

Philippians 1:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel;

Analysis

But I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel (Γινώσκειν δὲ ὑμᾶς βούλομαι, ἀδελφοί, ὅτι τὰ κατ' ἐμὲ μᾶλλον εἰς προκοπὴν τοῦ εὐαγγελίου ἐλήλυθεν, Ginōskein de hymas boulomai, adelphoi, hoti ta kat' eme mallon eis prokopēn tou euangeliou elēlythen)—Boulomai ("I wish, desire") expresses deliberate intention to inform. Ta kat' eme ("the things concerning me") euphemistically refers to his imprisonment.

Furtherance (προκοπή, prokopē, "progress, advancement") was Stoic terminology for moral progress; Paul repurposes it for gospel advance. What seemed a setback—imprisonment—became strategic advantage. Mallon ("rather, instead") indicates surprising reversal: chains advanced rather than hindered the gospel. This introduces 1:12-26, Paul's reflection on how imprisonment served evangelism. Providence orchestrates apparent disasters for redemptive purposes.

Historical Context

Paul's Roman imprisonment (c. AD 60-62) occurred under house arrest (Acts 28:16, 30), allowing visitors and correspondence. Far from ending ministry, it gave access to Caesar's household and Praetorian Guard—strategic mission fields otherwise unreachable. Ancient prisoners depended on friends for provisions, creating opportunities for gospel conversation.

Related Passages

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. What apparent setbacks in your life has God turned to 'furtherance of the gospel'?
2. How can you reframe hardships providentially rather than as random misfortune or injustice?
3. What gospel opportunities exist in your current constraints that wouldn't exist in easier circumstances?

Interlinear Text

Γινώσκειν	δὲ	ὕμᾱς	βούλομαι	ἀδελφοί	ὅτι	τὰ
should understand	But	ye	I would	brethren	that	G3588
G1097	G1161	G5209	G1014	G80	G3754	
κατ'	ἐμὲ	μᾶλλον	εἰς	προκοπὴν	τοῦ	
the things which happened unto	me	rather	unto	the furtherance		G3588
G2596	G1691	G3123	G1519	G4297		
εὐαγγελίου	ἐλήλυθεν					
of the gospel	have fallen out					
G2098	G2064					

Additional Cross-References

2 Timothy 2:9 (Parallel theme): Wherein I suffer trouble, as an evil doer, even unto bonds; but the word of God is not bound.

Romans 8:28 (Parallel theme): And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

Romans 8:37 (Parallel theme): Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

Acts 8:4 (Parallel theme): Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word.

Esther 9:1 (Parallel theme): Now in the twelfth month, that is, the month Adar, on the thirteenth day of the same, when the king's commandment and his decree drew near to be put in execution, in the day that the enemies of the Jews hoped to have power over them, (though it was turned to the contrary, that the Jews had rule over them that hated them;)

Psalms 76:10 (Parallel theme): Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain.

Exodus 18:11 (Parallel theme): Now I know that the LORD is greater than all gods: for in the thing wherein they dealt proudly he was above them.