

2 Cor 1: 8-11

vs 8

~~Θλίψεις~~

Θλίψεις - persecution, distress, affliction, make narrow

ὑπερβολῆν - exceedingly, beyond measure, superlatively.

ἐβαρύνθημεν = αορ, pass of βαρέω, weight, load, burden

ἔξαπορηθῆναι - αορ. pass. inf of ἔξαπορέομαι.
to be w/out a way out, to be in utter despair.
the inf is used to express result - "so that we were utterly w/out way of escape."
- "I am at my wits end, I despair."

① before - the nature of the trouble is uncertain. The following words seem to indicate inward distress rather than trouble from w/out.
were pressed out of measure = "were weighted down" βάρος - burden.

We despaired - only here + 4:18. From ἔξ, "out + out", + ἀπορέω - "to be w/out a way of escape" cf - Mark 6:20 = to be in ~~the~~ circumstances where one cannot find a way out. → "perplexed"

(Vincent)

Vs 8, civit

2 Cor - this is what it is ⁽²⁾
really like to be a servant - more
grief than glory

② "beyond measure, above strength we were weighed down." It is being overloaded w/ a heavy burden - "pressed out of shape" suggests pressed out of shape. Beyond measure means that the load was in itself an excessive one; above strength, that is was more than they could sustain. They really saw it would kill them. vterly despaired (strong surprised verb)

What is the affliction? - more probably he refers to the crushing news which had been brought to him in Asia ~~and~~ state of things in Corinth, especially as regards rebellion against the Apostle's ~~own~~ authority & repudiation of his teaching, to the highly sensitive & tenderhearted missionary, this revolt of the church which he had founded is one of the most important centers of the world, & which he had loved so well, was overwhelming. He did not expect, & perhaps he hardly wished, to survive it. Paul lets them know how deeply their conduct affected him. This is a part of the strong appeal he makes to them - for it proves his intense interest & affection, & may convince them of the gravity of their conduct.

(Cambridge - Plummer)

③ Paul proceeds to describe the particular ~~affliction~~ affliction in which he received divine comfort + empowering.

That it had occurred recently — certainly after I Cor. was written — seems ~~not~~ indicated by the vividness of Paul's description.

Evidently they were already aware of Paul's trial — hence the vague reference to "the affliction" — He now informs his converts of its overwhelming + unique character.

He had been so "utterly, unbearably crushed" that he was forced to ~~renounce~~ renounce all hopes of survival. The rare word "despaired" implies the total unavailability of an exit (peris, passage) from oppressive circumstances. (Expositors Bible Commentary)

④ weighed down exceedingly like a beast of burden crushed beneath too heavy a load + beyond his powers of endurance — (Zyndale)

⑤ Following the general praise of God for continued help + comfort (vs 3-7), Paul now recalls his ~~recent~~ recent ~~remarkable~~ remarkable deliverance from death.

⑤ Could: The Cor., it would seem, knew of it, for he does not tell them any details, but they did not know how serious a danger it had been.

In Paul's letters the expression we do not want you to be ignorant occurs 6 times to introduce a point he wishes to emphasize. — to Paul, who had faced danger often, it was unusually serious, as he indicated by the double expression utterly, unbearably crushed.

→ Exposition: It was not Paul's way to make much of his physical sufferings — only once, when he was defending his right to speak — Gal 6:17.

Whatever it was, the affliction was so deep — the defection of the Cor. Church springing on top of perhaps a physical experience — that it seemed like the sentence of death — a blow from which he could not recover.

Trust in G



Sentence of death may mean such loss of ~~the~~ heart & hope that we are brought to a despair in which there is nothing between us & darkness except G's mercy. It may therefore be a saving experience, awakening that need of G which he is waiting to answer, & w/out which he cannot

V O
⑤ don't deliver us. Paul's despair & helplessness forced him to rely completely upon O (Father, Bible)

⑥ - The Corinthians were ~~not~~ ignorant not of the character, but of the intensity of Paul's affliction. Paul writes to tell them not what it was, but how it had oppressed him.

- it had happened in ~~recent~~ recent months.
- it is classified as among "the sufferings of X" which abounded to Paul. V.5
- it may have been agonizing anxiety concerning the state of the Corin Church which incapacitated Paul. - cf 2:13; 7:5.
- may be associated w/ "thorn" 12:7.
- it was an experience that weighed him down to excess & beyond the normal power of endurance - no possibility of survival.

- And this terrible affliction, though experienced in Asia, was in some way endured on behalf of the Corinthians (v.6) It was of a piece w/ his suffering as their chosen Apostle. This was something they had failed to appreciate because of the narrow heartedness induced by the false apostles in their midst. (The fake apostles surely didn't suffer as Paul did. Could they

⑥ Contd -

be a sign of a true pastor? }
(NJC)

⑦ The apostle confirms from the facts of his recent history, what he said of his afflictions - pressed, burdened: the illusion is to a wearied animal that sinks in deep despair under a burden beyond its strength.

Out of measure, above strength: If these separated, the former of these phrases refers to the character of his afflictions in themselves, they were excessive - & the latter, expresses their relation to his ability to bear them.

Absolutely, they were too great, relatively, they were above his strength.

(Hodge)

⑧ From what has been said in vns 3-7, & especially from the proposition in v. 6a, it follows that Paul's sufferings should be a source of strength to his converts. He had no motive for concealing them, as if they were tokens of failure & defeat.

< He actually admits he lost all hope! Here would be the bit about weakness: they're not doing any better than you are >

(Hodge)

⑧ Control

- Beyond measure καθ' ὑπερβολήν: the ~~more~~ noun + its cognates are particularly characteristic of 2 Corin - 1:8; 3:10; 4:7; 9:14; 11:23; 12:7; & the rest of the N.T. 5 times in all.
(Barrett)

⑨ - the connective γάρ, "for", "then," as indicating a connection w/ vs 3-7 & 8-11 - The "suffering" & "encouragement" (3-7) point forward to some specific occasion, referred to in 8-11 - Paul's bitter experience of ὀδύς in Asia affected this writing of this letter.

- Ignorant, brethren - Paul uses this idiomatic expression as a way of calling attention to the second reason for his thanks to G. He sets the deliverance he has known against the background of "the affliction...."

The text in v.8,9 suggests an experience that drove Paul to the edge of despair.

"Extreme, excessive, burdened." Such pleonasm ~~point~~ point to the intensity of the experience Paul endured & has in his vivid recall.
(Ward)

V. 9

① Sentence of Death - ἀπόκριμα - answer - occurs
only here in N.T. "when I have asked myself what
would be the issue of this struggle, the
answer has been, "death." (Vincent)

② But - ἀλλά - introduces not an opposition, but
confirms what precedes: "Yea; 'Nay'
w/ the perfect, "have got," which vividly recalls
the situation & prolongs it into the present.
"Raises the dead" - Paul introduces a doctrine
that had been impugned at Corinth.
(Cambridge)

③ In his own mind Paul anticipated death.
In this he did wrong; he did not reckon on
G. Here, as in v. 4, he sees a divine purpose
working itself out in this apparently futile
suffering. ~~It~~

In this hard way G was teaching Paul to
rely ---

Raises the dead - Two ideas: G can deliver,
but if death does come, G is still master (even
death doesn't fling us out of G's reach.
(2 B)

⊙ In the wake of this trying experience that
was tantamount to death there followed another
experience that was tantamount to

4) Cml'd

to resurrection.

All this undermined Paul's self-confidence (1 Cor 15:31; 2 Cor 12:9,10) + compelled his utter dependence on \mathcal{G} who raises the dead.

< This was a very revealing experience for Paul - of Nelson M-Kunze's self-confidence - never too old to learn. >
(EBC)

5) Whatever the nature of the trouble - when Paul asked himself at the time what the issue would be, the "answer" he found present in his mind was "death".

But when he looked back he knew that he had been allowed in the providence of \mathcal{G} to go through that terrible experience, that he might be brought to a full recognition of his own utter utter helplessness + abandoning all self confidence.

(Lyndale Lyndale)

6) The purpose of this experience has already been stated in V. 6

We ourselves (This strengthens the ~~reflective~~ reflexive that is about to be used) have received (or, "accepted" - fighting against it no more).

→ The next clause is introduced by $\epsilon\upsilon\alpha$, denoting purpose. . . . This took place in order

① Cont'd.

we should trust no more in ourselves
 (The perfect subjunctive, ΠΕΠΟΙΘΩΤΕΣ ὢΜΕΙΣ, w/ the
 negative, suggests the descontinuance of
 an existing condition).

Death marks the frontier of ~~man's~~ human
 existence. W/in the area thus defined man
 has, or at least appears to have, a certain
 scope of self-confidence; but to approach
 the frontier, as Paul had done, is to recognize
 not merely the limits but the ultimate
self-deception of such self-confidence.

It is because this epistle as a
 whole moves on this boundary line between
 life + death that it contains so much
 persistent questioning of all human security,
 + so is so uncomfortable a document.

If, however, it dismisses all human comfort,
 security, + confidence; it is in the interests of
 the only true comfort, security + confidence.

Physical illness, the shadow of death, the
 failure of his work in Corinth, were among
 the causes that led to the breaking down
 of a man who, if any had ground for
 confidence in the flesh, had more (Phil 3:4; cf 2 Cor
 11:22) [I believe this is a fallacy Paul had all
 his life]

① Con'd

The Church at Cor, like many another since, thought it could by-pass affliction on the way to comfort; the theme of the epistle is that this is impossible (cf Acts 14:22).

Xian discipline means, for an apostle & for the church as a whole, a progressive weakening of man's instinctive self-confidence, & of the self-despair to which this leads, & the growth of radical faith confidence in God.
(Parrett)

① The deliverance God had given him had been tantamount to a resurrection from the dead: it was not merely from illness or violence but from so great a death that he had been ~~snatched~~ snatched.

Great lesson: trust in God, not self. This is a theme that provides a key to the whole epistle.

2:13; 4:7f; 4:10f; 4:16; 5:1ff; 5:18; 12:7; 13:4.

It is a theme that points to the unity of the epistle & links the concluding to the opening chapters.

Chrysostom: notwithstanding that the resurrection is a future event, he shows that it happens everyday; for when God raises up again a man whose life is despaired of, & who has been brought to the very gates of hell, He shows nothing other than

A Cont'd.

resurrection, snatching from the very jaws of death the one who had fallen into them.

Paraphrase: "In Asia I delivered me from so great a death, & He will ~~deliver~~ continue to deliver ~~me~~ me in my present ~~and~~ circumstances; I am confident, moreover, that He will also still deliver me through all that lies ahead."

(N 9 C)

⑧ Sentence - Signify, answer, response. When he put to himself the question, whether life or death was to be the issue of his conflicts, the answer was, Death! In other words, he did not expect to escape by his life.

I brought him into these straits in order that he might not trust in himself, but in I who raises the dead. These 2 things are so connected that the former is the necessary condition of the latter. There is no such thing as implicit confidence or reliance on I, until we renounce all confidence in ourselves. When Paul was convinced that no wisdom or efforts of his own could deliver him from death, then he was forced to rely on the power of I.

No man until he is tried knows how

⑧ Cont'd

essential the omnipotence of \mathcal{G} is as a ground of confidence to his people.
(Hodge)

⑨ \mathcal{G} who raises the dead - Resurrection of $X = \text{Paul}$ relates this demonstration of divine grace to his own circumstances of need.
(Word)

Verse 10

① though he had been delivered from the instant & fearful death w/ which he was threatened, the danger was not over. The machinations of his enemies, followed him wherever he went. He therefore says that \mathcal{G} had not only delivered him, but that he continued to deliver him. He was still beset w/ danger. He was, however, confident for the future.
(Hodge)

② Confidence in \mathcal{G} grows thru experience of his power to deliver.
(Barrett)

③ but of so terrible a death, placed first w/ emphasis "Will still deliver" intimates that he feels that the peril is not entirely over, or that it may return. (Cambridge)

④ - The hard learned lesson give Paul not only joy, but hope. (2B)

Verse 11

① Paul's deliverance came from the O of all comfort (v.3) in answer to the prayers of many & it would prompt still further thanksgiving. The genitive absolute κοινωνουμένων kai κοινωνούντων may be conditional in sense: "provided you too work together w/ us." The bestowal of divine favor is intimately related to the offering of human prayer (Phil 1:19; Philem 22) and the verb implies that prayer is cooperative work (Rom 15:30), expressive of the interdependence of the members of X's body (1 Cor 12:25, 26). (EBC)

V. 11, Cont'd

συνυπουργούντων ~~καί~~ pres act part of
συνυπουργέω, to work together, to cooperate, the
word is

- Souta: I cooperate in a subordinate capacity,
 - Vine: denotes to help together, join in helping,
to serve w/ anyone as an underworker.
- syn - w/; hupourgeo, to serve; hupo, under;
ergon, work.

② - Prayer, supplication, often used of intercession,
Although he has just told them that their
former conduct nearly cost him his life, now
that he has received the good news brought by
Titus he feels sure of their cooperation, & his
future rescue from similar danger depends
upon their intercessions cooperating w/ his
own prayer for deliverance.
(Cambridge)

πρόσωπων - The human face, presence, appearance,
outward aspect.

③④ If Paul can minister comfort to his people, his
people may also minister to him in that
their prayers secure O's gift for him, & that
they may join in the chorus of thanksgiving
for what O gives & does.
If the prayer of one individual for many
is heard in such a way, much more will the

to act thru the prayers of his people.

③ Cmt'd

will ~~the~~ prayer of many for one individual.

Intercession helps (in a way Paul does stop to explain) to set in motion ~~the~~ divine act, & this ~~is~~ turn leads to thanksgiving.

- ΠΡΟΣΩΠΩΝ - ~~per~~ perhaps in primary sense of "free" - many faces returned to God in prayer; or he may think of it in the sense of ~~drama~~ drama - there are many different characters in the play, but all cooperate to the same end & join in the same thanksgiving when it is achieved.

Translation: "If you too cooperate on our behalf by your prayer in order that from many people thanks may be rendered to God on our behalf for the gift of grace bestowed upon us through the agency of many."

(Barrett)

④ The picturesque verb (συνπροσπυδούτων, lit. "working together to support, participate") recalls the part played by the intercessions of Paul's friends who stood w/ him in his apostolic mission (2 Thess 3:1-3). The value Paul set upon these prayer & supplication is seen in the consequence: many people will have occasion to give

④ Cont'd

to give thanks to O for the "~~favor~~"
"favor" freely granted by O in answer
to "the many," i.e., the loyal Christians,
who have prayed for Paul.

— Paul's Verb in v. 11 is remarkably expressive
to remind us that prayer is both a work,
Col 4:12,13, + a privilege to be in partnership
w/ those in need.

(Word)

⑤ The experience had the effect, encouraging
him to rely more than ever on O. Here was
incentive enough both for renewed hope
in O ~~and~~ + also for redoubled ~~efforts~~
prayer for Paul on the part of his friends,
w/ the result that thanksgiving to O
would increase because of the further
Blessings granted in answer to many
prayers.

Whatever Paul's affliction, it left a
permanent mark on his mind. 2 2 Cor the
effect of this experience is specially
evident in 4:7-5:10.

(New Century Bible
Bruce)

① There is no limit to the power of intercessory prayer -

When such prayer is answered, it results in an ~~outburst~~ outburst of praise & thanksgiving which redounds greatly to O's glory.

Trans: "... that there may be a sea of upturned faces as a widespread thanksgiving goes up to O on our behalf for the gracious act which He has done for us."
(Zyndale)

① Though the Apostle's hope is firmly fixed on O, yet he also relies on the prayers of his fellow-believers on his behalf, especially of those to whom, like the Corinthians, his ministry of the Gospel has closely linked him. Their supplications play an important role in his expectation of deliverance.

In prayer, human impotence casts itself at the feet of divine omnipotence. Thus the duty of prayer is not a modification of O's power, but a glorification of it.

Supplicatory

Supplicatory prayer not only expresses but also promotes the communion of the saints; the end to which it leads

⑦ Cont'd

is joy & thanksgiving because of the Heavenly Father's goodness in hearing & answering the petition of His children
(N 9 C)

⑧ Paul's confidence in his safety for the future was not founded simply on the experience of God's past mercy, but also on the prayers of His people in his behalf.

The design of God is thus uniting His people in praying for each other when in affliction or danger, is that the deliverance may be a matter of common gratulation & praise.

Thus all hearts are drawn out to God & His people's fellowship is promoted.

(Hodge)

⑨ The Christian strategy by which trouble may be prevented from leaving a painful scar is to pray that it may be turned into a blessing. When once it comes, it is irrevocable. We cannot elude it by turning our minds from it; but God can so redeem it that it becomes a memory from which we have no desire to escape. ~~Paul is convinced~~

(2 B)

Additional Notes on W 8-11

v. 8

① Having spoken in general terms of the Divine ~~comfort~~ comfort in times of trouble, he goes on to mention his own particular case.

He was weighed down beyond his power.

"beyond power" a phrase he never uses elsewhere & which is specially remarkable from the pen of one who always gloried in divine power granted him - Phil 4:13

v. 10

↳ out of so great a death = ἐκ indicates emergence from a danger to which one has actually been exposed. (O let him get into it - wounded but not killed - Jer 45:5)

v. 11 δέησις is prayer for a particular object, as contrasted by the more general προσευχή.

(EGT)

② But the divine purpose (him) of such deep despair, Paul learned, was "to prove to him his own helplessness."

- "~~Given~~ Given Paul's character the realization of his total dependence upon I was perhaps the most difficult supernatural truth he ever had to assimilate."

(Beacon)

(3) When we looked about us, when we face our circumstances, & asked ourselves whether death or life was to be the end of this, we could only answer death.

* Notice the perfect ἐσχηκόμεν - we had this experience, & its fruit - a newer & deeper faith in God - we have it still. It is a permanent possession in this happy form.

Paul had a divine gift for interpreting experience & reading its lesson -

It is natural, he implies, for us to trust in ourselves. It is so natural, & so confirmed by the habits of a lifetime, that no ordinary difficulties avail to break us of it.

It takes all God can do to root up our self-confidence. He must reduce us to despair; He must bring us to such extremity that the one voice that cries to us whenever we look around for help is, death, death, death. It is out of this despair that the superhuman hope is born. It is out of this abject hopelessness that the soul learns to look up w/ new trust to God.

and
and — we come to the limit of our resources... — there were blessings so valuable that the angel of God did not shrink from reducing Paul to despair that he might be compelled to grasp.