

Hebrews 10:34

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For ye had compassion of me in my bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance.

Analysis

For ye had compassion of me in my bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance. This verse provides specific examples of their love and faith under persecution. "Ye had compassion of me in my bonds" (tois desmiois synepathesan, τοῖς δεσμίοις συνεπαθήσατε) shows active sympathy with imprisoned believers. Synepathesan means suffered with, sympathized with—not mere pity but genuine shared suffering. They visited prisoners, brought provisions, and identified with them despite the danger this brought.

"Took joyfully the spoiling of your goods" (tēn harpagēn tōn hyparchontōn hymōn meta charas prosedēxasthe, τὴν ἀρπαγὴν τῶν ὑπαρχόντων ὑμῶν μετὰ χαρᾶς προσεδέξασθε) describes remarkable faith. Harpagēn means seizure, plundering, robbery. Their property was confiscated, stolen, or destroyed because of their faith. Yet they accepted this "with joy" (meta charas, μετὰ χαρᾶς). This echoes Jesus' teaching (Matthew 5:11-12) and apostolic example (Acts 5:41)—rejoicing in suffering for Christ's name.

The reason for this joy: "knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance" (ginōskontes echein heautous kreittona hyparxin kai menousan, γινώσκοντες ἔχειν ἑαυτοὺς κρείττονα ὑπαρξιν καὶ μένουσαν). Kreittona means better, superior; menousan means abiding, remaining, permanent. They possessed confident knowledge (ginōskontes, γινώσκοντες) of superior, permanent

possessions in heaven. Earthly loss was trivial compared to heavenly gain. This eternal perspective enabled joyful endurance of temporal suffering.

Historical Context

Confiscation of Christian property was common in early persecution. Roman authorities could seize goods of those convicted of illegal religion. Jewish Christians might lose inheritance rights when disinherited by families. Mobs sometimes looted Christian homes with impunity, knowing authorities wouldn't protect "atheists" who refused to worship the emperor or traditional gods.

The ability to accept property loss joyfully demonstrated genuine heavenly-mindedness. This wasn't forced stoicism or pretended indifference but authentic joy rooted in confidence of eternal reward. Church fathers like Polycarp, Perpetua, and countless unnamed martyrs exhibited this same joyful acceptance of loss, even of life itself, because they knew their treasure was in heaven (Matthew 6:19-21).

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. How does your attitude toward material possessions reflect your confidence in heavenly treasure?
2. What practical steps can you take to cultivate eternal perspective that values spiritual over material things?
3. In what ways might material abundance tempt you to value earthly possessions more than eternal treasures?

Interlinear Text

καὶ γὰρ τοῖς δεσμοῖς μου συνεπαθήσατε καὶ τὴν
For G1063 G3588 **bonds** G1199 **in my** G3450 **ye had compassion of me** G4834 **For** G2532 G3588

ἄρπαγὴν τῶν ὑπαρχόντων ὑμῶν μετὰ χαρᾶς
the spoiling G724 G3588 **goods** G5224 **of your** G5216 **joyfully** G3326 G5479

προσεδέξασθε γινώσκοντες ἔχειν ἐν ἑαυτοῖς
took G4327 **knowing** G1097 **that ye have** G2192 **in** G1722 **yourselves** G1438

κρείττονα ὑπαρξιν ἐν οὐρανοῖς καὶ μένουσαν
a better G2909 **substance** G5223 **in** G1722 **heaven** G3772 **For** G2532 **an enduring** G3306

Additional Cross-References

1 Peter 1:4 (Parallel theme): To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,

2 Timothy 1:16 (Parallel theme): The Lord give mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus; for he oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain:

Hebrews 13:3 (Parallel theme): Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body.

Ephesians 6:20 (Parallel theme): For which I am an ambassador in bonds: that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.

Luke 12:33 (Parallel theme): Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth.

James 1:2 (Parallel theme): My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations;

