

Isaiah 8:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And I will wait upon the LORD, that hideth his face from the house of Jacob, and I will look for him.

Analysis

Isaiah's personal resolution to wait on the Lord demonstrates faith amid divine hiddenness. 'Hideth his face' indicates God's temporary withdrawal of blessing and protection from Israel due to sin. Yet this doesn't produce despair but patient expectation: 'I will wait upon him.' The parallel 'I will look for him' emphasizes active, hopeful anticipation. This models the Reformed virtue of perseverance—continuing to trust God even when His purposes seem hidden. Faith doesn't require constant visible blessing but trusts God's character despite circumstances.

Historical Context

During the dark years of Assyrian threat and eventual devastation, God seemed absent from Israel's national life. Yet Isaiah models persistent faith, waiting for God's deliverance rather than seeking human solutions. This waiting was vindicated when God destroyed Sennacherib's army in 701 BC. More broadly, the righteous remnant 'waited' through exile until God brought restoration. Simeon and Anna (Luke 2:25-38) exemplify this same patient expectation for Messiah.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. How do we wait on the Lord when He seems to hide His face from our circumstances?
2. What is the difference between passive resignation and active, expectant waiting on God?
3. How does patient endurance in times of God's hiddenness demonstrate and strengthen faith?

Interlinear Text

וְיַיְהֵן	לִיהְיוֹן	בְּמִסְתֵּר	בְּפָנָי	מִבֵּית	יַעֲקֹב
And I will wait	upon the LORD	that hideth	his face	from the house	of Jacob
H2442	H3068	H5641	H6440	H1004	H3290
וְיַיְהֵן	לִיהְיוֹן				
and I will look		H0			
		H6960			

Additional Cross-References

Habakkuk 2:3 (Parallel theme): For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry.

Isaiah 25:9 (References Lord): And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the LORD; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation.

Psalms 33:20 (References Lord): Our soul waiteth for the LORD: he is our help and our shield.

Isaiah 54:8 (References Lord): In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the LORD thy Redeemer.

Hebrews 9:28 (Parallel theme): So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.

Psalms 27:14 (References Lord): Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD.

Isaiah 59:2 (Parallel theme): But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.

Isaiah 50:10 (References Lord): Who is among you that feareth the LORD, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? let him trust in the name of the LORD, and stay upon his God.

1 Thessalonians 1:10 (Parallel theme): And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.

Micah 3:4 (References Lord): Then shall they cry unto the LORD, but he will not hear them: he will even hide his face from them at that time, as they have behaved themselves ill in their doings.