

Acts 26:6

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And now I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers:

Analysis

And now I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers—Paul identifies the core issue: his trial concerns *elpis* (ἐλπίς, hope) in God's *epangelia* (ἐπαγγελία, promise) to the patriarchs. This is not about novel doctrine but Israel's ancient hope—the Messianic promise woven through Genesis 3:15, the Abrahamic covenant (Gen 12:3), and prophetic Scripture.

Paul's defense strategy is brilliant: he reframes his "crime" as faithfulness to Judaism's foundational hope. The irony is profound—Paul stands accused by Jewish leaders for believing what every pious Jew claimed to await: the resurrection and the Messiah. His imprisonment vindicates his claim that Christianity is the fulfillment, not the abandonment, of Israel's faith. As he will argue in verses 22-23, he preaches "nothing but what the prophets and Moses said would come to pass."

Historical Context

Paul speaks before King Agrippa II (AD 60-62), who as a Herodian king was educated in Jewish law and prophecy. This is Paul's third defense speech in Acts (cf. 22:1-21, 24:10-21). The "promise to our fathers" references the patriarchal covenants—God's oath to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—which first-century Judaism unanimously affirmed, even while disagreeing on the details of fulfillment.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How does Paul's appeal to "the hope of the promise" challenge the dichotomy between Old and New Testament faith?
2. In what ways does your Christian hope connect to God's ancient promises to Israel, and why does this continuity matter?

Interlinear Text

καὶ	νῦν	ἐπ'	ἐλπίδι	τῆς	πρὸς	τοὺς	πατέρας	ἐπαγγελίας
And	now	for	the hope	G3588	unto	G3588	our fathers	of the promise
G2532	G3568	G1909	G1680		G4314		G3962	G1860

γενομένης	ὑπὸ	τοῦ	θεοῦ	ἔστηκα	κρινόμενος
made	of	G3588	God	I stand	and am judged
G1096	G5259		G2316	G2476	G2919

Additional Cross-References

Acts 24:15 (Hope): And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust.

Acts 28:20 (Hope): For this cause therefore have I called for you, to see you, and to speak with you: because that for the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain.

Titus 2:13 (Hope): Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;

Acts 23:6 (Hope): But when Paul perceived that the one part were Sadducees, and the other Pharisees, he cried out in the council, Men and brethren, I am a

Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee: of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question.

Romans 15:8 (Covenant): Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers:

Zechariah 13:7 (Parallel theme): Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the LORD of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered: and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones.

Genesis 22:18 (Parallel theme): And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.

Genesis 26:4 (Parallel theme): And I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, and will give unto thy seed all these countries; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed;

Genesis 12:3 (Parallel theme): And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.

Deuteronomy 18:15 (References God): The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken;