

your fellow believers (*literally, brothers*)? Or, why do you despise your fellow believers (*literally, your own brothers*)? We will all stand before [God's] <sup>1</sup> judgment seat. <The Greek word "βῆμα" is the word for "bench". In the market was a bench on which judges sat when they heard cases. Thus all judgments were made in public at the "βῆμα" or "bench of judgment".> <sup>11</sup> For it is written:

"As I live, says the Lord, to me every knee will bend  
and every tongue will speak in praise of God." (*Isaiah 45:23, 49:18*)

<sup>12</sup> So then, everyone of us will give a personal accounting to God. <What is wrong for me translates easily into what is wrong for everyone!>

### **DO NOT MAKE YOUR BROTHER STUMBLE**

,Romans 14:13-23>

<sup>13</sup> Let us therefore no longer pass judgment on (*or, censure*) one another. Rather, arrive at this conclusion: not to place any hindrance or obstacle (*literally, stumbling block*) in another's (*literally, a brother's*) way. <sup>14</sup> I know and I feel certain, as one who is united with the Lord Jesus, that nothing is unclean per se (*or in itself*). It becomes unclean to the person who regards it as being unclean. <sup>15</sup> If your friend (*literally, brother*) is still grieved because of the food you are eating, you are no longer controlled in your behavior by love. Do not permit food to be the cause of ruining your friend for whom Christ died. <sup>16</sup> Because of this, do not let what is a good thing for [you] <sup>2</sup> become blasphemy to others. <sup>17</sup> Keep in mind, God's Kingdom does not simply consist in eating (*or, food*) and drink but consists in righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. <sup>18</sup> Whoever serves Christ in this manner pleases God and is also esteemed by believers (*literally, men*). <sup>19</sup> Therefore we must concentrate on whatever [brings about] <sup>3</sup> peace and edification. <sup>20</sup> Do not destroy the work of God because of food. While all food is pure, (*Acts 10:9 ff.*) it is wrong for a person (*literally, man*) to eat if that food is an offense to others. <sup>21</sup> The proper way is to abstain from eating meat and abstain from drinking wine, in fact, to prevent your fellow Christian (*literally, brother*) from [being offended.]

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<sup>22</sup> As far as your faith is concerned, keep it as a personal matter in relationship with God. Happy is the person who does not have any qualms about actions he has approved. <sup>23</sup> Whoever has qualms and yet eats stands self-condemned because of not acting, based on faith, and every act that is not based on faith is sin.<sup>5</sup>

## **CHAPTER XV**

### **PLEASE YOUR FELLOW MEN NOT YOURSELF**

<Romans 15:1-6>

<sup>1</sup> Our obligation provided that our faith is strong, is to accept (*or, support*) the weakness of those who are not as strong and not simply to please ourselves. <sup>2</sup> Let each of us seek to please our neighbor for our neighbor's benefit, in order that he might be edified. <sup>3</sup> For, Christ also did not seek to please Himself, but, as is written, "The insults of those who insulted you have fallen to me." (*Psalms 69:9*) <sup>4</sup> Everything that was written beforehand was written for our instructions (*or, to teach us*) so

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1 So: Aleph & C in the original hands, A, B, 630, 1739, Old Latin, Sahidic & Bohairic Coptic. "Christ" Aleph in the third corrective hand, C in the second corrective hand, P, Psi, 048, 0209, many minuscules, several Old Latin, Peshitta & Harclean Syriac & Aramaic.

2 Both singular and plural forms are used in the manuscripts.

3 Slight alterations appear in the manuscripts, perhaps based on an error of spelling due to Greek having two "o's" "ο" & "ω".

4 So: Aleph in the first corrective hand, A, C, 048, several minuscules, one Old Latin, Peshitta Syriac, Bohairic Coptic & Ethiopian. "distressed (or, upset)" Aleph in the original hand. "to stumble and be weakened" Syriac. Many other variants occur.

5 Minor variants occur in the last two verses but they are of little consequence.

that we might maintain our hope with patience and with the comforting power of the Writings. <sup>5</sup> May the God of patience and of comfort grant to you the ability to agree with one another, following the example of Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup> so that you might unanimously, as if you had one voice, glorify God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ.

### **THE GOSPEL FOR JEWS AND GENTILES ALIKE**

<Romans 15:7-13>

<sup>7</sup> Accept one another, therefore, just as Christ has accepted [you] <sup>6</sup> to the glory of God.

<sup>8</sup> What I mean to say (*literally, for I say*) is, Christ became the servant (*The Greek word is "δίακονος" which is generally translated as "deacon". The word often described a waiter.* > to those who were circumcised on behalf of God's truth, in order to confirm the promises made to our ancestors, <sup>9</sup> namely, that the Gentiles (*or, nations*) should praise God for His mercy, for it is written:

"For this reason I will declare you among the Gentiles (*or, nations*) and sing praises to your name." (*Psalm 18:49, II Samuel 22:50*)

<sup>10</sup> He also said,

"Be glad, O Gentiles (*or, nations*), together with His people." (*Deuteronomy 32:43*)

<sup>11</sup> And again,

"All you Gentiles (*or, nations*) praise the Lord and all the people will extol Him." (*Psalm 117:1*)

<sup>12</sup> Again, Isaiah said,

"There will be a root (*or, offspring*) of Jesse,  
One who will stand and rule the Gentiles (*or, nations*)  
On Him the Gentiles (*or, nations*) will build their hopes." (*Isaiah 11:1, 10*)

<sup>13</sup> May God, the giver of hope, fill you with all joy and peace, as you believe so that you might abound in hope and the power of the Holy Spirit. <*Both the weak and the strong are to accept one another. That is what it means to follow Christ. He accepted us!*>

### **PAUL'S MISSIONARY COMMISSION**

<Romans 15:14-21>

<sup>14</sup> My friends, (*literally, brothers*) I, myself, am convinced concerning you that you are filled with goodness and that you are fully endowed with [the] <sup>7</sup> knowledge (*or, have complete knowledge*) and are able to administer (*or, instruct*) one another. <sup>15</sup> I have, however, been bold in writing to you to remind you concerning some points because of the grace that was granted me by God <sup>16</sup> that I should become a servant of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles (*or, nations*) to perform priestly service on behalf of the Good News of God so that the Gentiles (*or, nations*) might become an acceptable offering, having been made holy by the Holy Spirit. <sup>17</sup> I have [the] <sup>8</sup> reason for my boasting because of my relationship (*or, union*) with God in Christ Jesus. <sup>18</sup> For I will not have the courage to say a word about anything except what Christ has accomplished through me in persuading the Gentiles (*or, nations*) in words and deeds, <sup>19</sup> by means also of powerful signs and wonders through the power of the [Spirit] <sup>9</sup> that went out from Jerusalem and the surrounding area, as far as Illyricum. <*A Roman*

6 Singular and plural forms are used in the manuscripts.

7 So: P46, D in the original hand, F, G, 1739, 1881. Omitted by Aleph, A, B, C, D in the second corrective hand, Psi, 33 & the Majority Text.

8 So: Aleph, A, Psi, 33, 1739, 1881 & the Majority Text. Omitted by P46 & 323 in the original hand.

9 So: B. "the Holy Spirit" A, D in the original & third corrective hands, G, 33, 81, 104, 630, 1739, 1881, 1962, 2127, Old Latin, Harclean (margin) & Palestinian Syriac, Sahidic & Bohairic Coptic & Aramaic. "the Spirit of God" P46, Aleph, D in the second corrective hand, P, Psi, a number of minuscules, Peshitta & Harclean Syriac & Ethiopian. "the Spirit of Holy

province on the east coast of the Adriatic Sea, formerly a part of Yugoslavia.> I have wholeheartedly proclaimed the Good News of Christ. <sup>20</sup> I have had one ambition, not to proclaim the Good News where Christ's name is already known, lest I should be building on the foundations laid by someone else. <sup>21</sup> As it is written:

"Those who have never been told about him will see  
and those who have never heard will understand." (*Isaiah 52:15*)

