

Acts 8:33

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

In his humiliation his judgment was taken away: and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth.

Analysis

In his humiliation his judgment was taken away: and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth. The prophecy continues describing the Suffering Servant's unjust treatment and mysterious death.

In his humiliation his judgment was taken away indicates denial of justice. Jesus' trials violated legal procedures—false witnesses, coerced confession attempts, nighttime proceedings. The phrase captures double injustice: innocent condemned while guilty go free. This miscarriage of justice served divine purpose—Christ bore judgment we deserved.

Who shall declare his generation? asks profound question. Some interpret generation as offspring/descendants—who will recount His story if He dies childless? Others see it meaning His contemporaries—who among His generation truly understood Him? Both capture the mystery: the Life-giver dies; the Eternal One has life taken from earth.

His life is taken from the earth seems final—death appeared victorious. Yet this apparent defeat accomplished salvation. Reformed theology emphasizes Christ's death as penal substitution—bearing God's wrath against sin. His 'life taken' provided life for His people. The prophecy's ambiguity about resurrection leaves room for Philip's explanation of Easter morning.

Historical Context

The prophecy's fulfillment occurred in Jesus' trials before Sanhedrin, Pilate, and Herod—all marked by injustice and procedural violations. Isaiah wrote this 700 years before crucifixion, yet details match Gospel accounts precisely.

The question about His generation gained poignancy after the crucifixion. His disciples fled; religious leaders celebrated; Romans considered it another execution. Yet within days, resurrection vindicated the condemned One. Philip, explaining this text around 35-37 CE, could recount recent events fulfilling ancient prophecy—powerful apologetic for Christianity's truth claims. The Ethiopian eunuch hearing this explanation receives both prophecy and fulfillment together.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How does Christ's unjust treatment demonstrate both human sinfulness and divine redemptive purpose?
2. What does 'judgment taken away' teach about legal righteousness versus substitutionary atonement?
3. In what ways does the question 'who shall declare his generation?' highlight the mystery of incarnation and crucifixion?
4. How should believers respond when experiencing denial of justice, in light of Christ's example?
5. What role does the paradox of life being 'taken from earth' play in understanding atonement?

Interlinear Text

Ἐν τῇ ταπεινώσει αὐτοῦ ἡ κρίσις αὐτοῦ αἱρεται
In G3588 **humiliation** his G3588 **judgment** his G846 **is taken**
G1722 G5014 G846 G2920 G846 G142

τὴν δὲ γενεὰν αὐτοῦ τίς διηγήσεται ὅτι αἱρεται ἀπὸ^{τὸν}
G3588 **and** **generation** his **who** **shall declare** for **is taken** **from**
G1161 G1074 G846 G5101 G1334 G3754 G142 G575

τῆς γῆς ἡ ζωὴ αὐτοῦ
G3588 **the earth** G3588 **life** his
G1093 G2222 G846

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 53:12 (Parallel theme): Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

Isaiah 53:8 (Judgment): He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken.

Zechariah 13:7 (Parallel theme): Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the LORD of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered: and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones.