

# Isaiah 38:18

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For the grave cannot praise thee, death can not celebrate thee: they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth.

## Analysis

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The statement "the grave cannot praise thee, death can not celebrate thee" reflects Old Testament understanding that conscious worship belongs to earthly life. "They that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth" shows that death ends active faith and testimony. This perspective makes earthly life precious as opportunity for worship and witness. The theology is pre-resurrection, lacking New Testament clarity about eternal life, but rightly values present opportunity to glorify God.

## Historical Context

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This theology appears throughout Old Testament wisdom literature (Psalm 6:5; 88:10-12). Life was precious partly because it offered opportunity to praise God.

## Related Passages

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**1 Corinthians 13:4** — Characteristics of love

**John 15:13** — Greatest form of love

## Study Questions

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1. How does our limited time on earth make each day precious for worship and witness?

2. What does the urgency of praising God while we can teach about prioritizing worship?
3. How does New Testament resurrection hope transform while still affirming life's preciousness?

## Interlinear Text

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|               |              |              |                   |           |             |             |
|---------------|--------------|--------------|-------------------|-----------|-------------|-------------|
| לֹא           | יָפְלַל בָּ  | מֵת          | תֹּאֵד בָּ        | שָׁא וְלָ | לְאָכִ      | בָּ         |
| H3808         | H3808        | H1984        | H3034             | H7585     | H3588       | H3588       |
|               |              |              |                   |           |             |             |
| אַמְתָּבָה    | בְּרֵאָה     | בְּרֵאָה     | וְרֵאָה           | וְרֵאָה   | כְּבָרְאָה  | כְּבָרְאָה  |
| for thy truth | into the pit | that go down | they that go down | thee they | cannot hope | cannot hope |
| H571          | H953         | H413         | H3381             | H7663     | cannot hope | cannot hope |

## Additional Cross-References

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**Psalms 6:5** (Parallel theme): For in death there is no remembrance of thee: in the grave who shall give thee thanks?

**Ecclesiastes 9:10** (Parallel theme): Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.

**Psalms 30:9** (Resurrection): What profit is there in my blood, when I go down to the pit? Shall the dust praise thee? shall it declare thy truth?