

Philippians 2:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all.

Analysis

Yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all (Ἄλλὰ εἰ καὶ σπένδομαι ἐπὶ τῇ θυσίᾳ καὶ λειτουργίᾳ τῆς πίστεως ὑμῶν, χαίρω καὶ συγχαίρω πᾶσιν ὑμῖν, Alla ei kai spendomai epi tē thysia kai leitourgia tēs pisteōs hymōn, chairō kai synchairō pasin hymin)—Spendomai ("I am poured out as a drink offering") is cultic language. Drink offerings accompanied sacrifices (Num 15:1-10). Paul pictures his potential martyrdom as libation poured over the Philippians' sacrificial faith-offering. Epi tē thysia kai leitourgia ("upon the sacrifice and service") uses priestly terminology. Thysia ("sacrifice") and leitourgia ("service, ministry") describe the Philippians' faith as worship-offering to God.

Despite potential martyrdom, Paul says chairō kai synchairō ("I rejoice and rejoice together"). The double joy—personal and corporate—shows martyrdom as privilege, not tragedy. Pasin hymin ("with you all") invites Philippians to share his joy, not grieve his death. This verse displays Paul's Christ-saturated perspective: death in God's service is gain (1:21), joyful participation in Christ's sufferings (3:10).

Historical Context

Drink offerings were common in Jewish sacrificial system and Greco-Roman pagan worship. Paul Christianizes the metaphor: believers' faithful living is spiritual sacrifice (Rom 12:1); Paul's martyrdom is supplementary libation. This isn't

earning salvation but consecration. Early Christian martyrs (Ignatius, Polycarp) echoed this joy-in-martyrdom, astonishing pagan observers. Paul's readiness to die joyfully modeled the gospel's transforming power.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How does viewing martyrdom as a 'drink offering' (spendomai) reframe suffering and death?
2. Can you 'rejoice' (chairō) in the prospect of loss or death like Paul does?
3. How is your faith-life a 'sacrifice and service' (thysia kai leitourgia) unto God?

Interlinear Text

ἀλλ' εἰ καὶ σπένδομαι ἐπὶ τῇ θυσίᾳ καὶ
Yea G1487 and I be offered upon the sacrifice and
G235 G2532 G4689 G1909 G3588 G2378 G2532

λειτουργίᾳ τῇ πίστεως ὑμῶν χαίρω καὶ συγχαίρω
service G3588 faith G4102 of your G5216 I joy G5463 and rejoice with
G3009 G6213 G5216 G5463 G2532 G4796

πᾶσιν ὑμῖν·
all you
G3956 G5213

Additional Cross-References

2 Timothy 4:6 (Parallel theme): For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand.

Romans 15:16 (Sacrifice): That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost.

2 Corinthians 12:15 (Parallel theme): And I will very gladly spend and be spent for you; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved.

Colossians 1:24 (Parallel theme): Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church:

2 Corinthians 7:4 (Parallel theme): Great is my boldness of speech toward you, great is my glorying of you: I am filled with comfort, I am exceeding joyful in all our tribulation.

Philippians 1:20 (Parallel theme): According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death.

Romans 12:1 (Sacrifice): I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.