### **PAUL'S PLAN TO VISIT ROME**

<Romans 15:22-33>

<sup>22</sup> It is because of this that I have often been prevented from coming to visit you. <sup>23</sup> Now that I no longer have any responsibilities in this area and have had a great desire to visit you over [many] <sup>10</sup> years, <sup>24</sup> I hope to do so when I am traveling on my way to Spain, so that I might see you and be helped forward on my journey. <*Does Paul mean accompanied?*> after having spent some enjoyable time with you. <sup>25</sup> At the moment, however, I am on my way to Jerusalem to be of service to the believers (*literally, saints*) <sup>26</sup> from Macedonia <*Present day northern Greece and the country of Macedonia, formerly a part of Yugoslavia.*> and Achaia (*or, Greece*) who have been leased to decide to make some contributions to benefit the poor (*or, needy*) who are among the believers (*literally, saints*) in Jerusalem. <sup>27</sup> It pleased them to do so and indeed they owe it to them (*i.e. the believers in Jerusalem*). If the Gentiles (*or, nations*) have come to share their own spiritual possessions they then owe the believers in Jerusalem their service, along with help by means of material things. <sup>28</sup> When this is accomplished and the sum that was collected is safely placed in their hands <*i.e. the needy in Jerusalem*> I will come to you (*or, visit you*) on my way to Spain. <sup>29</sup> When I come to you I know that I will come with rich blessings from [Christ.] <sup>11</sup>

<sup>30</sup> I plead with you [my friends (*literally, brothers*)] <sup>12</sup> for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ and through the love which is inspired by His spirit: join with me in earnest prayers to God on my behalf <sup>31</sup> in order that I might be rescued from the unbelievers in Judea so that I might be able [to be of service] <sup>13</sup> in Jerusalem and be well received by the believers (*literally, saints*) there. <sup>32</sup> After that, by the will of God, I will come to you with gladness [and be able to enjoy a time of respite with you.]

<sup>14</sup>

<sup>33</sup> The God of peace be with all of you. [Amen.] <sup>15</sup>

### **CHAPTER XVI**

{*Some scholars consider this chapter to be a separate letter which perhaps was addressed to the Ephesians. This is prompted by the internal evidence, most specifically because of the names of Aquila and Priscilla (or, Prisca) who, in II Timothy 4:19 are residing in Ephesus. Another argument favoring that theory stems from the feeling that Paul would not have known many people in Rome, never having been there. Certainly there was a great deal of travel in the Mediterranean world*

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God" 330 & 451.

10 So: P46, Aleph, A, D, G, Psi & many minuscules. "a considerable number" B, C, P, 81, 326, 1962 & 2127.

11 So: P46, Aleph in the original hand, A, B, C, D, G, P, a number of minuscules, a few Old Latin, Sahidic & Bohairic Coptic & Aramaic. "the Good News of Christ" Aleph in the third corrective hand, Psi, many minuscules, Peshitta & Harclean Syriac. "the teaching of Christ" Ethiopian (Rome).

12 So: Aleph, A, C, D, F, G, Psi & the Majority Text. Omitted by P46 & B.

13 So: P46, Aleph, A, C, D in the third corrective hand, P, Psi, many minuscules, three Old Latin, Peshitta & Harclean Syriac, Sahidic & Bohairic Coptic, Aramaic & Ethiopian. "offer gifts" B, D in the original hand, G, two Old Latin.

14 The text has numerous variants but the sense is clear.

15 So: Aleph, B, C, D, P, Psi, many minuscules, Old Latin, Peshitta & Harclean Syriac, Sahidic & Bohairic Coptic, Aramaic & Ethiopian. Omitted by A, G, six minuscules & several Old Latin. P46 omits "Amen" but adds the verses from Romans 16:25-27.

during this time. Those who respond to the reference to Aquila & Priscilla feel that because of persecution they had temporarily been banished from Rome and with a changing political scene had returned to Rome. There is no manuscript evidence to support the theory of Chapter XVI being a separate letter. }

### **PERSONAL GREETINGS**

<Romans 16:1-23 [24]>

<sup>1</sup> I recommend to you, our sister Phoebe <The name means "radiant" and was the name of the Greek moon goddess.> who is [also] <sup>16</sup> a servant (or, deaconess) of the church in Cenchreae <The port of Corinth at the east end of the Saronic Gulf.> in order that you might receive her in the Lord's name as is deserved by believers (literally, saints) and that you might come to her aid in any circumstance in which she would need help for she has been a helper (or, patroness) of many, including myself.

Greet Prisca (or, Priscilla) <a common Roman name meaning "prime". Prisca is the diminutive form of Priscilla.> and Aquila <The name means "eagle".> (Acts 18:18, I Corinthians 16:19, II Timothy 4:19) my fellow workers in Christ Jesus who have risked their own necks to save my life for whom not only I but all the Gentile churches are grateful. Also greet the congregation (or, church) that meets in their house. Also, greet Epaphroditus <The name means "praised".> who is the very first (literally, the first fruits) convert to Christ in [Asia.] <sup>17</sup> <Asia, in this context, would mean the present day country of Turkey.> Greet Mary (literally, Miriam) <This common name might mean "the corpulent one", or "rebellion".> who has toiled much for you. Greet my fellow countrymen <The Greek word "συγγενησ" can give the concept of their being relatives though the language doesn't demand that.> and fellow prisoners, Andronicus <The name means "conqueror of men".> and [Junias] <sup>18</sup> <A common Roman name. Is Junias a female? Julian is a masculine name. If Junias is male it is the only example of the name being masculine.> they are outstanding among the apostles and have been believers [prior to my becoming a believer] <sup>19</sup> in Christ. Greet Ampliatus <The name was commonly that of a slave. We do not know if Ampliatus was slave or free.> who is dear to me in the Lord. Greet Urbanus, <The name means "refined" or "elegant".> my fellow worker in Christ and my dear friend Stachus. <The name means "heads of grain".> Greet Apelles <A rather common Greek name.> who is an esteemed believer in Christ. Greet those who comprise the household of Aristobulus. <The Greek says, literally, "those of Aristobulus". A common name in the Maccabean time.> Greet my kinsman Herodion (or, fellow countryman Herodion.) <This was a common masculine name.> Greet those of the household of Narcissus <The name was also that of a freedman of Emperor Claudius.> who are believers. Greet Tryphaena <The name means "dainty".> and Tryphosa <The name means "delicate". These two are frequently used names in the early Christian era.> who are laborers for the Lord. Greet Persis <The name means "the beloved". It was a common name for female slaves.> who has labored greatly for the Lord. Greet Rufus <The name means "red haired". It is possible that this Rufus is referred to in Mark 15:21 but there is no way of being certain.> chosen by the Lord along with his mother and mine. Greet Asyncritus, <The name means "incomparable".> Phlegon, <the name means "burning".> Hermes, <The name

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<sup>16</sup> So: Aleph in the original hand, A, C in the second corrective hand, D, F, G, Psi, 33, 1739, 1881 & the Majority Text. Omitted by P46, Aleph in the second corrective hand, b, C in the original hand & 81.

<sup>17</sup> So: P46, A, B, C, D in the original hand, F, G & some minuscules. "Achaia" D in the first corrective hand, Psi, 33, 1881 & the Majority Text.

<sup>18</sup> So: Aleph, A, B, C, D, G, P, Psi & the Majority Text. "Julian" P46.

<sup>19</sup> Minor variants occur.

*means "rock cairn" though that is questionable. It is perhaps a non-Greek name. it is also the name of the Son of Zeus and the half-brother of Apollo. cf. Acts 14:12 for a reference to the name, though not concerning the individual.> Patobas, <Perhaps meaning "the father of life".> Hermas, <The name appears in an apocryphal book, The Shepherd of Hermas ca. 200 A.D. Origen identified this person with the writer of the apocryphal book. this is doubtful in the light of recent scholarly studies, however.> and the fellow Christians (literally, brothers) who are with them. Greet Philologus, <The name means "talkative".> [Julia,]<sup>20</sup> <The name is the female form of "Julius". She was perhaps the wife of Philologus.> Nereus, <It is thought this is the son of Philologus and Julia and that Olympas is also a brother, along with the un-named sister.> his sister and Olympas along with all those who are believers (or, saints). Greet one another with a holy kiss. All of the churches of Christ greet you!*

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<sup>20</sup> Minor variants occur.