

Romans 8:31

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?

Analysis

What shall we then say to these things? (Τί οὖν ἐροῦμεν πρὸς ταῦτα)—Taûta ("these things") references vv. 1-30, especially the golden chain of redemption. Paul asks rhetorically: given God's sovereign, comprehensive salvation—foreknowledge, predestination, calling, justification, glorification—what conclusion must we draw? This introduces the triumphant finale (vv. 31-39), application of salvation's certainties.

If God be for us, who can be against us? (εἰ οὖν θεὸς ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν, τίς καθ' ἡμῶν)—Ei assumes the condition is true: God is for us (demonstrated in vv. 1-30). Hypὲr hēmōn ("for us") means on our side, advocating for us. Tís kath' hēmōn ("who against us") is rhetorical—the expected answer is "no one who can prevail." Enemies exist (Satan, persecutors, sin), but none can overcome God's electing love. This isn't triumphalism denying suffering (vv. 17-18, 35-36) but confidence that no suffering can separate from God or thwart His purposes.

Historical Context

This verse sustained martyrs facing Rome's power. Stephen, facing stoning, saw Christ standing at God's right hand (Acts 7:55-56). Polycarp, burned alive (AD 155), refused to deny Christ: "Eighty-six years I have served Him, and He has done me no wrong. How can I blaspheme my King who saved me?" God's advocacy guarantees victory despite temporal defeat.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How does knowing "God is for us" sustain faith when circumstances suggest He is absent or opposed?
2. Who or what feels "against us" in your life—how does this verse provide perspective?
3. How does God being "for us" relate to the sufferings mentioned in vv. 17-18 and 35-36?

Interlinear Text

τίς	οὖν	έροῦμεν	πρὸς	ταῦτα	εἰ	ό	θεὸς	ὑπὲρ
What	then	say	to	these things	If	G3588	God	be for
G5101	G3767	G2046	G4314	G5023	G1487		G2316	G5228
ἡμῶν	τίς	καθ'	ἡμῶν					
us	What	can be against	us					
G2257	G5101	G2596	G2257					

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 118:6 (Parallel theme): The LORD is on my side; I will not fear: what can man do unto me?

Jeremiah 1:19 (Parallel theme): And they shall fight against thee; but they shall not prevail against thee; for I am with thee, saith the LORD, to deliver thee.

1 John 4:4 (References God): Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.

Psalms 56:11 (References God): In God have I put my trust: I will not be afraid what man can do unto me.

Isaiah 54:17 (Parallel theme): No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and their righteousness is of me, saith the LORD.

Jeremiah 20:11 (Parallel theme): But the LORD is with me as a mighty terrible one: therefore my persecutors shall stumble, and they shall not prevail: they shall be greatly ashamed; for they shall not prosper: their everlasting confusion shall never be forgotten.

Psalms 56:4 (References God): In God I will praise his word, in God I have put my trust; I will not fear what flesh can do unto me.

Numbers 14:9 (Parallel theme): Only rebel not ye against the LORD, neither fear ye the people of the land; for they are bread for us: their defence is departed from them, and the LORD is with us: fear them not.

Genesis 15:1 (Parallel theme): After these things the word of the LORD came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward.

Deuteronomy 33:29 (Parallel theme): Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the LORD, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency! and thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee; and thou shalt tread upon their high places.