

Colossians 1:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel;

Analysis

For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel. The verb *apokeimenen* (ἀποκειμένην, "laid up") means stored or treasured, using imagery of valuables kept secure. Christian hope isn't wishful thinking but confident expectation of guaranteed future reality, reserved *en tois ouranois* (ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς, "in the heavens") beyond earthly tampering.

This heavenly orientation counters the Colossian heresy's emphasis on present mystical experiences. Hope grounds faith and energizes love—believing God's promises about the future enables present endurance. "The word of the truth of the gospel" emphasizes objective reality: *alētheias* (ἀληθείας, "truth") against falsehood. They "heard before" establishes chronological priority—original apostolic teaching supersedes later innovations.

Historical Context

Unlike Greek philosophy (viewing matter as evil, seeking enlightenment) or Jewish nationalism (expecting earthly restoration), Christianity offers hope both already secured (in heaven) and not yet experienced (awaiting fulfillment). This already-not-yet tension characterizes New Testament eschatology, balancing present reality with future consummation.

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How does hope in resurrection and glorification affect your response to present suffering?
2. What contemporary teachings shift focus from future hope to present experience, and why is this problematic?
3. How do you evaluate new spiritual movements—by novelty and appeal, or conformity to apostolic gospel?

Interlinear Text

διὰ τοῦ ἐλπίδα τοῦ ἀποκειμένην ὑμῖν ἐν τοῦ
For which the hope which is laid up for you in which
G1223 G3588 G1680 G3588 G606 G5213 G1722 G3588

οὐρανοῖς ἦν προηκούσατε ἐν τοῦ λόγῳ τοῦ
heaven whereof ye heard before in which the word which
G3772 G3739 G4257 G1722 G3588 G3056 G3588

ἀληθείας τοῦ εὐαγγελίου
of the truth which of the gospel
G225 G3588 G2098

Additional Cross-References

Ephesians 1:13 (Word): In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise,

2 Timothy 4:8 (Parallel theme): Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

Titus 1:2 (Hope): In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began;

Colossians 1:27 (Hope): To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory:

1 Peter 2:2 (Word): As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:

Colossians 1:23 (Hope): If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister;

Hebrews 7:19 (Word): For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God.

1 Corinthians 15:19 (Hope): If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.

1 Thessalonians 2:13 (Word): For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.

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.