

2 Corinthians 7:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For, when we were come into Macedonia, our flesh had no rest, but we were troubled on every side; without were fightings, within were fears.

Analysis

For, when we were come into Macedonia, our flesh had no rest—Elthontōn gar hēmōn eis Makedonian oudemia eschēken anesin hē sarx hēmōn (ἐλθόντων γὰρ ἡμῶν εἰς Μακεδονίαν οὐδεμίαν ἔσχηκεν ἄνεσιν ἡ σάρξ ἡμῶν, "when we came to Macedonia, our flesh had no relief"). Anesis (ἄνεσις, "relief/relaxation") appears in 2:13 where Paul had 'no rest in spirit' awaiting Titus. Here sarx ("flesh") emphasizes physical and emotional exhaustion—not sinful nature but human frailty.

But we were troubled on every side; without were fightings, within were fears—En panti thlibomenoi (ἐν παντὶ θλιβόμενοι, "afflicted in every way"). Exōthen machai (ἔξωθεν μάχαι, "external conflicts")—possibly persecution, opposition from false apostles, or civic hostility. Esōthen phoboi (ἔσωθεν φόβοι, "internal fears")—anxiety about Corinth's response, personal safety, ministry fruitfulness. Paul's transparency about apostolic weakness undermines triumphalist theology: even extraordinary servants experience crushing pressure.

Historical Context

Macedonia (northern Greece) included Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea. Paul had planted churches there (Acts 16-17) and received financial support from Philippi (Phil 4:15-16). Yet even in friendly territory, Paul faced exhaustion from travel, ongoing persecution (1 Thess 2:14-16), and emotional burden for multiple

churches. His vulnerability counters the 'super-apostles' who projected invincible confidence (11:5, 12-13).

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. How does Paul's honest admission of 'no rest' and 'fears' give permission for Christian leaders to acknowledge their own struggles?
2. What 'external conflicts' and 'internal fears' am I facing, and who have I allowed to comfort me (as Titus comforted Paul)?
3. How do I respond when spiritual leaders show human weakness—with contempt or compassion?

Interlinear Text

Kαὶ	γὰρ	ἐλθόντων	ἡμῶν	εἰς	Μακεδονίαν	οὐδεμίαν	
G2532	For	were come	our	into	Macedonia	no	
G1063		G2064	G2257	G1519	G3109	G3762	
ἔσχηκεν	ἀνεσιν	ἡ	σὰρξ	ἡμῶν	ἀλλ'	ἐν	παντὶ
had	rest	G3588	flesh	our	but	on	every side
G2192		G425	G4561	G2257	G235	G1722	G3956
θλιβόμενοι·	ἔξωθεν		μάχαι	ἔσωθεν	φόβοι		
we were troubled	without		were fightings	within	were fears		
G2346			G3163	G2081	G5401		

Additional Cross-References

2 Corinthians 2:13 (Parallel theme): I had no rest in my spirit, because I found not Titus my brother: but taking my leave of them, I went from thence into Macedonia.

Deuteronomy 32:25 (Parallel theme): The sword without, and terror within, shall destroy both the young man and the virgin, the suckling also with the man of gray hairs.

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