

Aquila and Priscilla

Aquila and Priscilla. Aquila was originally from Pontus, which is the Black Sea region of modern Turkey. He was a Jewish believer living in Rome with his wife Prisca as tent-makers. When Claudius expelled all Jews from Rome, Aquila and Prisca were forced to leave and relocate to Corinth (Acts 18:2-3). The Apostle Paul roomed with them for eighteen months, as he too was a tent-maker. No doubt this couple would have known Phoebe well having lived in Corinth, which is a short distance from Cenchrea. They accompanied Paul on part of his journey to Syria, but he left them at Ephesus, where they met and tutored Apollos in the Christian faith. They were still at Ephesus when Paul wrote 1 Corinthians, and the assembly was at that time meeting in their home (1 Cor. 16:19)!

In A.D. 54 Claudius died and the expulsion of the Jews from Rome was lifted. Aquila and Priscilla returned to Rome, and four years later when the epistle of Paul to the Romans arrived, one of the assemblies in Rome was meeting *“at their house”*. This couple was very hospitable. They hosted Paul at Corinth (and possibly an assembly there too), they hosted an assembly in Ephesus, and an assembly in Rome! Mr. Kelly remarks that, as tent-makers, this Christian couple would have always had a large room in their home for laying out tent fabric, which would have been quite suitable for a meeting room!

While Aquila and Priscilla shared the Apostle’s craft of tent-making, he passes over that fact often, and instead refers to their primary bond; e.g. *“my fellow-workmen in Christ Jesus”*. They had at some point risked their “neck” (singular) for Paul, showing that as “one flesh” they were committed to the service of Christ. Paul would be forever “thankful” to them for that sacrifice (John 15:13). Evidently the news was widely heard and Aquila and Priscilla had earned the thanks of *“all the assemblies of the nations”*. Much can be attributed to the faithfulness of this model Christian couple: their instructing Apollos, establishing the Corinthian assembly, and even saving Paul’s life. Certainly they were used of the Lord in a remarkable way among the Gentile assemblies in Italy, Greece, and Asia Minor.

Their names are found six places in the New Testament (Acts 18:2, 18, 26; Rom. 16:3; 1 Cor. 16:19; 2 Tim. 4:19), and the husband and wife are always mentioned together! They are a model Christian couple. Four out of six references give the wife’s name as “Priscilla”, which is the Greek diminutive form of “Prisca”. Her proper name was Prisca, but it is nice to see that Luke and Paul were close enough to the couple to use her “nickname”!