

Luke 10:24

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For I tell you, that many prophets and kings have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them.

Analysis

For I tell you, that many prophets and kings have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them. The emphatic *legō hymin* (λέγω ὑμῖν, "I tell you") introduces solemn declaration of truth. The verb *ēthelēsan* (ἠθέλησαν, "desired") conveys intense longing—prophets and kings yearned to witness Messiah's coming.

Many prophets and kings encompasses the entire Old Testament faithful: Abraham rejoiced to see Christ's day (John 8:56); Moses wrote of Him (John 5:46); David called Him Lord (Matthew 22:43-45); Isaiah saw His glory (John 12:41). These giants of faith received promises but died without seeing fulfillment (Hebrews 11:13, 39). They saw dimly through types, shadows, and prophecies—the disciples see Christ Himself, the reality casting those shadows (Colossians 2:17, Hebrews 10:1).

The parallel structure **to see... and have not seen... to hear... and have not heard** emphasizes both visual and auditory witness. The disciples see miracles, transfiguration, resurrection appearances; they hear the Sermon on the Mount, parables, "I am" declarations—direct divine revelation. This doesn't diminish Old Testament saints' faith; rather, it magnifies the disciples' privilege and responsibility. Greater light brings greater accountability (Luke 12:48). The church

today stands in this same privileged position, possessing the full revelation of Christ through apostolic testimony in Scripture.

Historical Context

This statement establishes the disciples' unique redemptive-historical position at the hinge between Old and New Covenants. The Old Testament saints lived in the age of promise and anticipation; the disciples inhabit the age of fulfillment and realization. This transition from shadow to substance, from prophecy to fulfillment, from type to antitype, marks the central turning point of human history. The early church understood this privilege deeply, recognizing they possessed what patriarchs and prophets longed to see (1 Peter 1:10-12).

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. How does recognizing that prophets and kings longed to see Christ affect your appreciation for direct access to Jesus through Scripture?
2. What responsibility comes with seeing and hearing what the Old Testament faithful could only anticipate?
3. In what ways do believers today have even greater privilege than the first disciples, possessing the complete canon of Scripture and the indwelling Spirit?

Interlinear Text

λέγω γὰρ ὑμῖν ὅτι πολλοὶ προφῆται καὶ βασιλεῖς

I tell For you that many prophets and kings

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G1063

G5213

G3754

many

G4183

prophets

G4396

and

G2532

kings

G935

ἡθέλησαν εἰδον· ἀ ὑμεῖς βλέπετε καὶ οὐκ

have desired have those things which ye see and not

G2309

G1492

those things which

G3739

ye

G5210

see

G991

and

G2532

not

G3756

εἰδον· καὶ ἤκουσαν ἀ ἤκουσαν καὶ οὐκ

have and have those things which have and not

G1492

G2532

have

G191

those things which

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have

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and

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not

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ἤκουσαν

have

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Additional Cross-References

Hebrews 11:13 (Parallel theme): These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.

John 8:56 (Parallel theme): Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad.

Hebrews 11:39 (Parallel theme): And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: