

2 Corinthians 1:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For we would not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life:

Analysis

For we would not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia (Οὐ θέλομεν ὑμᾶς ἀγνοεῖν)—disclosure formula signals crucial information. Thlipsis (θλίψις) is same word from v. 4.

That we were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life—three intensifiers: kath hyperbolēn ("beyond measure"), hyper dynamin ("beyond strength"), exaporēthēnai ("utterly at a loss/total despair"). Paul faced existential crisis—he expected to die.

Historical Context

The specific 'trouble in Asia' is debated: Ephesian riot (Acts 19:23-41), imprisonment, illness, or judicial threat. Whatever the crisis, it occurred in the province of Asia (western Turkey) where Paul ministered ~AD 52-55. His transparency about 'despairing of life' countered super-apostles' claims of invincibility.

Related Passages

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. Have I experienced 'beyond measure, beyond strength' suffering—what did God teach?
2. How does Paul's disclosure of total despair challenge my tendency to project false strength?
3. What current burden feels 'beyond my strength'—am I crying to 'God who raises the dead'?

Interlinear Text

Οὐ	γὰρ	θέλομεν	ὑμᾶς	ἀγνοεῖν	ἀδελφοί	ὑπὲρ	τοῦ	
not	For	we would	you	have	brethren	above	which	
G3756	G1063	G2309	G5209	G50	G80	G5228	G3588	
θλίψεως	ἡμῶν	τοῦ	γενομένης	ἡμῖν	ἐν	τοῦ	Ἀσίας	ὅτι
trouble	our	which	came	to us	in	which	Asia	that
G2347	G2257	G3588	G1096	G2254	G1722	G3588	G773	G3754
καθ'	ὑπερβολὴν	ἐβαρήθημεν	ὑπὲρ	δύναμιν	ὥστε			
we were pressed	of measure	out	above	strength	insomuch			
G2596	G5236	G916	G5228	G1411	G5620			
ἐξαπορηθῆναι	ἡμᾶς	καὶ	τοῦ	ζῆν·				
despaired	that we	even	which	of life				
G1820	G2248	G2532	G3588	G2198				

Additional Cross-References

1 Corinthians 15:32 (Parallel theme): If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me, if the dead rise not? let us eat and drink; for to morrow we die.

1 Corinthians 4:8 (Parallel theme): Now ye are full, now ye are rich, ye have reigned as kings without us: and I would to God ye did reign, that we also might reign with you.

1 Corinthians 16:9 (Parallel theme): For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries.

1 Samuel 27:1 (Parallel theme): And David said in his heart, I shall now perish one day by the hand of Saul: there is nothing better for me than that I should speedily escape into the land of the Philistines; and Saul shall despair of me, to seek me any more in any coast of Israel: so shall I escape out of his hand.

1 Samuel 20:3 (Parallel theme): And David sware moreover, and said, Thy father certainly knoweth that I have found grace in thine eyes; and he saith, Let not Jonathan know this, lest he be grieved: but truly as the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, there is but a step between me and death.