here and in chapter 41 the author uses the language of the Old Testament priesthood (high priest, priests, Levites, laity) as a picture of order in the church. Scholars debate whether he means that Christian overseers, elders, and deacons correspond to these ranks. He does not say so directly. The word translated “lay person” (laikos) is usually said to be its earliest known use in Christian writing.

Chapter 41

41.1 Let each of us, brothers, please God in his own rank, keeping a good conscience and not stepping beyond the rule appointed for his service, but acting with reverence.

41.2 Brothers, the daily offerings, the offerings for vows, and the offerings for sin and guilt are not offered everywhere, but only in Jerusalem. Even there they are not offered in every place, but in front of the sanctuary, at the altar, after the offering has been examined for any blemish by the high priest and the ministers mentioned above.

Translator's note. The author speaks of the temple sacrifices in the present tense, although the temple was destroyed in AD 70. This has been used in debates about the letter's date. Many scholars think he is simply describing the law's provisions, as Josephus and Hebrews also do.

41.3 So those who do anything contrary to what his will requires are punished with death.

41.4 You see, brothers, the greater the knowledge we have been counted worthy of, the greater the danger we are under.

Chapter 42

42.1 The apostles received the gospel for us from the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus the Christ was sent from God.

42.2 So Christ is from God, and the apostles are from Christ. Both came about in good order, by the will of God.

42.3 So the apostles received their instructions and were fully convinced through the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, and they were confirmed in the word of God. With the full assurance of the Holy Spirit they went out announcing the good news that the kingdom of God was about to come.

42.4 As they preached in country and city, they appointed their firstfruits, after testing them by the Spirit, to be overseers and deacons of those who would believe.

Translator's note. “Overseers” translates episkopoi (singular episkopos), often rendered “bishops.” Here, and in 44.1–6, the word seems to be used for the same group of people the letter calls “presbyters” or “elders.”

Scholars disagree about whether the church at Corinth was led by a single bishop or by a board of overseer-elders at this time. The wording here favors the second view.

42.5 This was not new, for it had been written a long time earlier about overseers and deacons. For somewhere the Scripture says: “I will appoint their overseers in righteousness and their deacons in faith.”

Translator’s note. This is a loose adaptation of [Isaiah 60:17](#) in the Greek Old Testament, which reads “I will give your rulers in peace and your overseers in righteousness.” The author reshapes it so that it names “deacons.”

Chapter 43

43.1 Is it any wonder that those who were entrusted by God in Christ with such a task appointed the people just mentioned? The blessed Moses too, “a faithful servant in all his house,” recorded in the sacred books all the instructions given to him. The other prophets followed him and added their witness to the laws he had laid down.

Translator’s note. The quotation is from [Numbers 12:7](#), which already reads “servant” in the Greek Old Testament; [Hebrews 3:5](#) quotes the same verse.

43.2 When jealousy broke out about the priesthood, and the tribes were quarreling about which of them was to be honored with that glorious title, Moses commanded the twelve tribal leaders to bring him staffs, each with the name of its tribe written on it. He took them, tied them together, and sealed them with the rings of the tribal leaders, and put them in the tent of testimony on the table of God.

43.3 He shut the tent and sealed the keys just as he had sealed the staffs,

43.4 and said to them, “Brothers, the tribe whose staff blossoms is the one God has chosen to serve as his priests and to minister to him.”

43.5 When morning came, he called together all Israel, six hundred thousand men, and showed the seals to the tribal leaders. He opened the tent of testimony and brought out the staffs. And Aaron’s staff was found not only to have blossomed but also to be bearing fruit.

Translator’s note. The story is told in [Numbers 17](#) (see also [Hebrews 9:4](#)). The author adds details not found there: the binding and sealing of the staffs with the leaders’ rings, the sealed keys, the “table of God,” and the gathering of six hundred thousand men. Numbers says only that the staffs were laid before the Lord in the tent of testimony and that Aaron’s staff budded, blossomed, and produced almonds.

43.6 What do you think, dear friends? Did Moses not know this was going to happen? He certainly knew. But he did it so that there would be no disorder in Israel, and so that the name of the true and only God would be glorified. To him be glory forever and ever. Amen.

Chapter 44

44.1 Our apostles also knew, through our Lord Jesus Christ, that there would be strife over the office of overseer.

44.2 For this reason, having received perfect foreknowledge, they appointed those mentioned earlier, and afterward gave a further instruction, so that if they died, other approved men would succeed to their service.

Translator's note. The Greek word translated "further instruction" (epinome) is difficult and its meaning is disputed. Some scholars understand it as a rule or provision about succession. Others emend the text to a different word. Lake translates it as "codicil." It is also unclear whether "if they died" refers to the apostles or to the men they appointed.

44.3 So we do not think it is right to remove from their service those who were appointed by them, or afterward by other respected men with the agreement of the whole church, and who have served the flock of Christ blamelessly, with humility, quietly and without self-seeking, and have been well spoken of by everyone for a long time.

44.4 For it will be no small sin on our part if we throw out those who have offered the gifts of the overseer's office blamelessly and in holiness.

Translator's note. The "gifts" (dora) offered by the overseers may refer to the church's prayers and offerings, possibly including the Lord's Supper. The letter does not say exactly what is meant.

44.5 Blessed are the elders who went before, who had a fruitful and complete departure, for they no longer fear that anyone will remove them from the place set up for them.

44.6 For we see that you have removed some people who were living good lives from the service they had carried out blamelessly and with honor.

Chapter 45

45.1 Be eager to compete, brothers, and be zealous about the things that lead to salvation.

Translator's note. The Greek verb can be read either as a statement ("You are contentious") or as a command ("Be contentious"); many take it as a command, perhaps ironic: if you must be contentious, let it be about what leads to salvation.

45.2 You have looked deeply into the holy Scriptures, which are true and given through the Holy Spirit.

45.3 You know that nothing unjust or falsified has been written in them. You will not find that righteous people were ever thrown out by holy men.

45.4 The righteous were persecuted, but by lawless people. They were imprisoned, but by unholy people. They were stoned by lawbreakers. They were killed by those who had taken up a foul and unjust jealousy.

45.5 They suffered these things and bore them gloriously.

45.6 What shall we say, brothers? Was Daniel thrown into the lions' den by those who feared God?

45.7 Or were Ananias, Azarias, and Misael shut into the fiery furnace by those who practiced the great and glorious worship of the Most High? Certainly not. Who then did these things? Hateful people, full of every evil, who were so stirred up in their anger that they brought torture on those who served God with a holy and blameless purpose. They did not know that the Most High is the champion and protector of those who serve his all-virtuous name with a clean conscience. To him be glory forever and ever. Amen.

Translator's note. Ananias, Azarias, and Misael are the Greek forms of the Hebrew names Hananiah, Azariah, and Mishael ([Daniel 1:6-7](#)). Babylon renamed them Shadrach, Abednego, and Meshach. The story of the furnace is in [Daniel 3](#).

45.8 But those who endured with confidence inherited glory and honor. They were lifted up and recorded by God in his remembrance forever and ever. Amen.

Chapter 46

46.1 We too, brothers, must hold on to such examples.

46.2 For it is written: "Hold on to the holy ones, for those who hold on to them will be made holy."

Translator's note. This saying is not found in the Old Testament, and its source is unknown. It may come from a writing now lost, or it may be a loose paraphrase.

46.3 And again in another place it says: "With an innocent man you will be innocent, and with a chosen man you will be chosen, and with a crooked man you will act crookedly."

Translator's note. The quotation is from [Psalm 18:25-26](#) ([Psalm 17](#) in the Greek Old Testament).

46.4 So let us hold on to the innocent and righteous, for these are the chosen of God.

46.5 Why are there quarrels, outbursts of anger, divisions, splits, and war among you?

46.6 Or do we not have one God, one Christ, and one Spirit of grace poured out on us? And is there not one calling in Christ?

Translator's note. Compare [Ephesians 4:4-6](#).

46.7 Why do we pull apart and tear the members of Christ, and rebel against our own body, and reach such a degree of madness that we forget that we are members of one another? Remember the words of the Lord Jesus.

46.8 For he said: "Woe to that man. It would have been better for him not to have been born than to cause one of my chosen ones to stumble. It would have been better for him to have a millstone hung around him and be drowned in the sea than to turn one of my chosen ones aside."

Translator's note. This saying is close to [Matthew 18:6-7](#), 26:24, [Mark 9:42](#), 14:21, and [Luke 17:1-2](#), but it does not match any of them exactly. The Gospels speak of "little ones" where Clement has "my chosen ones." This is one of several places where Clement gives a saying of Jesus in a form that blends Gospel passages.

Scripture: [Matthew 26:24](#); [Luke 17:2](#); [Mark 9:42](#)

46.9 Your split has turned many aside, has thrown many into despair, many into doubt, and all of us into grief. And your rebellion continues.

Chapter 47

47.1 Take up the letter of the blessed apostle Paul.

47.2 What did he first write to you in the early days of the gospel?

Translator's note. "The beginning of the gospel" means the time when the gospel was first preached among them. Paul uses the same phrase in [Philippians 4:15](#).

47.3 In truth, by the Spirit, he wrote to you about himself, Cephas, and Apollos, because even then you had formed factions.

Translator's note. This refers to [1 Corinthians 1:10-17](#) and 3:1-23. "Cephas" is the Aramaic name of Peter. This is one of the earliest references by name to a New Testament letter outside the New Testament itself.

47.4 But that partisanship made your sin less serious, for you sided with apostles of good reputation and with a man they approved.

Translator's note. The "man approved" is Apollos.

47.5 But now consider who has turned you aside and reduced the dignity of your famous brotherly love.

47.6 It is shameful, dear friends, extremely shameful, and unworthy of the way of life in Christ, to hear that the steadfast and ancient church of the Corinthians is rebelling against its elders because of one or two people.

47.7 This report has reached not only us but also those who differ from us, so that blasphemies are brought on the name of the Lord because of your foolishness, and you are creating danger for yourselves.

Chapter 48

48.1 Let us remove this quickly, and fall before the Master and weep as we beg him, so that he may be merciful and be reconciled to us and restore us to the dignified, holy practice of our brotherly love.

48.2 For this is the gate of righteousness that opens onto life, as it is written: “Open the gates of righteousness for me, so that I may enter by them and give thanks to the Lord.

Translator’s note. The quotation is from [Psalm 118:19–20](#) ([Psalm 117](#) in the Greek Old Testament).

48.3 “This is the gate of the Lord. The righteous will enter by it.”

48.4 Though many gates have been opened, the gate of righteousness is the one in Christ. Blessed are all who enter it and direct their way in holiness and righteousness, doing everything without disorder.

Scripture: [Luke 1:75](#)

48.5 Let someone be faithful, let him be able to explain knowledge, let him be wise in judging arguments, let him be pure in his deeds.

48.6 For the greater he seems to be, the more humble he should be, and the more he should seek what benefits everyone, not his own advantage.

Chapter 49

49.1 Let the person who has love in Christ do the commands of Christ.

49.2 Who can explain the bond of God’s love?

49.3 Who is able to describe the greatness of its beauty?

49.4 The height to which love lifts us is beyond description.

49.5 Love joins us to God. Love covers a multitude of sins. Love puts up with everything and is patient with everything. There is nothing coarse and nothing proud in love. Love knows no division.

Love causes no rebellion. Love does everything in harmony. In love all God's chosen were made perfect. Without love nothing is pleasing to God.

Translator's note. "Love covers a multitude of sins" comes from [1 Peter 4:8](#) (compare [Proverbs 10:12](#)); the passage as a whole echoes [1 Corinthians 13:4-7](#).

Scripture: [1 Corinthians 13:4-7](#)

49.6 In love the Master took us to himself. Because of the love he had for us, Jesus Christ our Lord gave his blood for us by the will of God, and his flesh for our flesh, and his life for our lives.

Chapter 50

50.1 See, dear friends, how great and wonderful love is, and there is no way to explain its perfection.

50.2 Who is fit to be found in it, except those whom God counts worthy? So let us pray and ask for his mercy, that we may be found in love, blameless, without taking human sides.

50.3 All the generations from Adam to this day have passed away, but those who were made perfect in love by the grace of God have a place among the godly, and they will be revealed when Christ's kingdom comes to visit the world.

50.4 For it is written: "Go into the inner rooms for a very little while, until my anger and wrath pass. Then I will remember a good day, and I will raise you up from your tombs."

Translator's note. This is a loose combination of [Isaiah 26:20](#) and [Ezekiel 37:12](#). The words "I will remember a good day" have no clear source in either passage.

50.5 We are blessed, dear friends, if we keep God's commands in the harmony of love, so that our sins may be forgiven through love.

50.6 For it is written: "Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord will not count, and in whose mouth there is no deceit."

Translator's note. The quotation is from [Psalm 32:1-2](#) ([Psalm 31](#) in the Greek Old Testament). Paul quotes the first part in [Romans 4:7-8](#).

Scripture: [Romans 4:7-9](#)

50.7 This blessing came to those chosen by God through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

Chapter 51

51.1 So let us ask to be forgiven for whatever wrongs we have committed and whatever we have done through any of the attacks

of the Adversary. And those who became the ringleaders of the rebellion and division ought also to look to the hope we all share.

51.2 For those who live with fear and love would rather suffer mistreatment themselves than see their neighbors suffer it. They would rather take blame on themselves than bring blame on the harmony that was handed down to us so well and so rightly.

51.3 For it is better for a person to confess his sins than to harden his heart, as the hearts of those who rebelled against Moses, the servant of God, were hardened. Their condemnation was made plain to all.

51.4 For they went down into Hades alive, and death will shepherd them.

Translator's note. See [Numbers 16](#) and [Psalm 49:14](#) ([Psalm 48](#) in the Greek Old Testament).

51.5 Pharaoh, his army, all the rulers of Egypt, and their chariots and riders were drowned in the Red Sea and perished for no other reason than that their senseless hearts were hardened, after the signs and wonders were done in the land of Egypt through Moses, the servant of God.

Chapter 52

52.1 The Master of all things needs nothing, brothers. He asks nothing from anyone except that we confess to him.

52.2 For David, the chosen one, says: "I will confess to the Lord, and it will please him more than a young calf with horns and hooves. Let the poor see it and be glad."

Translator's note. The quotation is loosely drawn from [Psalm 69:30-32](#) ([Psalm 68](#) in the Greek Old Testament). "Confess" here (exomologeomai) can also mean "give thanks" or "praise."

52.3 And again he says: "Sacrifice to God a sacrifice of praise and pay your vows to the Most High. Call on me in the day of your trouble, and I will rescue you, and you will glorify me."

Translator's note. The quotation is from [Psalm 50:14-15](#) ([Psalm 49](#) in the Greek Old Testament).

52.4 For a broken spirit is a sacrifice to God.

Translator's note. From [Psalm 51:17](#) ([Psalm 50](#) in the Greek Old Testament).

Chapter 53

53.1 For you know the holy Scriptures, dear friends, and you know them well, and you have looked deeply into the words of God. So we

are writing these things to remind you.

53.2 When Moses went up on the mountain and spent forty days and forty nights in fasting and humbling himself, God said to him: “Go down from here quickly, for your people, whom you brought out of the land of Egypt, have broken the law. They have quickly turned from the way you commanded them. They have made molten images for themselves.”

| *Translator’s note.* The story is from [Exodus 32:7–8](#) and [Deuteronomy 9:12](#).

| *Scripture:* [Deuteronomy 9:12](#)

53.3 And the Lord said to him: “I have spoken to you once and twice, saying, ‘I have seen this people, and look, it is stiff-necked.’ Let me destroy them, and I will wipe out their name from under heaven, and I will make you into a great and wonderful nation, far greater than this one.”

| *Translator’s note.* The wording follows the Greek Old Testament of [Deuteronomy 9:13–14](#). Compare [Exodus 32:9–10](#).

| *Scripture:* [Deuteronomy 9:13–14](#)

53.4 And Moses said, “No, Lord. Forgive the sin of this people, or else wipe me out of the book of the living.”

| *Translator’s note.* See [Exodus 32:31–32](#).

53.5 What great love! What unsurpassable perfection! The servant speaks boldly to the Lord. He asks forgiveness for the multitude, or else asks that he himself be wiped out with them.

Chapter 54

54.1 Who among you is noble? Who is compassionate? Who is filled with love?

54.2 Let him say: “If rebellion, strife, and divisions have come about because of me, I will leave. I will go away wherever you wish, and I will do what the people command. Only let the flock of Christ be at peace with the elders who have been appointed.”

54.3 Whoever does this will win great glory for himself in Christ, and every place will welcome him, for “the earth is the Lord’s and everything in it.”

| *Translator’s note.* The quotation is from [Psalm 24:1](#) ([Psalm 23](#) in the Greek Old Testament).

54.4 This is what people have done, and will keep doing, who live as citizens of God in a way of life they will never regret.

Chapter 55

55.1 Let us also bring forward examples from the Gentiles. Many kings and rulers, when a time of plague came, received an oracle and handed themselves over to death, to rescue their citizens by their own blood. Many left their own cities so that the strife would not go on.

Translator's note. Clement names no one. Greek and Roman stories honored rulers who gave their lives to save their cities, sometimes at the command of an oracle. A well-known example is the legendary king Codrus of Athens, though his story involves war rather than plague.

55.2 We know that many among us have handed themselves over to prison in order to ransom others. Many have sold themselves into slavery and used the price they received to feed others.

Translator's note. Other early Christian writings describe similar sacrificial giving. For example, the Shepherd of Hermas (Similitude 5.3) and Aristides (Apology 15) speak of fasting so that the food saved can be given to the needy.

55.3 Many women, strengthened by the grace of God, have done many brave deeds.

55.4 The blessed Judith, when the city was under siege, asked the elders to let her go out to the camp of the foreigners.

Translator's note. The story of Judith is in the book of Judith, which is part of the Greek Old Testament and in Catholic and Orthodox Bibles but not in Protestant ones.

55.5 So she handed herself over to danger. She went out because of her love for her country and for her people who were under siege, and the Lord handed Holofernes over by the hand of a woman.

55.6 No less did Esther, perfect in faith, put herself in danger to rescue the nation of Israel that was about to be destroyed. By her fasting and humbling herself she begged the all-seeing Master of the ages, who saw the humility of her soul and rescued the people for whose sake she had taken the risk.

Chapter 56

56.1 So let us also pray for those who have fallen into some wrongdoing, that gentleness and humility may be given to them, so that they yield not to us but to the will of God. In this way the remembrance made of them before God and the saints, with compassion, will be fruitful and complete for them.

56.2 Let us accept discipline, dear friends; no one should resent it. The warnings we give one another are good and extremely helpful, for they bind us to the will of God.

56.3 For the holy word says this: "The Lord has disciplined me severely, but he has not handed me over to death."

Translator's note. The quotation is from [Psalm 118:18](#) ([Psalm 117](#) in the Greek Old Testament).

56.4 “For the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and whips every son he accepts.”

Translator's note. The quotation is from [Proverbs 3:12](#), also quoted in [Hebrews 12:6](#).

56.5 “A righteous man will discipline me in mercy and rebuke me,” it says, “but do not let the oil of sinners anoint my head.”

Translator's note. The quotation is from [Psalm 141:5](#) ([Psalm 140](#) in the Greek Old Testament).

56.6 And again it says: “Blessed is the man whom the Lord rebukes. Do not reject the warning of the Almighty, for he causes pain and then restores.

Translator's note. Sections 56.6–15 quote [Job 5:17–26](#) in the Greek Old Testament.

56.7 “He struck, and his hands healed.

56.8 “Six times he will rescue you from troubles, and in the seventh no evil will touch you.

56.9 “In famine he will rescue you from death, and in war he will free you from the power of the sword.

56.10 “He will hide you from the whip of the tongue, and you will not be afraid when evils come.

56.11 “You will laugh at the unjust and lawless, and you will not be afraid of wild beasts.

56.12 “For wild beasts will be at peace with you.

56.13 “Then you will know that your house will be at peace, and the home of your tent will not fail.

56.14 “You will know that your offspring will be many, and your children like the grass of the field.

56.15 “You will come to the grave like ripe grain harvested in its season, or like a stack on the threshing floor gathered in at the right time.”

56.16 You see, dear friends, how great the protection is for those who are disciplined by the Master. For as a good father, he disciplines us so that we may receive mercy through his holy discipline.

Chapter 57

57.1 So you who laid the foundation of the rebellion, submit to the

elders and accept discipline that leads to repentance, bending the knees of your heart.

Translator's note. A similar phrase appears in the Prayer of Manasseh (verse 11): "I bend the knee of my heart."

57.2 Learn to submit, putting away the boastful and proud arrogance of your tongue. It is better for you to be found small but respected in Christ's flock than to seem important and be thrown out of his hope.

57.3 For the all-virtuous Wisdom says this: "Look, I will pour out to you the utterance of my breath, and I will teach you my word.

Translator's note. Sections 57.3-7 quote [Proverbs 1:23-33](#) in the Greek Old Testament, where Wisdom speaks. "All-virtuous Wisdom" was also an early Christian name for the book of Proverbs itself; Eusebius (Church History 4.22) says the ancients called Proverbs by this title.

57.4 "Because I called and you did not obey, and I stretched out my words and you did not pay attention, but you made my counsels void and disobeyed my rebukes, I too will laugh at your destruction. I will rejoice when ruin comes on you, when sudden confusion arrives, when disaster comes like a storm, or when affliction and siege come on you.

57.5 "For when you call on me, I will not listen to you. Evil people will seek me and will not find me. For they hated wisdom and did not choose the fear of the Lord. They would not heed my counsels, but mocked my rebukes.

57.6 "So they will eat the fruits of their own way, and be filled with their own ungodliness.

57.7 "For because they wronged the innocent, they will be killed, and judgment will destroy the ungodly. But whoever listens to me will dwell secure, trusting in hope, and will live in quiet, without fear of any evil."

Chapter 58

58.1 So let us obey his most holy and glorious name, and escape the threats that Wisdom spoke beforehand against the disobedient, so that we may dwell secure, trusting in the most holy name of his majesty.

58.2 Accept our advice, and you will have nothing to regret. For as God lives, and as the Lord Jesus Christ lives, and the Holy Spirit (who are the faith and the hope of the chosen), the one who with humility and earnest gentleness carries out without regret the requirements and commands given by God will be enrolled and held in honor among the number of those who are saved through Jesus Christ. Through him glory belongs to God forever and ever. Amen.

Translator's note. Clement adapts the Old Testament oath "As the Lord lives" (for example, [1 Samuel 14:39](#)), here naming God, the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit together.

Chapter 59

59.1 But if some disobey what he has said through us, let them know that they will entangle themselves in sin and in no small danger.

