Open English Translation of the Bible

A letter to the believers in
Laodikeia

Introduction

This short letter to the believers in Laodikeia (Laodicea) is written in Paulos's (Paul's) name. It echoes several passages from his letters, especially Philippians. It encourages its readers to hold onto the good message, remain united, and put what they've learnt into practice.

The letter survives in Latin manuscripts and later translations. Although Colossians 4:16 mentions a letter from Laodikeia, this text isn't generally regarded as that lost letter or as a genuine letter by Paulos. It's included here as part of the OET's wider collection of additional books.

This draft adapts M. R. James's 1924 English translation into current English, using OET names and terminology. The Latin text is difficult in places, especially verse 5, where the intended meaning isn't certain.

Main components of this letter

Greeting and encouragement *1:1-5*
Imprisonment, hope, and unity *1:6-9*
Instructions and final greetings *1:10-20*

Lighter type marks additions. Underscores join parts of a single source word.
Struck words are untranslated. The ◘ sign marks a verse with no text.
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Readers' Version

Greeting and encouragement

1:1 This letter is from Paulos (Paul), a missionary appointed by Yeshua (Jesus) the messiah, not by people or through any human authority. I'm writing to the fellow believers in Laodikeia (Laodicea). 2 May you all experience grace and peace from God the father and the master Yeshua the messiah.

3 I thank the messiah whenever I pray, because you remain in him and keep doing his work as you wait for the promise to be fulfilled on judgement day. 4 Don't let the empty talk of people who slip in among you unsettle you. They're trying to turn you away from the truth of the good message that I announce. 5 Now God will enable those who are associated with me to keep serving the truth of the good message, helping it spread, doing good, and working towards salvation—eternal life.[1]

Imprisonment, hope, and unity

6 Everyone can now see the chains I wear because of the messiah, and I rejoice and am glad about them. 7 This will lead to my lasting salvation through your prayers and the help of the holy spirit, whether I live or die. 8 For me, living means living in the messiah, and dying is joy. 9 In his mercy, he'll do the same in you, so that you share the same love and are united in your thinking.

Put what you've learnt into practice

10 So, dear friends, hold onto what you heard when I was with you. Put it into practice with reverence for God, and you'll have eternal life, 11 because it's God who's at work in you. 12 Whatever you do, do it without hesitation.

13 Finally, dear friends, rejoice in the messiah, and watch out for people who are greedy for dishonest gain. 14 Bring all your requests openly before God, and remain firm in the messiah's way of thinking. 15 Do what's wholesome, true, pure, right, and worthy of love. 16 Keep what you've heard and received firmly in your hearts, 17 and you'll have peace.

Final greetings

18 The believers here send their greetings. 19 May the grace of the master Yeshua be with your spirit.

20 Have this letter read to the people in Kolossai (Colossae), and have their letter read to you.

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1 RV 1:5 · Note The Latin wording of this verse is difficult. This draft follows James's interpretation of its general sense; the precise meaning needs further review.