

# Word Study G3781 *opheiletes* debtor

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## Introduction

### Rom 1:14-15 - Paul is in debt to everyone (and his brother)

<sup>14</sup> I am debtor <sup>G3781</sup> both to the Greeks *Helen*, and to the Barbarians *barbaros*; both to the wise, and to the unwise. <sup>15</sup> So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also.

Is Paul saying he owes these guys money? No, I don't think so. I would say he is in debt to God for the remainder of his life because his job is a servant of Yeshua Messiah who has tasked him with spreading the gospel. The debt to the Greeks, Barbarians, wise and unwise is through agency. God has determined that the aforementioned people deserve to be given notice of their salvation and God "owes" them this debt.

This debt that God incurred is found in the promises of the prophets e.g. Hos 1, Jer 31:31-34.

In the next verse (Rom 1:15), the debt that God will have paid them because those people will have been "served notice". Once served notice however, they then are in debt and must respond by repentance.

We understand this spiritual concept of indebtedness by the movement of money and how it is accounted for in the physical world in which we live.

Q. But John one might ask, those are for Israel, not the Gentiles and for sure not the Barbarians correct? A. Aha, good question and here is my response. When Paul is spreading the Good News, he isn't prejudging who the recipient is. Everyone should get the message, the question is what will they do with the message once given?

## G3781 *opheiletes* KJC:7 debtor(s)<sup>5</sup>, owed<sup>1</sup>, sinners=

ὀφειλέτης

From [G3784](#); an *ower*, that is, a person *indebted*; figuratively a *delinquent*; morally a *transgressor* (against God): - debtor, which owed, sinner.

**Total KJV Occurrences: 7**

**debtors, 3** [Rom 8:12](#) (2), [Rom 15:27](#)

**debtor, 2** [Rom 1:14](#), [Gal 5:3](#)

**owed, 1** [Mat 18:24](#)

**sinners, 1** [Luk 13:4](#)

*opheilētēs*, gen. *opheilētou*, masc. noun from *opheílo* ([G3784](#)), to owe. A debtor.

(I) One owing money ([Mat 18:24](#)). One indebted for favors ([Rom 15:27](#)).

(II) One morally bound to the performance of any duty, followed by the inf. ([Gal 5:3](#), he is bound to keep the whole law).

(III) Delinquent, one who fails in the performance of duty ([Mat 6:12](#), meaning those who fail in their duty toward us). Forgiving our debtors does not imply that man has the ability to forgive another human being in the same way that God forgives a sinner. Generally a transgressor, sinner (*hamartōlós* [[G268](#)], sinner) ([Luk 13:4](#) [cf. [Luk 13:2](#)]; see also [Gen 18:23](#); [Psa 1:1](#)).

**Deriv.:** *chreōpheilētēs* ([G5533](#)), one who owes a debt.

**Ant.:** *daneistēs* ([G1157](#)), a lender, creditor.