

Romans 15:32

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

That I may come unto you with joy by the will of God, and may with you be refreshed.

Analysis

That I may come unto you with joy by the will of God, and may with you be refreshed (ἵνα ἐν χαρᾷ ἐλθὼν πρὸς ὑμᾶς διὰ θελήματος θεοῦ συναναπαύσωμαι ὑμῖν, hina en chara elthōn pros hymas dia thelēmatos theou synanapavsōmai hymin)—The third prayer request: that he come to Rome en chara (with joy), contingent on dia thelēmatos theou (through/by God's will). Thelēmatos theou acknowledges divine sovereignty over Paul's plans—he hopes and plans, but God determines (Prov 16:9, Jas 4:13-15). True joy comes from fulfilled divine will, not merely successful plans. Synanapavsōmai (may be refreshed together) expresses mutual encouragement: Paul will find rest and renewal in Roman fellowship, and they in his.

Paul's phrasing—'by the will of God'—proves prophetic: he did reach Rome, but God's will involved arrest, trials, shipwreck, and arrival in chains (Acts 28). Yet even this fulfilled God's purpose: Paul testified before rulers (Acts 9:15, 23:11) and reached Rome to preach unhindered (Acts 28:30-31). God's will transcends our neat plans.

Historical Context

Paul's desire for mutual refreshment echoes 1:11-12. He longed for reciprocal blessing: strengthening Roman believers while being strengthened by them. Acts 28:15 records Roman Christians meeting Paul on the Appian Way, sight of whom 'he thanked God and took courage'—partial fulfillment of desired mutual

refreshment despite circumstances. Fellowship in Christ transcends circumstances.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. How does Paul's submission to 'the will of God' regarding his travel plans model healthy balance between intentional planning and divine sovereignty?
2. In what ways have you experienced God's will unfolding differently than you planned, yet recognizably good and purposeful in retrospect?
3. What does the concept of mutual refreshment (Paul needing encouragement from Roman Christians) teach about interdependence in the body of Christ?

Interlinear Text

ἵνα	ἐν	χαρᾷ	ἔλθω	πρὸς	ὑμᾶς	διὰ	θελήματος	θεοῦ
That	with	joy	I may come	unto	you	by	the will	of God
G2443	G1722	G5479	G2064	G4314	G5209	G1223	G2307	G2316

καὶ	συναναπαύσωμαι	ὑμῖν
and	be refreshed	with you
G2532	G4875	G5213

Additional Cross-References

1 Corinthians 16:18 (Parallel theme): For they have refreshed my spirit and your's: therefore acknowledge ye them that are such.

Acts 18:21 (References God): But bade them farewell, saying, I must by all means keep this feast that cometh in Jerusalem: but I will return again unto you, if God will. And he sailed from Ephesus.

2 Corinthians 7:13 (Parallel theme): Therefore we were comforted in your comfort: yea, and exceedingly the more joyed we for the joy of Titus, because his spirit was refreshed by you all.

Philemon 1:7 (Parallel theme): For we have great joy and consolation in thy love, because the bowels of the saints are refreshed by thee, brother.

Philemon 1:20 (Parallel theme): Yea, brother, let me have joy of thee in the Lord: refresh my bowels in the Lord.

2 Timothy 1:16 (Parallel theme): The Lord give mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus; for he oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain: