

1 Chronicles 29:15

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For we are strangers before thee, and sojourners, as were all our fathers: our days on the earth are as a shadow, and there is none abiding.

Analysis

David's humble confession: 'For we are strangers before thee, and sojourners, as were all our fathers: our days on the earth are as a shadow, and there is none abiding.' This echoes Abraham's self-description (Genesis 23:4) and anticipates Hebrews 11:13-16. The terms 'strangers' (gerim) and 'sojourners' (toshavim) describe temporary residents without permanent inheritance. Life's brevity - 'as a shadow' - emphasizes the transient nature of earthly existence. 'None abiding' (ein miqveh) means no enduring hope apart from God. This perspective relativizes earthly achievements (even temple building) and points to the eternal inheritance in Christ. It teaches living as aliens and exiles who long for heavenly country.

Historical Context

Spoken during temple dedication preparations (c. 971 BCE), this confession demonstrates mature wisdom - even while accomplishing Israel's greatest project, David recognized life's brevity and dependence on God's eternal purposes beyond earthly achievements.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. How does viewing yourself as a 'stranger and sojourner' affect your priorities and attachment to earthly possessions?
2. What 'enduring hope' beyond this shadow-life anchors your identity and purpose?

Interlinear Text

כִּי	גֵרִים	אֲנִי חֵנוּ	לִפְנֵי יְיָ	וְתוֹשָׁבִים	כָּכָל
H3588	For we are strangers	H587	before	thee and sojourners	H3605
	H1616		H6440	H8453	
	אֲבֹתַי יָנוּ	כַּצֵּל לִי	יָמֵי יָנוּ	עַל	הָאָרֶץ
	as were all our fathers	are as a shadow	our days	H5921	on the earth
	H1	H6738	H3117	H776	H369
	מִקְוָה:				
	and there is none abiding				
	H4723				

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 102:11 (Parallel theme): My days are like a shadow that declineth; and I am withered like grass.

Leviticus 25:23 (Parallel theme): The land shall not be sold for ever: for the land is mine; for ye are strangers and sojourners with me.

Psalms 144:4 (Parallel theme): Man is like to vanity: his days are as a shadow that passeth away.

Psalms 90:9 (Parallel theme): For all our days are passed away in thy wrath: we spend our years as a tale that is told.

Psalms 39:12 (Parallel theme): Hear my prayer, O LORD, and give ear unto my cry; hold not thy peace at my tears: for I am a stranger with thee, and a sojourner, as all my fathers were.

Job 14:2 (Parallel theme): He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not.

James 4:14 (Parallel theme): Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.

Psalms 119:19 (Parallel theme): I am a stranger in the earth: hide not thy commandments from me.

Ecclesiastes 6:12 (Parallel theme): For who knoweth what is good for man in this life, all the days of his vain life which he spendeth as a shadow? for who can tell a man what shall be after him under the sun?

Genesis 47:9 (Parallel theme): And Jacob said unto Pharaoh, The days of the years of my pilgrimage are an hundred and thirty years: few and evil have the days of the years of my life been, and have not attained unto the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage.