

Romans 16:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

That ye receive her in the Lord, as becometh saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you: for she hath been a succourer of many, and of myself also.

Analysis

That ye receive her in the Lord, as becometh saints—Hina prosdexēthe autēn en kyriō axiōs tōn hagiōn (ἵνα προσδέξησθε αὐτήν ἐν κυρίῳ ἀξίως τῶν ἁγίων). Prosdechomai (προσδέχομαι, receive/welcome) implies hospitality—provide lodging, resources, assistance. En kyriō (in the Lord) means as fellow believer, recognizing shared identity in Christ. Axiōs tōn hagiōn (ἀξίως τῶν ἁγίων, worthily of the saints) sets the standard: treat her as befits God's holy people—with honor, generosity, respect.

And that ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you: for she hath been a succourer of many, and of myself also—Kai parastēte autē en hō an hymōn chrēzē pragmati· kai gar autē prostatis pollōn egenēthē kai emou autou (καὶ παραστήτε αὐτῇ ἐν ᾧ ἂν ὑμῶν χρήζῃ πράγματι· καὶ γὰρ αὐτὴ προστάτις πολλῶν ἐγενήθη καὶ ἐμοῦ αὐτοῦ). Paristēmi (παρίστημι, assist/stand by) means provide whatever help needed. Prostatis (προστάτις, patron/benefactor) was used for wealthy patrons who supported clients—Phoebe financially supported Paul's ministry and many others. She was woman of means, influence, and leadership.

Historical Context

Roman patronage systems (patronus-clients) structured society: wealthy patrons supported clients (artisans, teachers, missionaries) who provided services and honor in return. Phoebe was Paul's prostatis (feminine form of prostatēs, patron)—

she funded his mission, provided hospitality, leveraged connections. Women like Phoebe (also Lydia, Acts 16:14-15; Priscilla, Acts 18:2-3) were essential to early Christianity's spread, using wealth and status to advance the gospel. Paul's request that Rome assist Phoebe reciprocates her past generosity.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How does Phoebe's role as '*prostatis*' (patron/benefactor) challenge assumptions about women's involvement in ministry support and leadership?
2. What does it mean to 'receive in the Lord' (*en kyriō prosdechōmai*) fellow believers—how is this distinct from cultural hospitality?
3. Who are the 'Phoebes' in your church—faithful servants and financial supporters—and how can you honor and assist them?

Interlinear Text

ἵνα αὐτοῦ προσδέξησθε ἐν κυρίῳ ἀξίως τῶν ἁγίων
That her ye receive in the Lord as becometh G2443 G846 G4327 G1722 G2962 G516 G3588 G40
G2443 G846 G4327 G1722 G2962 G516 G3588 G40

καὶ παραστήτε αὐτοῦ ἐν ᾧ ἂν ὑμῶν χρήζη
also that ye assist her in whatsoever of you she hath need
G2532 G3936 G846 G1722 G3739 G302 G5216 G5535

πράγματι· καὶ γὰρ αὐτοῦ προστάτις πολλῶν ἐγενήθη
business also for her a succourer of many hath been
G4229 G2532 G1063 G846 G4368 G4183 G1096

καὶ αὐτοῦ ἐμοῦ
also her G1700
G2532 G846

Additional Cross-References

Philippians 2:29 (References Lord): Receive him therefore in the Lord with all gladness; and hold such in reputation:

Philippians 1:27 (Parallel theme): Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel;