

Acts 2:39

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.

Analysis

The promise is unto you, and to your children—Peter expands covenant blessing beyond the present generation, echoing Abrahamic (Genesis 17:7) and Deuteronomic (30:19) promises. **To all that are afar off** (πᾶσι τοῖς εἰς μακράν) initially meant Diaspora Jews (Ephesians 2:13 later applies this to Gentiles), showing the Spirit's availability transcends geography. **As many as the Lord our God shall call** (ὅσους ἂν προσκαλέσῃται) grounds salvation in divine election—the universal offer ('whosoever', v.21) operates within God's sovereign calling. This balances human responsibility (repent, be baptized) with divine initiative.

Historical Context

Peter addressed Jews from 'every nation under heaven' (v.5), many from distant Mediterranean regions. The 'children' reference assured continuity of covenant blessing through family lines—critical for Jewish hearers considering separation from Judaism. The early church debated how far 'afar off' extended until Acts 10's Gentile inclusion.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How do God's promise to 'your children' and sovereign calling interact with personal faith?
2. What does 'as many as the Lord shall call' teach about evangelism's confidence?

Interlinear Text

ὕμῖν γάρ ἐστὶν ἡ ἐπαγγελία καὶ τοῖς τέκνοις ὑμῶν
unto you For is G3588 the promise and G3588 children to your
G5213 G1063 G2076 G1860 G2532 G5043 G5216

καὶ πᾶσιν τοῖς εἰς μακρὰν ὅσους ἂν
and to all G3588 that are afar off G3112 even as many as shall call
G2532 G3956 G1519 G3745 G302

προσκαλέσεται κύριος ὁ θεὸς ἡμῶν
G4341 the Lord G3588 God our
G2962 G2316 G2257

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 44:3 (Parallel theme): For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring:

Romans 8:30 (Parallel theme): Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

Joel 2:32 (References Lord): And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the LORD hath said, and in the remnant whom the LORD shall call.

Acts 15:8 (References God): And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us;

Ephesians 4:4 (Parallel theme): There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling;

Revelation 19:9 (References God): And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God.

1 Peter 5:10 (References God): But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.

Hebrews 9:15 (Covenant): And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.

Isaiah 54:13 (References Lord): And all thy children shall be taught of the LORD; and great shall be the peace of thy children.

2 Peter 1:3 (References God): According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: