

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 prosdexēsthe autēn en kyriō axiōs tōn hagiōn (ἴνα προσδέξησθε αὐτὴν ἐν κυρίῳ ἀξίως τῶν ἀγίων). 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 ἀγίων, 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 parastētē autē en hō an hymōn chrēzē pragmati· kai gar autē prostatis pollōn egenēthē kai emou autou (καὶ παραστῆτε αὐτῇ ἐν ὧ ἀν ὑμῶν χρήζῃ πράγματι· καὶ γὰρ αὐτὴ προστάτις πολλῶν ἔγενήθη 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-cliens) 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 'Phoebe's' in your church—faithful servants and financial supporters—and how can you honor and assist them?

Interlinear Text

ἵνα	αὐτοῦ	προσδέξησθε	ἐν	κυρίῳ	άξιως	τῶν	ἀγίων
That	her	ye receive	in	the Lord	as becometh	G3588	saints
G2443	G846	G4327	G1722	G2962	G516		G40
καὶ	παραστῆτε	αὐτοῦ	ἐν	ῳ	ἀν	ὑμῶν	χρήζῃ
also	that ye assist	her	in	whatsoever	G302	of you	she hath need
G2532	G3936	G846	G1722	G3739	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	έμοι					
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;