

Isaiah 41:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the LORD will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them.

Analysis

God's compassion for the poor and needy ('aniyim' and 'evyonim'—the afflicted and destitute) seeking water introduces a restoration promise. When their tongue fails for thirst, God promises, 'I the LORD will hear them...will not forsake them.' This echoes the wilderness provision under Moses, now applied to return from exile.

Historical Context

The journey from Babylon through arid regions required divine provision. This promise recalled the Exodus and assured similar miraculous sustenance for the new exodus from Babylon.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How does God's attentiveness to desperate prayers encourage you in your neediest moments?
2. What does God's promise never to forsake the needy teach about His heart for the afflicted?

Interlinear Text

When the poor	and needy	seek	water	I the LORD
H6041	H34	H1245	H4325	H3068
and there is none	and their tongue	for thirst	faileth	
H3956		H6772	H5405	
will hear	them I the God	of Israel	will not forsake	
H6030	H430	H3478	H5800	

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 55:1 (Parallel theme): Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.

Isaiah 30:19 (Parallel theme): For the people shall dwell in Zion at Jerusalem: thou shalt weep no more: he will be very gracious unto thee at the voice of thy cry; when he shall hear it, he will answer thee.

Matthew 5:6 (Parallel theme): Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

Isaiah 44:3 (Parallel theme): For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring:

Isaiah 61:1 (References God): The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound;

Isaiah 42:16 (Parallel theme): And I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them.

Genesis 28:15 (Parallel theme): And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of.

Revelation 22:17 (Parallel theme): And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.

Revelation 21:6 (Parallel theme): And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.

Isaiah 43:20 (Parallel theme): The beast of the field shall honour me, the dragons and the owls: because I give waters in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert, to give drink to my people, my chosen.