

Romans 8:36

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.

Analysis

As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter (kathòs gégraptai hóti Hénekén sou thanathoúmēta hólēn tēn hēmérān, elogísthēmen hōs próbata sphagēs)—Paul quotes Psalm 44:22, where Israel laments persecution despite covenant faithfulness. Hénekén sou ("for your sake") indicates suffering because of allegiance to God. Thanathoúmēta hólēn tēn hēmérān ("killed all the day long") uses present tense: continuous, ongoing threat of death.

Elogísthēmen hōs próbata sphagēs ("accounted as sheep for slaughter")—believers are viewed by enemies as expendable, destined for killing like sheep led to butcher. Yet this echoes Isaiah 53:7: Christ as the suffering Servant, "led as a lamb to the slaughter." Union with Christ means sharing His sufferings (Philippians 3:10; Colossians 1:24). Far from disproving God's love, suffering confirms our identification with Christ.

Historical Context

Psalm 44 was used in synagogue liturgy during persecution. Paul applies it to Christian experience under Roman suspicion and Jewish hostility. The early church embraced martyrdom as participation in Christ's sufferings. Martyrs sang hymns and quoted Romans 8 as they faced lions, crosses, and flames.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How does suffering "for Christ's sake" differ from general human suffering or self-inflicted hardship?
2. What does being "accounted as sheep for slaughter" reveal about how the world views faithful Christians?
3. How does this verse prepare believers for potential martyrdom while living in relative peace?

Interlinear Text

καθὼς γέγραπται ὅτι Ἐνεκά σοῦ θανατούμεθα ὅλην
As it is written sake For thy we are killed all
G2531 G1125 G1752 G4675 G2289 G3650

τὴν ἡμέραν ἐλογίσθημεν ὡς πρόβατα σφαγῆς
the day long we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter
G3588 G2250 G3049 G5613 G4263 G4967

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 44:22 (Parallel theme): Yea, for thy sake are we killed all the day long; we are counted as sheep for the slaughter.

Isaiah 53:7 (Parallel theme): He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.

1 Corinthians 15:30 (Parallel theme): And why stand we in jeopardy every hour?

1 Corinthians 4:9 (Parallel theme): For I think that God hath set forth us the apostles last, as it were appointed to death: for we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men.

Acts 8:32 (Parallel theme): The place of the scripture which he read was this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth:

Jeremiah 51:40 (Parallel theme): I will bring them down like lambs to the slaughter, like rams with he goats.

Jeremiah 12:3 (Parallel theme): But thou, O LORD, knowest me: thou hast seen me, and tried mine heart toward thee: pull them out like sheep for the slaughter, and prepare them for the day of slaughter.

Acts 20:24 (Parallel theme): But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.

Jeremiah 11:19 (Parallel theme): But I was like a lamb or an ox that is brought to the slaughter; and I knew not that they had devised devices against me, saying, Let us destroy the tree with the fruit thereof, and let us cut him off from the land of the living, that his name may be no more remembered.

John 16:2 (Parallel theme): They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service.