

Romans 8:24

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope:
for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?

Analysis

For we are saved by hope (tē gār elpídi esóthēmen)—The dative elpídi could be instrumental ("by hope") or sphere ("in hope"). The aorist esóthēmen ("we were saved") points to past justification, but salvation includes future glorification. We are saved (past), being saved (present sanctification), and will be saved (future glorification). Hope bridges present reality and future consummation—we possess salvation but await its fullness.

But hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? (elpís blepómenē ouk éstin elpís; hò gār blépei tis, tí elpízei)—Hope by definition involves the unseen. Once possessed, hope becomes sight. Hebrews 11:1 defines faith as "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Christian hope isn't wishful thinking but confident expectation grounded in God's promises, awaiting what is guaranteed but not yet experienced.

Historical Context

Greek philosophy (especially Stoicism) emphasized resignation to fate; Christian hope emphasizes confident expectation of God's promised future. The Greek elpís could mean uncertain wish; biblical elpís is certain hope grounded in covenant promises and Christ's resurrection (1 Peter 1:3). Hope transforms suffering from meaningless pain to purposeful waiting.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. How is Christian "hope" different from optimism, wishful thinking, or blind faith?
2. What specific biblical promises ground your hope—what makes hope certain rather than speculative?
3. How does hope sustained by God's promises enable patient endurance through trials?

Interlinear Text

τῇ	γὰρ	ἐλπίς·	ἐσώθημεν·	ἐλπίς·	δὲ	βλέπει	οὐκ	ἔστιν
G3588	For	by hope	we are saved	by hope	but	seeth	not	is
	G1063	G1680	G4982	G1680	G1161	G991	G3756	G2076

ἐλπίς·	ὃ	γὰρ	βλέπει	τίς	τί	καί	ἐλπίζει
by hope	what	For	seeth	a man	why	yet	doth he
G1680	G3739	G1063	G991	G5100	G5101	G2532	G1679

Additional Cross-References

Hebrews 11:1 (Hope): Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

2 Corinthians 5:7 (Parallel theme): (For we walk by faith, not by sight:)

2 Corinthians 4:18 (Parallel theme): While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.

1 Peter 1:21 (Hope): Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God.

1 Thessalonians 5:8 (Salvation): But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation.

1 Peter 1:3 (Hope): Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

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

Romans 5:2 (Hope): By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

Romans 15:13 (Hope): Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.

Colossians 1:27 (Hope): To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory: