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Paulos's letter to the believers in

Filippou

Introduction

Paulos wrote this letter to the believers in Filippou, a province of Makedonia (Acts 16:6-40). That group of believers was the first group planted by Paulos in the Romaios empire in Europe, and this letter was written while he was imprisoned in Romai for his preaching of the good message about Yeshua Messiah.

The main reason for Paulos's writing this letter was because he wanted to thank the believers there in Filippou for the gift that they had sent to help him in prison. His second reason for writing was so that he could encourage them and strengthen their faith despite difficulties that they would face, as well as his own difficulties. Paulos advised them that they need to humble themselves like Yeshua had humbled himself when he was here on the earth. He reminds them again about the goodness and mercy of God, and how their faith in Messiah saves them. It's no longer necessary for them to be constrained by the Law of Mosheh and human beliefs. Then he wrote about the peace and happiness that God gives to those united in Messiah.

Note that Paulos (or his scribe) regularly refer to the 'messiah' (Greek 'Χριστὸς') in this letter without a preceding article, i.e., no preceding 'the', thus he uses the word (which originally meant 'chosen or anointed one') as another name for Yeshua (rather than as a title—for example, compare 'Governor' with 'the governor'), hence we capitalise it here as 'Messiah'.

Main components of Paulos's letter

Introduction *1:1-11*
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Lighter type marks additions. Underscores join parts of a single source word.
Struck words are untranslated. The ◘ sign marks a verse with no text.
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Readers' Version

1:1 This letter is from Paulos and Timotheos,
slaves **of Messiah Yeshua** (Jesus; Grk. Yesus).
To all the believers in **Messiah Yeshua** in Filip-
pou (Philippi),[1] along with your overseers and
servants.
2 May our father **God** and our **master Yeshua**
Messiah grant grace to you all and fill you with
peace.

Paulos's thanking and praying

3 I thank my **God** every
time that I hear you men-
tioned **4** and every time that I pray for you all,
I'm always glad when I make my requests **5** be-
cause the good message united us in fellowship
from the first day until now. **6** I'm sure of this:
that the **one** who started a good work in you all
will ensure that it's continued through to the
day **of** the return of **Messiah Yeshua** (Jesus;
Grk. Yesus). **7** It's right for me to be thinking
this about you because I have you all in my
heart. You received grace along with me so
whether I'm in chains or defending and con-
firming the good message, we are fellow recipi-
ents. **8** **God is** my witness that I long for you
with all the compassions **of Messiah Yeshua**.
9 And this is what I'm praying: that your love
would grow more and more with knowledge
and all insight **10** so that you all will approve
what's of value and so remain sincere and
blameless until **Messiah** returns, **11** having
been filled with the fruit of righteousness
through **Yeshua Messiah**, honouring and
praising **God**.

Paulos's happiness that Messiah is proclaimed

12 Brothers and sisters,
I want you to know that
the good message has
progressed more because of what's happened
to me, **13** in that my being in chains because of
Messiah, has become known in the governor's
residence and to all the rest.[2] **14** Now, because
of my imprisonment, more of the brothers and
sisters in **Yahweh** have become much more
daring to fearlessly tell others **God's** message.
15 Some do proclaim **Messiah** because of envy
and strife, but others do it from their good will.
16 The ones proclaiming **Messiah** out of selfish
ambition don't do it sincerely, but expect that it
will add to my troubles while I'm here in
chains. **17** The ones who do it out of love, know
that I was appointed to defend the good mes-
sage.
18 What then? I will be happy, excited even, as
long as **Messiah** is being proclaimed in any
manner, whether their reason for doing it is
suspect or in truth. **19** I know that this will turn
out to be my SALVATION/DELIVERANCE due to
your prayers and from the resources of the
spirit of Yeshua (Jesus; Grk. Yesus) Messiah,
20 as my eager expectation and hope is that I
won't be ashamed of anything, but that **Mes-
siah** will be magnified by my life, always in
boldness and even now whether I go on to live
or to die, **21** because to me, to live is to serve
Messiah, and to die is to also gain. **22** If I con-
tinue to live in this body, I can continue in pro-
ductive work, but I don't really know which is
my preference. **23** I feel squeezed between the
two: the desire to depart from here and be with
Messiah which would be much better, **24** or to
remain on in this body, which is maybe more
necessary because of all of you. **25** Yes, I'm con-
vinced: I know that I should remain in this
world and continue with you all to assist in the
progress of your faith and the happiness that
comes from that, **26** so that when I come to visit
you again, I'll hear your pride in how you are all
growing in **Messiah Yeshua**.
27 Live as citizen who are worthy of the good
message of **Messiah**, so that whether I'm able
to come and see you all, or even if I'm absent,
I'll be able to hear everything about you all:
that you're standing firm in one spirit, with one
heart contending together for the faith of the
good message **28** and not being frightened
about anything because of those in opposition.
That will be a sign to them that they will face
destruction but you all will receive salvation
from **God**, **29** because it's been granted to you
on **Messiah's** behalf for you to believe in him,

1 **RV 1:1 · Cross-ref.** Acts 16:12.

2 **RV 1:13 · Cross-ref.** Acts 28:30.

yet also to suffer because of him— 30 the same struggle that you all saw in me, and now hear it from me.[3]

Messiah's humility

2:1 So if you all feel that **Messiah** is encouraging you on and if his love brings comfort and **the spirit** brings fellowship, if anyone feels compassion, 2 then complete my happiness by being in agreement in your thinking and being united in the same love.[4] 3 Don't do anything from selfish ambition or in vain conceit, but show humility and consider others to be more important than yourselves, 4 not just looking out for your own advantage, but for what others need. 5 This **is** how you all who are also in **Messiah Yeshua** (Jesus; Grk. Yesus) should **be** thinking: 6 Yeshua, though he was in the form **of God**, didn't take advantage of being considered equal **with God**, 7 but emptied himself and becoming like a human, took on the form of a slave. Then in that human form, 8 he humbled himself and became obedient all the way to death, even death on the stake. 9 That's why **God** highly praised him and gave him authority over every other authority, 10 so that every being in heaven and earthly and underwater realms will bow when **Yeshua** is announced[5] 11 and will honour **God** the father by testifying that **Yeshua Messiah** is **Yahweh**.

Shining like lights in the world

12 So then, my dear friends, work towards your salvation with fear and trembling—you always did this in my presence, so now do it much more in my absence— 13 because **God** is the one who works in you all to both desire and to be living out his good pleasure.

14 Do everything without grumbling and arguing 15 so that you'll all be blameless and innocent—blameless children **of God** among a generation that's crooked and perverted.[6] Then you'll shine like lights in the world, 16 as you live out the message of life, and then I'll be able to boast when **Messiah** returns because I didn't waste my time or work for nothing, 17 but even if I'm to lose my life by being poured out like wine on your sacrifice and on the ministry of your faith, I'll be happy and celebrate along with all of you. 18 You all should also be happy and celebrating along with me.

Timotheos and Epafroditos

19 I'm hoping in the **master Yeshua** (Jesus; Grk. Yesus) to be able to send Timotheos to you all soon, so that I can be encouraged when I learn what you're all up to, 20 because I have no one else so similar to me in spirit who will be genuinely caring for how you're all doing. 21 (There's plenty who search out what they themselves need instead of the things **of Yeshua Messiah**. 22 But you all know that Timotheos has proven himself and has served with me in the good message like a son serving his father.) 23 So I'll send him as soon as I can sort out what's happening to me, 24 but I'm confident in the **master** that I myself will also be coming soon.

25 Meanwhile I thought it was necessary to send Epafroditos to you all. He's my brother and fellow-worker and fellow-soldier, and your ambassador and minister to my needs. 26 He's been longing to see you all again and was upset that you heard that he'd been sick 27 because he nearly died from it, but **God** showed mercy to him, and not only to him but also to me that I wouldn't have yet another hardship to go through. 28 So I sent him willingly so that when you all see him again, you'll all be very happy and I'll be less anxious here. 29 So accept him in the **master** with gratefulness and treat him with honour, 30 because he nearly died after risking his life doing the work **of Messiah**, but he was able to minister to me in a way that all of you there couldn't.

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3 **RV 1:30 · Cross-ref.** Acts 16:19-40.

4 **RV 2:2 · Note** Here Paul repeats about being united in thought, but the repetition seems to only clutter his argument.

5 **RV 2:10-11 · Cross-ref.** Isa 45:23 (LXX).

6 **RV 2:15 · Cross-ref.** Deu 32:5.

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Truly knowing Messiah

3:1 So continuing, dear brothers and sisters, be happy in the **master**. I'm not against writing the same things to you all again because it will keep you safe. **2** Watch out for those dogs, those evil workers, those who say you must be circumcised,[7] **3** because we are the 'circumcised' ones—those **of** us with **God's spirit** and who worship and boast in **Messiah Yeshua** (Jesus; Grk. Yesus). We don't trust in the physical dimension, **4** although I do have confidence even in the physical. If anyone thinks they are more qualified in terms of physical attributes, I am more so: **5** I was circumcised as a baby on the eighth day, I'm a descendent of Yisrael (Israel) from the tribe of Benyamin,[8] I'm more 'Hebrew' than most Ivrim (Hebrews), obeyed the law as member of the Farisaios party,[9] **6** zealously persecuted assembled believers,[10] and without fault in terms of obeying the law. **7** However, all of those things which were considered advantages, now because of **Messiah** I consider them disadvantages. **8** In fact, I consider everything to be a loss to me because knowing **Messiah Yeshua**, my **master**, is superior. It's because of him that I discard everything else, considering it all to be rubbish so that I can gain Messiah **9** and will be found in him. I don't gain my own righteousness by means of the law, but the righteousness that comes through faith **in Messiah**—**God's** righteousness which depends on faith. **10** I want to know him and the power that brought him back to life, and to join with him in his sufferings, even to be conformed to his death, **11** if somehow I can also be given life after death.

Striving for the prize

12 I haven't already received that, or already reached perfection, but I'm running hard to try to grab it, in the same way that I was grabbed by **Messiah Yeshua** (Jesus; Grk. Yesus). **13** Brothers and sisters, I'm not under the illusion that I've already grabbed it, but I do do this one thing: forgetting what's behind me, and taking long strides towards what's ahead of me, **14** I'm running hard toward the prize of being called up to heaven by **God** through **Messiah Yeshua**.

15 Those of us who are mature should think that way, and if you don't yet, then **God** will reveal everything to you, **16** however, whatever we've already attained, that should be held onto.

17 Brothers and sisters, become imitators of me,[11] as well as watching others that have walked a similar path and can be examples for all of you. **18** As I've often told you before and now say it again with tears, there are many who are against the stake of the **messiah** **19** and their end is destruction. Their **god is** their belly, and they take pride in their shame—they're only thinking about earthly things. **20** For us, our citizenship is in heaven and we're waiting for our saviour to return from there—**the master Yeshua Messiah**— **21** who will take these embarrassing bodies of ours and make them similar to his resurrected body—he's capable of doing that and to put everything under his control.

Paulos's final teaching

4:1 So then, my dear brothers and sisters, my delight and my crown, I miss you all, so guard your faith in **the master**, dear ones. **2** Euodia and Suntuke, you both need to be thinking the same way in the **master**, **3** and yes, I'm asking you, my true companion, to help those two women who worked hard with me to share the good message, along with Klemes and the others who also worked with me and whose names are written in the book of life.

4 Always be happy in the **master**. I'll say that

7 RV 3:2 · Note Although it's possible that Paul had three different groups of people in mind here, it's much more likely that he used three different names to describe the one group of people.

8 RV 3:5 · Cross-ref. Rom 11:1.

9 RV 3:5 · Cross-ref. Acts 23:6; 26:5.

10 RV 3:6 · Cross-ref. Acts 8:3; 22:4; 26:9-11.

11 RV 3:17 · Cross-ref. 1Cor 4:16; 11:1.

Readers' Version

again: be happy. 5 Let your gentleness be visible to everyone. The **master** is close. 6 Don't worry about anything, but handle all situations by letting **God** know your requests—praying and telling God your needs, and also thanking him. 7 Then **God's** peace which is above human understanding will guard your hearts and your thinking in **Messiah Yeshua** (Jesus; Grk. Yesus).

8 Brothers and sisters, here's the rest of what you all should be considering: anything that's true or dignified, anything that's right or pure, anything that's lovely or admirable, and anything that's virtuous or praiseworthy. 9 Continue to do everything you all learnt or received from me, and everything you heard or saw in me, and the **God** of peace will be with you all.

Paulos's appreciation of their practical help

10 I was extremely happy in **Yahweh** once you all reestablished your consideration for my situation. Well, you were thinking about it, but lacked any opportunity to act, 11 not that I'm talking about being in poverty, because I've learnt to be content in any situation. 12 I've experienced being humbled with little, and I've experienced having plenty, but I've grown through every one of those experiences, sometimes being satisfied and sometimes hungry, sometimes having plenty and other times not enough. 13 In every situation I stay strong because of the one who strengthens me.

14 However, you all did well to participate in my hardships. 15 I've know all you Filippaisios (Philippians), that when I left Makedonia to begin preaching the good message, no other assembly shared with me in giving and receiving—only you there. 16 Even when I was in Thessalonikai,[12] once you sent me what I needed—actually twice— 17 not that I was looking for a gift from my perspective, but because I was thrilled to see you all accumulating heavenly rewards. 18 But now I've received everything I need. I have plenty now that Epafroditos arrived with what you all sent. It was like a fragrant sacrifice that's acceptable **to God** and which pleases him.[13] 19 My **God** will meet all of your needs from his riches in heaven in **Messiah Yeshua** (Jesus; Grk. Yesus)— 20 may our **God** and father be honoured throughout all the ages.

The ending greetings

21 Greet all of the believers there in the name of **Messiah Yeshua** (Jesus; Grk. Yesus). The brothers and sisters with me here also greet you all, 22 along with all the believers here, especially those in Kaisar's household.

23 May the grace from the **master Yeshua Messiah be** with all your spirits. May it be so.

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12 **RV 4:16 · Cross-ref.** Acts 17:1.

13 **RV 4:18 · Cross-ref.** Exo 29:18.