

We are Debtors to the Jews

We are all aware of the promises of Philippians 4.

“and my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus”

The Greek word translated as 'and' here and 'but' in the King James is the word 'de' or 'alla' which also translates 'now', 'further' and 'therefore' and as such links this statement with the preceding.

The preceding is speaking of the giving of the Philippian Church. Paul is not asking for a gift (v11-13), although he does admit in v14 that he does have financial troubles and needs, (comforting isn't it) and that they did help to meet these, but he exhorts them in v15-16.

Here in v15, “not one church shared with me in the matter of giving *and* receiving except you only”. Paul commends them regarding, not only, the action of giving. We can see in 2 Cor 8 that Paul says in v10, “last year you were the first not only to give but also to have the desire to do so.”

This would seem a contradiction at first glance. But I believe that what Paul was referring to in his letter to the Philippians, was their revelation that they were debtors.

Here Paul is euphemistically referring to their giving as a matter of 'debit' and 'credit' accounts. He was speaking of 'giving and receiving' not just the act of giving. The Philippians sent necessities to him in Thessalonica because they believed that they were in debt to him. In doing so, Paul was more able to spread the Gospel there.

Remember that Paul started 'churches' from scratch. There wasn't a group there to finance him, although he refused to be a burden and earned his own way anyway. Just imagine you were an ambassador, sent to another country to open a new consulate, and you had to find regular work to live on and at the same time, open, run and build up that consulate.

In v17, Paul states that he was not seeking a gift for necessity sake, but he is seeking earnestly, with zeal, for what may be credited to their account. Now the 'account' here is not as in a monetary account. It is as in “give an account” or a statement. In other words, “what they would be known for” or “what is said of them”.

In v18, he speaks of the gifts being an “acceptable sacrifice”, a “fragrant offering”, pleasing to God. We know from 2 Cor 8:2, that for it to be acceptable, then there must be a willingness and what they gift is to be in proportion to what was available to give, and to be pleasing to God, they must have given in faith, for “without faith (trust) it is impossible to please God” Heb 11:6., And to emphasize how God saw this gift: “this fragrant offering” or “sweet smell” is used in 2 Cor 2:15 when Paul speaks of us as being the fragrance of Life, or of Jesus, in God's eyes.

This may seem the long way around, but it is important to see the attitude and motivation of the Philippian church before we go on.

As we know, Jesus Christ has done all things and we have been given all things. But we must step out to receive, we must act to take hold. Just as in Rom 10:9-10, we receive Christ thru believing and confessing by faith. Here, “all our needs are met” by receiving thru understanding that we owe a debt and giving towards it.

1 Cor 9:11 “if we have sown spiritual seed among you, is it too much if we reap a material harvest from you?”
v14 “in the same way, the Lord has commanded that they who preach the Gospel should receive their living from the Gospel.”

Phil 4:18 not only speaks of giving to Paul's ministry but also to the poor in Jerusalem.
Rom 15:26-27 “for Macedonia and Achaia were pleased to do it, and indeed, they owe it to them. For if the **Gentiles have shared in the Jew's spiritual blessings, they owe it to the Jews to share with them material blessings**”.

You can now see the fullness of why Paul was so rapt with the motivation of the Philippians' giving, of their understanding.

Now, just as there are differing returns on investments and there is a way of investing for the most optimum return, so too when we give into the Kingdom. When we give to Ministries and to the needy, where is the 'best' result or what gets God's attention. We find this answer in God's heart. Have we forgotten that the Jews are God's chosen people and we the adopted, grafted in Sons? Isn't it thru His love for them that He refused to take back his spiritual and material blessings from them but instead included us in them?

God's heart cry goes out to them. Whenever we give by faith according to God's Word (will) we are rewarded, how much more when we do it for our brothers, the Jews.

Rom 11:11-12 "because of their transgression, salvation has come to the Gentiles, to make Israel envious. But if their transgression means riches to the world and their loss means riches to the Gentiles, how much greater riches will their fullness bring?"

Remember the Jews in your prayers and in your giving and see what God does for you.

I know, for many of you this is a bit 'out there'.

But it is scripture. Backed up by scripture.

"So why haven't I heard this preached?" I hear you say. Are you kidding?

I ran a home group.

There were some single mums and widows in the group that needed financial help.

The group did not have any spare cash to help them and church admin were unable to as well.

I went to the Father, and asked.

He said to share this message and to combine it with the 'Lord of the breakthrough" 2 Sam 5:20, 1 Chron 14:11

He said to take up a coin offering from those willing and give it as a Rom 15 gift to a Christian Church in Jerusalem. In other words He needed their faith (trust) and the action (hopefully unified.) to support it.

Before I had sent it,

EVERONE in the group received their breakthrough, mostly financial but also in relationships.

That is what happened in our group.

We cannot presume how He will reward and encourage you.

Remember the motivation is your debt to the Jews, not what you can get out of it.

Kevin Cramp