59.2 But we will be innocent of this sin. We will ask, with earnest prayer and pleading, that the Creator of all things may keep intact the number of his chosen ones counted throughout the whole world, through his beloved servant Jesus Christ. Through him he called us from darkness to light, from ignorance to full knowledge of the glory of his name.

Translator's note. The Greek word for "servant" (pais) can also mean "child." It is the same word used of Jesus in [Acts 3:13](#) and 4:27, echoing the Servant of the Lord in Isaiah.

59.3 [Grant us] to hope in your name, the source of all creation. You have opened the eyes of our hearts to know you, who alone are the Most High among the highest, the Holy One who rests among the holy. You humble the arrogance of the proud. You break up the plans of nations. You raise the lowly to the heights and bring down the high. You make rich and make poor, you kill and make alive. You alone are the finder of spirits and the God of all flesh. You look into the depths. You watch over human works. You are the helper of those in danger, the savior of the hopeless, the creator and overseer of every spirit. You multiply the nations on the earth, and from all of them you chose those who love you through Jesus Christ, your beloved servant. Through him you taught us, made us holy, and honored us.

Translator's note. "Servant" translates pais, which can mean either "child" (Lake) or "servant." The word recalls the Servant of the Lord in Isaiah.

Scripture: [Ephesians 1:18](#); [Isaiah 57:15](#); [Job 5](#); [Numbers 27:16](#)

59.4 We ask you, Master, to be our helper and defender. Save those of us who are in trouble. Have mercy on the lowly. Raise up those who have fallen. Appear to those in need. Heal the sick. Bring back those of your people who have wandered. Feed the hungry. Free our prisoners. Lift up the weak. Encourage the fainthearted. Let all the nations know you, that you alone are God, and Jesus Christ is your servant, and we are your people and the sheep of your pasture.

Translator's note. The phrase "we are your people and the sheep of your pasture" draws on [Psalm 79:13](#) and 100:3.

Chapter 60

60.1 For through your works you made plain the everlasting order of the world. You, Lord, created the world. You are faithful in all generations, just in your judgments, wonderful in strength and majesty. You are wise in creating and understanding in establishing what has been made, good in what is seen and kind to those who trust in you. Merciful and compassionate one, forgive us our lawless deeds and wrongdoings, our trespasses and faults.

60.2 Do not count every sin of your servants, male and female, but cleanse us with the cleansing of your truth. Direct our steps to walk in holiness of heart and to do what is good and pleasing before you and before our rulers.

60.3 Yes, Master, let your face shine on us, to do us good in peace. Shelter us with your mighty hand and free us from every sin by your uplifted arm. Rescue us from those who hate us without cause.

Translator's note. This echoes the priestly blessing ("the Lord make his face shine on you," [Numbers 6:25](#)). It also recalls the "mighty hand" and "uplifted arm" of the Exodus (e.g., [Deuteronomy 4:34](#) and 5:15 in the Greek Old Testament). And it borrows from the Psalms' "those who hate me without cause" ([Psalm 35:19](#); 69:4).

Scripture: [Numbers 6:25-26](#); [Jeremiah 21:10](#); [Deuteronomy 30:9](#)

60.4 Give harmony and peace to us and to all who live on the earth, as you gave them to our fathers when they called on you in holiness, in faith and truth. Grant that we may be obedient to your almighty and glorious name, and to our rulers and leaders on earth.

Translator's note. The Greek grammar is loose here. The word "obedient" (accusative) does not agree with "our fathers," so translators usually take it as a request that "we" may be obedient.

Chapter 61

61.1 You, Master, gave them their royal authority through your magnificent and indescribable power. You did this so that we, knowing the glory and honor you gave them, would submit to them and not oppose your will in any way. Lord, give them health, peace, harmony, and stability, so that they may carry out without fault the rule you have given them.

Translator's note. This is one of the earliest Christian prayers for the civil authorities, which included the Roman emperor; compare [1 Timothy 2:1-2](#) and [Romans 13:1-7](#). Though the Roman church had suffered persecution (chapters 5-6 recall martyrdoms usually linked to Nero, though he is not named), it prays for those in power.

61.2 For you, heavenly Master, King of the ages, give to human beings glory, honor, and authority over the things on earth. Lord, direct their plans according to what is good and pleasing before

you. Then, as they use the authority you gave them in peace, gentleness, and godliness, they may find you merciful.

Translator's note. "King of the ages" is also a title of God in [1 Timothy 1:17](#).

61.3 You alone are able to do these things and even greater good for us. We praise you through the high priest and protector of our souls, Jesus Christ. Through him be glory and greatness to you, now and from generation to generation, and forever and ever. Amen.

Translator's note. Clement calls Christ "high priest and protector" elsewhere in the letter too (36.1 and 64).

Chapter 62

62.1 We have written enough to you, brothers, about the things that belong to our worship and are most helpful for a virtuous life, for those who wish to direct their lives in godliness and righteousness.

62.2 For we have gone over every point about faith, repentance, genuine love, self-control, sound judgment, and endurance. We have reminded you that you must please almighty God in holiness, with righteousness, truth, and patience. You must live in harmony without holding grudges, in love and peace, with constant gentleness. This is how our fathers, whom we mentioned earlier, pleased God: they were humble toward God the Father and Creator and toward all people.

62.3 We have reminded you of these things all the more gladly because we knew clearly that we were writing to faithful and highly respected men who have looked deeply into the words of God's teaching.

Chapter 63

63.1 It is right, then, in view of so many and such great examples, to bow our necks and take our place in obedience. Then, ceasing from senseless strife, we may reach without any blemish the goal truly set before us.

63.2 For you will give us joy and delight if you obey what we have written through the Holy Spirit, and cut out the wicked anger of your jealousy, as we have urged in this letter in our appeal for peace and harmony.

Translator's note. The Roman church claims that it has written "through the Holy Spirit," a strong claim of authority for its counsel.

63.3 We have sent faithful and sensible men who have lived among us blamelessly from youth to old age. They will be witnesses between you and us.

63.4 We did this so that you will know that all our concern has been and is for you to be at peace quickly.

Chapter 64

64.1 Finally, may the all-seeing God, Master of spirits and Lord of all flesh, who chose the Lord Jesus Christ, and us through him, to be his own special people, give faith, fear, peace, endurance and patience, self-control, purity, and sober-mindedness to every soul that calls on his magnificent and holy name. May he give these so that they may please his name through our high priest and protector Jesus Christ. Through him be glory and greatness, power and honor to God, both now and for all the ages of ages. Amen.

Translator's note. "His own special people" uses the Greek phrase found in the Greek Old Testament at [Deuteronomy 7:6](#) and 14:2, and in [Titus 2:14](#).

Scripture: [Numbers 27:16](#)

Chapter 65

65.1 Send back to us quickly, in peace and with joy, the men we sent from here: Claudius Ephebus and Valerius Bito, together with Fortunatus. Then they can report to us all the sooner the peace and harmony we pray for and long for, and we too can rejoice sooner over your good order.

Translator's note. Claudius Ephebus and Valerius Bito carry the family names Claudius and Valerius. Some scholars, notably J. B. Lightfoot, suggested they may have been freedmen, or descendants of freedmen, connected with the imperial household. This is a guess, not a known fact. Fortunatus is a single, common name, and nothing certain is known about him.

65.2 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you and with all people everywhere who have been called by God through him. Through him be glory, honor, power, and greatness to God, and an eternal throne, from the ages to the ages of ages. Amen.

Translator's note. At least one manuscript adds the closing title "Letter of the Romans to the Corinthians," which matches the letter's opening, where the church in Rome is the sender; other witnesses title it as Clement's letter.

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