

Psalms 102:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But thou, O LORD, shalt endure for ever; and thy remembrance unto all generations.

Analysis

But thou, O LORD, shalt endure for ever; and thy remembrance unto all generations. This verse pivots dramatically from human transience (v. 11) to divine eternality. "But thou" (v'attah, וְאַתָּה) is emphatic—contrasting the psalmist's fading shadow-life with God's permanence. While human existence flickers and vanishes, God endures unchanging across all ages.

"Shalt endure for ever" (l'olam teshev, לְעוֹלָם תֵּשֶׁב) uses yashav (ישָׁב), meaning to sit, dwell, remain, or be enthroned. The verb suggests stability, continuity, and sovereign rule. God isn't merely eternal in abstract philosophical sense but actively reigning throughout all ages. L'olam (לְעוֹלָם) denotes perpetuity without end—everlasting, forever, to all eternity.

"Thy remembrance unto all generations" (v'zikharka l'dor vador, וְזִיכָּרְךָ לְדֹר וְדֹר) emphasizes God's reputation and revealed character persist across time. Zeker (זִיכָּר) means remembrance, memorial, or reputation—particularly God's self-revelation through mighty acts and covenant promises. Each generation inherits the testimony of previous generations, creating continuity of faith.

This verse provides the theological foundation for hope amid suffering. While individual lives are brief and nations rise and fall, God remains constant. His promises don't expire, His character doesn't change, and His purposes advance inexorably toward fulfillment. Human transience is real but not ultimate; God's eternality is the final reality.

Historical Context

The contrast between human transience and divine eternity is foundational to Israel's faith. Moses declared, 'Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God' (Psalm 90:2). This conviction sustained Israel through upheavals that destroyed other nations—Israel's God transcended political fortunes.

For exilic Israel, God's eternity meant their current devastation wasn't final. Though Jerusalem was rubble and the Temple destroyed, the eternal God could restore them. Though the Davidic king was deposed, God's covenant with David remained valid (2 Samuel 7:12-16). Though they languished in Babylon, God's purposes hadn't failed.

The phrase 'thy remembrance unto all generations' recalls God's revelation to Moses: 'This is my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations' (Exodus 3:15). God's 'memorial' is His revealed character—mighty acts of deliverance, covenant faithfulness, and attributes like mercy, justice, and truth. Each generation learns God's character through Scripture, communal worship, and personal experience.

The New Testament reveals Jesus Christ as the eternal Word who 'is the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever' (Hebrews 13:8). He entered time as a human (subject to transience like grass and shadows) yet remained eternally God. His resurrection demonstrates that union with Christ transfers believers from transient existence to eternal life.

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How does God's eternity provide comfort when facing personal mortality, national crisis, or historical chaos?
2. What does 'thy remembrance unto all generations' suggest about the importance of passing down faith testimonies to children and spiritual descendants?
3. In what ways might we functionally deny God's eternity by living as if present circumstances or cultural trends are ultimate realities?

Interlinear Text

וְאַתָּה	הִיא	לְעוֹלָם	תִּשְׁבַּח	זִכְרָה
H859	H3068	H5769	H3427	H2143
But thou O LORD	for ever	shalt endure	and thy remembrance	
generations	generations			
H1755	H1755			

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 135:13 (References Lord): Thy name, O LORD, endureth for ever; and thy memorial, O LORD, throughout all generations.

Psalms 9:7 (References Lord): But the LORD shall endure for ever: he hath prepared his throne for judgment.

Hebrews 13:8 (Parallel theme): Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.

Lamentations 5:19 (References Lord): Thou, O LORD, remainest for ever; thy throne from generation to generation.

Isaiah 44:6 (References Lord): Thus saith the LORD the King of Israel, and his redeemer the LORD of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God.

Exodus 3:15 (References Lord): And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: this is my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations.

Isaiah 60:15 (Parallel theme): Whereas thou hast been forsaken and hated, so that no man went through thee, I will make thee an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations.

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