

Romans 15:26

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For it hath pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem.

Analysis

For it hath pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem (εύδόκησαν γὰρ Μακεδονία καὶ Ἀχαΐα κοινωνίαν τινὰ ποιήσασθαι εἰς τοὺς πτωχοὺς τῶν ἀγίων τῶν ἐν Ἱερουσαλήμ, eudokēsan gar Makedonia kai Achaia koinōnian tina poiēsasthai eis tous ptōchous tōn hagiōn tōn en Ierousalēm)—Eudokēsan (they were pleased, they were willing) indicates voluntary, joyful giving, not coerced obligation (cf. 2 Cor 9:7). Macedonia and Achaia represent Paul's Greek churches (Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea, Corinth). Koinōnian (fellowship, partnership, contribution) is rich term: more than financial transaction, it expresses communion—shared life in Christ manifested in material sharing.

Tous ptōchous (the poor) indicates Jerusalem church's economic distress, perhaps from persecution, economic boycott by non-Christian Jews, or generalized poverty. Calling them hagiōn (saints) despite poverty dignifies them: poverty doesn't diminish spiritual status. This challenges both prosperity gospel (equating faithfulness with wealth) and poverty's stigma.

Historical Context

James, Peter, and John had urged Paul to 'remember the poor' (Gal 2:10), which Paul 'eagerly' did. The Jerusalem church's poverty may have resulted from the community of goods experiment (Acts 2:44-45, 4:32-37), persecution under Herod

Agrippa I (Acts 12), or Jewish-Christian marginalization from both Jewish and pagan economic networks. The collection demonstrated Gentile believers weren't severing ties with Jewish Christianity.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How does the description of giving as 'koinōnia' (fellowship/partnership) elevate Christian generosity beyond mere charity?
2. What does the Jerusalem church's poverty despite faithfulness teach about prosperity theology and God's promised blessings?
3. In what ways can your church or you personally practice 'koinōnia' with impoverished believers in other parts of the world?

Interlinear Text

εύδόκησαν	γὰρ	Μακεδονίᾳ	καὶ	Ἀχαΐᾳ	κοινωνίαν
it hath pleased them	For	of Macedonia	and	Achaia	contribution
G2106	G1063	G3109	G2532	G882	G2842
τινὰ	ποιήσασθαι	εἰς	τῶν	πτωχοὺς	τῶν
a certain	to make	for	which	the poor	which
G5100	G4160	G1519	G3588	G4434	G3588
ἐν	Ἰερουσαλήμ				
are at	Jerusalem				
G1722	G2419				