

Romans 15:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.

Analysis

For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning (ὅσα γὰρ προεγράφη, εἰς τὴν ἡμετέραν διδασκαλίαν ἐγράφη, hosa gar proegraphē, eis tēn hēmeteran didaskalian egraphē)—Paul articulates a theology of Scripture. Proegraphē (written beforehand) refers to the OT, which has abiding relevance for the church. Didaskalian (instruction, teaching) indicates Scripture's didactic purpose: not merely historical record but divine pedagogy. The example of Christ's suffering (v. 3) comes from Scripture, which therefore teaches Christlikeness.

That we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope (ἴνα διὰ τῆς ὑπομονῆς καὶ διὰ τῆς παρακλήσεως τῶν γραφῶν τὴν ἐλπίδα ἔχωμεν, hina dia tēs hypomonēs kai dia tēs paraklēseōs tōn graphōn tēn elpida echōmen)—Scripture produces two qualities that generate hope: hypomonē (patient endurance, steadfastness) and paraklēsis (comfort, encouragement). As believers read of God's past faithfulness and promises, they develop resilient hope for future glory. This is experiential, not merely intellectual: Scripture sustains believers in present trials by pointing to certain future vindication.

Historical Context

Paul's doctrine of Scripture's continuing authority was critical for the largely Gentile Roman church. They might have wondered whether the Hebrew Bible applied to them. Paul affirms that the OT is Christian Scripture, written for the

church's instruction. This undergirds the NT pattern of reading Israel's story as anticipating and illuminating Christ.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How does viewing Scripture as written specifically 'for our learning' change your approach to difficult OT passages?
2. What examples from Scripture have produced patient endurance and hope in your own seasons of suffering?
3. In what ways does the pattern of 'hope through Scripture-produced patience and comfort' shape your daily Bible reading?

Interlinear Text

ὅσα	γὰρ	προεγράφη,	εἰς	τὴν	ἡμετέραν
whatsoever things	For	were written	for	G3588	our
G3745	G1063	G4270	G1519		G2251
διδασκαλίαν	προεγράφη,	τίνα	διὰ	τῆς	ὑπομονῆς
learning	were written	that	through	G3588	patience
G1319	G4270	G2443	G1223		G5281
τῆς	παρακλήσεως	τῶν	γραφῶν	τὴν	έλπίδα
G3588	comfort	G3588	of the scriptures	G3588	hope
	G3874		G1124		G1680
					G2192

Additional Cross-References

1 Corinthians 10:11 (Parallel theme): Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.

Romans 12:12 (Hope): Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer;

1 Peter 1:13 (Hope): Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ;

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