

1 Thessalonians 2:15

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Who both killed the Lord Jesus, and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they please not God, and are contrary to all men:

Analysis

Who both killed the Lord Jesus, and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they please not God, and are contrary to all men—Paul indicts unbelieving Jews (not all Jews, but specifically those who reject Christ) with four charges:

1. killing Jesus (kai ton Kyrion apokteninantōn Iēsoun, καὶ τὸν Κύριον ἀποκτείναντων Ἰησοῦν)
2. killing prophets (kai tous prophētas, καὶ τοὺς προφήτας)
3. persecuting apostles (kai hēmas ekdiōxantōn, καὶ ἡμᾶς ἐκδιωξάντων)
4. displeasing God (kai Theō mē areskontōn, καὶ Θεῷ μὴ ἀρεσκόντων) and opposing humanity (kai pasin anthrōpois enantōn, καὶ πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις ἐναντίον).

This isn't anti-Semitism but prophetic indictment in Israel's own tradition (Matt 23:29-36

Acts 7:51-53). Jesus and prophets denounced Israel's covenant unfaithfulness; Paul continues this pattern. The phrase pasin anthrōpois enantōn ('contrary to all men') describes preventing Gentiles' salvation (v. 16), an ultimate act of hostility. God's covenant people have become covenant breakers; chosen for blessing nations, they prevent it. This tragedy intensifies Paul's anguish for Israel (Rom 9:1-5; 10:1) and anticipates God's judicial hardening (Rom 11:7-10, 25).

Historical Context

Paul writes from experience—Jews from Thessalonica followed him to Berea, inciting persecution there (Acts 17:13). Earlier, Judean Jews opposed his ministry (Acts 9:23, 29), Antioch of Pisidia (Acts 13:50), Iconium (Acts 14:2, 5), Lystra (Acts 14:19), and would later in Corinth (Acts 18:12-17) and Jerusalem (Acts 21:27-36). This pattern fulfilled Jesus's warning (Matt 10:17, 23; 23:34). Yet Paul never abandoned his kinsmen, maintaining 'great heaviness and continual sorrow' for Israel (Rom 9:2) and longing for their salvation (Rom 10:1; 11:14).

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How do you distinguish between prophetic indictment of covenant unfaithfulness and sinful ethnic hatred?
2. What does opposition to the gospel's spread reveal about the human heart's hostility toward God?
3. How can Paul simultaneously indict Jewish opposition and maintain 'great sorrow' for Israel's salvation (Rom 9:2-3)? What does this teach about biblical confrontation?

Interlinear Text

τῶν καὶ τὸν κύριον ἀποκτεινάντων Ἰησοῦν καὶ
G3588 Who both G3588 the Lord killed Jesus Who both
G2532 G2962 G615 G2424 G2532

τοὺς ιδίους προφήτας καὶ ἡμᾶς ἐκδιωξάντων καὶ
G3588 their own prophets Who both us have persecuted Who both
G2398 G4396 G2532 G2248 G1559 G2532

θεῷ μὴ ἀρεσκόντων καὶ πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις ἐναντίων
God not they please Who both to all men are contrary
G2316 G3361 G700 G2532 G3956 G444 G1727

Additional Cross-References

Matthew 5:12 (Prophecy): Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

Acts 2:23 (References God): Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain:

Acts 7:52 (Prophecy): Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which shewed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers:

Matthew 23:37 (Prophecy): O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killst the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!

Matthew 27:25 (Parallel theme): Then answered all the people, and said, His blood be on us, and on our children.

Luke 24:20 (Parallel theme): And how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him.

Esther 3:8 (Parallel theme): And Haman said unto king Ahasuerus, There is a certain people scattered abroad and dispersed among the people in all the

provinces of thy kingdom; and their laws are diverse from all people; neither keep they the king's laws: therefore it is not for the king's profit to suffer them.

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