

Romans 9:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

That I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart.

Analysis

Great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart (λύπη μεγαλὴ καὶ ἀδιάλειπτος ὡδύνη, λύπη μεγάλη καὶ ἀδιάλειπτος ὡδύνη)—the language intensifies: 'great grief' and 'unceasing anguish.' The adjective adialeiptos means 'without intermission,' the same word Paul uses for unceasing prayer (1 Thessalonians 5:17). His sorrow over Israel is as constant as his devotion to Christ.

This verse reveals the pastoral heart of election theology. Far from producing cold determinism, God's sovereignty moved Paul to unrelenting intercession and evangelistic zeal (10:1). The doctrine that makes God most sovereign makes his servants most passionate for the lost. True Calvinism weeps.

Historical Context

Paul's sorrow mirrors Moses (Exodus 32:32) and anticipates Christ's weeping over Jerusalem (Luke 19:41). First-century Judaism saw Israel's covenant status as unshakeable—their mass rejection of Messiah created theological crisis requiring chapters 9-11 to resolve.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. How does Paul's 'continual sorrow' challenge caricatures of Reformed theology as emotionally cold?
2. What causes you unceasing grief in your spiritual life or for others?
3. How can belief in God's sovereignty intensify (rather than diminish) evangelistic passion?

Interlinear Text

ὅτι	λύπη	μοί	ἐστιν	μεγάλη	καὶ	ἀδιάλειπτος	όδύνη
That	heaviness	I	have	great	and	continual	sorrow in
G3754	G3077	G3427	G2076	G3173	G2532	G88	G3601
τῇ	καρδίᾳ	μου					
G3588	heart	my					
	G2588	G3450					

Additional Cross-References

Philippians 3:18 (Parallel theme): (For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ:

Psalms 119:136 (Parallel theme): Rivers of waters run down mine eyes, because they keep not thy law.

Jeremiah 13:17 (Parallel theme): But if ye will not hear it, my soul shall weep in secret places for your pride; and mine eye shall weep sore, and run down with tears, because the LORD'S flock is carried away captive.

Lamentations 3:51 (Parallel theme): Mine eye affecteth mine heart because of all the daughters of my city.

Jeremiah 9:1 (Parallel theme): Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people!

Ezekiel 9:4 (Parallel theme): And the LORD said unto him, Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof.

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