

Philemon 1

King James Version (KJV)

(Freedom from Slavery) (A slave ran away from Philemon. Paul returned the slave to Philemon in return for many favors that he owed Paul) (This book is about how people can enslave themselves to this world and how to get free from it)

(This letter was written by Paul while he was in prison in Rome. The slave had helped Paul a great deal to do God's work, but Roman law would not allow Paul to keep the slave with him, so he is going to return the slave to Philemon, but he will also help him get free. Onesimus penned the letter from Paul. He was clearly an educated man. He carried the letter back to Philemon)

¹ Paul, a prisoner of Jesus Christ, and Timothy our brother, unto Philemon our dearly beloved, and fellow labourer, (Philemon was loved and respected by the Colossians and by Paul)

² And to our beloved Apphia, and Archippus our fellowsoldier, and to the church in thy house: (Apphia = fruitful; she was Philemon's wife) (Archippus = a lover of horses; was his son) (These people were Christians. They held church services in their house)

³ Grace to you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. (A blessing to Philemon's house and family)

⁴ I thank my God, making mention of thee always in my prayers,

⁵ Hearing of thy love and faith, which thou hast toward the Lord Jesus, and toward all saints; (Paul has converted the slave that ran away, before he returns him to Philemon)

⁶ That the communication of thy faith may become effectual by the acknowledging of every good thing which is in you in Christ Jesus. (I <Paul> trust that you will do the right thing)

⁷ For we have great joy and consolation in thy love, because the bowels of the saints are refreshed by thee, brother. (You help to uplift the church of Jesus Christ, and we appreciate you)

⁸ Wherefore, though I might be much bold in Christ to enjoin thee that which is convenient, (May I speak plainly to you to ask a favor)

⁹ Yet for love's sake I rather beseech thee, being such an one as Paul the aged, and now also a prisoner of Jesus Christ. (These are all fellow Christians. Paul had originally also converted Philemon, so he owed Paul a favor)

¹⁰ I beseech thee for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten in my bonds: (Onesimus <Latin> = one that is profitable or one that blesses) (Paul's "son" spiritually because he converted him. That is the name of the slave)

¹¹ Which in time past was to thee unprofitable, but now profitable to thee and to me: (Because he is now a Christian, he can greatly help Philemon in Christianity; much more profitable than just a slave doing farm work or running the household) see Colossians-4:9

¹² Whom I have sent again: thou therefore receive him, that is, mine own bowels: (Receive him as a fellow Christian, not as a returned slave)

¹³ Whom I would have retained with me, that in thy stead he might have ministered unto me in the bonds of the gospel: (Paul wasn't allowed to keep Onesimus with him because he was in prison. If he had been allowed, he says that Onesimus would have been a great help to him in teaching God's Word in Rome)

¹⁴ But without thy mind would I do nothing; that thy benefit should not be as it were of necessity, but willingly. (Even so, Paul would not have kept Onesimus without Philemon's permission)

¹⁵ For perhaps he therefore departed for a season, that thou shouldest receive him for ever; (God sent him back to you for a purpose; to help you do God's work)

¹⁶ Not now as a servant, but above a servant, a brother beloved, specially to me, but how much more unto thee, both in the flesh, and in the Lord? (A fellow Christian; not a slave) (Paul saw great potential in this man)

¹⁷ If thou count me therefore a partner, receive him as myself. (Receive him as you would receive me – happily and freely)

¹⁸ If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee ought, put that on mine account; (That would be the punishment that a slave would receive for having run away; put it on my tab. Paul is calling in his favors)

¹⁹ I Paul have written it with mine own hand, I will repay it: albeit I do not say to thee how thou owest unto me even thine own self besides. (Through Paul's teachings, Philemon is saved by God)

²⁰ Yea, brother, let me have joy of thee in the Lord: refresh my bowels in the Lord. (It will give me great joy if you do this favor for me)

(The Greek version of the name Onesimus <Latin> means – to be profitable to me. Paul is saying that he would see it as profitable to him if Philemon does this favor for him. Paul spoke many languages and is using a play on words to make his point. Onesimus was profitable to me as a Christian teacher while he was here in Rome)

²¹ Having confidence in thy obedience I wrote unto thee, knowing that thou wilt also do more than I say. (I know that you will do this and more)

²² But withal prepare me also a lodging: for I trust that through your prayers I shall be given unto you. (Pray for me that I may also be set free. Keep a room for me)

²³ There salute thee Epaphras, my fellowprisoner in Christ Jesus;

²⁴ Marcus, Aristarchus, Demas, Lucas, my fellowlabourers. (Mark and Luke – the gospel writers; Marcus and Lucas are the Latin versions of their names)

²⁵ The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen.

(People enslave themselves in the world by becoming subject to usury, drugs, alcohol and many other traps. It is up to us to free ourselves from these traps and live a good honest life through the freedom that Jesus purchased for us. Jesus said – You shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free) see John-8:32