

Titus 1:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began;

Analysis

In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised—The phrase ὁ ἄψευδής θεός (ho apseudes theos, the unlying God) appears only here in Scripture, emphasizing God's ontological truthfulness. His very nature makes deception impossible (cf. Hebrews 6:18, Numbers 23:19). This isn't mere reliability but metaphysical incapacity for falsehood.

Before the world began (πρὸ χρόνων αἰωνίων, pro chronon aionion)—literally "before eternal times." God's promise of eternal life existed in the eternal divine counsel before creation, before human fall, before any human merit or demerit. Election and grace are pre-temporal realities, demolishing any works-righteousness. This parallels Ephesians 1:4's "before the foundation of the world."

Historical Context

Paul writes to counter the Cretan false teachers who promoted "Jewish fables" and "commandments of men" (1:14). Against their legalistic innovations, Paul grounds salvation in God's pre-creation promise, making human works irrelevant to justification while essential to sanctification (see 2:14, 3:8, 3:14).

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. How does God's promise existing before creation affect your understanding of salvation's basis—your performance or His eternal decree?
2. What anxieties about your salvation stem from viewing it as contingent rather than pre-determined by the "unlying God"?
3. How should pre-temporal election affect your evangelism and prayer for the lost?

Interlinear Text

ἐπ'	ἐλπίδι	ζωῆς	αἰώνιων	ἣν	ἐπηγγείλατο	ὁ
In	hope	life	of eternal	which	promised	G3588
G1909	G1680	G2222	G166	G3739	G1861	
ἄψευδης	θεὸς	πρὸ	χρόνων	αἰώνιων		
that cannot lie	God	before	began	of eternal		
G893	G2316	G4253	G5550	G166		

Additional Cross-References

Numbers 23:19 (References God): God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?

1 John 2:25 (Covenant): And this is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life.

2 Timothy 1:9 (Parallel theme): Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,

2 Timothy 1:1 (Covenant): Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, according to the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus,

Titus 3:7 (Eternal Life): That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

Titus 2:13 (Hope): Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;

Jude 1:21 (Eternal Life): Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.

2 Timothy 2:13 (Parallel theme): If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself.

1 John 5:20 (Eternal Life): And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life.

1 Samuel 15:29 (Parallel theme): And also the Strength of Israel will not lie nor repent: for he is not a man, that he should repent.