

2 Corinthians 1:9

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead:

Analysis

But we had the sentence of death in ourselves (τὸ ἀπόκριμα τοῦ θανάτου)—apokrima (ἀπόκριμα) is judicial: "official verdict/sentence/decree." Perfect tense eschēkamen (ἐσχήκαμεν) suggests ongoing awareness: "we are dead men."

That we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead—hina (ἵνα, "in order that") reveals divine purpose: eliminate self-trust. God's epithet—"the one who raises the dead"—comes from Jewish liturgy (Shemoneh Esreh) but became Paul's experiential reality.

Historical Context

Written around AD 55-56 from Macedonia after Paul's 'painful visit' to Corinth (2:1). The Corinthian church faced challenges to Paul's apostolic authority from 'super-apostles' (11:5) who valued eloquence over cruciform ministry. Paul writes to defend his ministry, explain his changed travel plans, and restore relationship with this fractious congregation.

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. What 'death sentence' would God need to pronounce on my self-sufficiency before I truly depend on Him?
2. How does trusting 'God who raises the dead' differ from merely trusting Him to improve circumstances?
3. Where am I still 'trusting in myself'—what would full transfer to God look like?

Interlinear Text

ἀλλ' αὐτοὶ ἐν ἑαυτοῖς τοὺς ἀπόκριμα τοὺς θανάτου
But G846 **in** **ourselves** **which** **the sentence** **which** **of death**
G235 G1722 G1438 G3588 G610 G3588 G2288

ἐσχήκαμεν τίνα μὴ πεποιθότες ὥμεν ἐπὶ ἑαυτοῖς ἀλλ'
we had **that** G3361 **trust** G5600 **in** **ourselves** **But**
G2192 G2443 G3982 G1909 G1438 G235

ἐπὶ τοὺς θεῷ τοὺς ἐγείροντι τοὺς νεκρούς·
in **which** **God** **which** **raiseth** **which** **the dead**
G1909 G3588 G2316 G3588 G1453 G3588 G3498

Additional Cross-References

2 Corinthians 3:5 (References God): Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God;

2 Corinthians 4:7 (References God): But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.

Hebrews 11:19 (Resurrection): Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure.

Job 40:14 (Parallel theme): Then will I also confess unto thee that thine own right hand can save thee.

Luke 18:9 (Faith): And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others:

Proverbs 28:26 (Faith): He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool: but whoso walketh wisely, he shall be delivered.

Ezekiel 33:13 (Faith): When I shall say to the righteous, that he shall surely live; if he trust to his own righteousness, and commit iniquity, all his righteousnesses shall not be remembered; but for his iniquity that he hath committed, he shall die for it.

Psalms 22:29 (Parallel theme): All they that be fat upon earth shall eat and worship: all they that go down to the dust shall bow before him: and none can keep alive his own soul.

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