

1 Thessalonians 5:9

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ,

Analysis

For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ—hoti ouk etheto hēmas ho Theos eis orgēn alla eis peripoiēsin sōtērias dia tou Kyriou hēmōn Iēsou Christou (ὅτι οὐκ ἔθετο ἡμᾶς ὁ Θεὸς εἰς ὀργὴν ἀλλὰ εἰς περιποίησιν σωτηρίας διὰ τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ). Etheto (ἔθετο, aorist of tithēmi, 'to place/appoint') indicates divine determination. God appointed believers not eis orgēn (εἰς ὀργήν, 'unto wrath') but eis peripoiēsin sōtērias (εἰς περιποίησιν σωτηρίας, 'unto obtaining salvation'). Orgē (ὀργή) is God's judicial wrath against sin; believers are exempt not because they're sinless but because Christ bore wrath on their behalf (1:10).

Through our Lord Jesus Christ (dia tou Kyriou hēmōn Iēsou Christou, διὰ τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ)—salvation is mediated exclusively through Christ. This verse provides assurance: the day of the Lord brings wrath for unbelievers (v. 3) but salvation for believers (v. 9). Divine appointment (not human decision) determined this distinction. Those 'in Christ' escape wrath not through works but through Christ's propitiatory sacrifice (Rom 3:25). This doesn't mean believers avoid all suffering (2:14; 3:3-4) but that we escape God's eschatological wrath poured out on unbelief.

Historical Context

The distinction between wrath and salvation at the day of the Lord comforted persecuted Thessalonians—their present suffering wasn't God's wrath but Satan's

opposition and human persecution (2:18; 3:5). God's wrath awaited persecutors (2:16; 2 Thess 1:6-9), not persecuted believers. This theology sustained martyrs throughout church history: present suffering isn't divine judgment but diabolic hostility; Christ will vindicate believers when He returns. Romans 5:9 confirms: 'Being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.' Believers are saved from wrath, not saved from suffering.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Study Questions

1. How does understanding that God appointed you 'to obtain salvation,' not 'unto wrath,' provide assurance during trials?
2. What does 'through our Lord Jesus Christ' teach about salvation's exclusive means and Christ's unique role?
3. How do you distinguish between present suffering (not divine wrath) and future wrath (which believers escape)?

Interlinear Text

ὅτι	οὐκ	ἔθετο	ἡμᾶς	ὁ	θεὸς	εἰς	ὀργὴν	ἀλλ'	εἰς
For	not	appointed	us	G3588	God	to	wrath	but	to
G3754	G3756	G5087	G2248		G2316	G1519	G3709	G235	G1519

περιποιήσιν	σωτηρίας	διὰ	τοῦ	κυρίου	ἡμῶν	Ἰησοῦ
obtain	salvation	by	G3588	Lord	our	Jesus
G4047	G4991	G1223		G2962	G2257	G2424

Χριστοῦ

Christ
G5547

Additional Cross-References

1 Thessalonians 1:10 (Judgment): And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.

1 Peter 2:10 (References God): Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.

Acts 13:48 (References Lord): And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed.

Proverbs 16:4 (References Lord): The LORD hath made all things for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil.

2 Timothy 2:10 (Salvation): Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.

Exodus 9:16 (Parallel theme): And in very deed for this cause have I raised thee up, for to shew in thee my power; and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth.

1 Timothy 1:16 (References Jesus): Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting.

1 Thessalonians 3:3 (Parallel theme): That no man should be moved by these afflictions: for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto.

1 Timothy 1:13 (Parallel theme): Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief.

1 Peter 2:8 (Parallel theme): And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed.