

Psalm 103:16

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more.

Analysis

The wind (ruach) passes over the flower, and 'it is gone' with 'the place thereof knowing it no more.' This extends the grass metaphor, emphasizing how quickly life ends and is forgotten. Yet this sobering reality isn't the psalm's conclusion but its foil for God's everlasting mercy (v.17). The Reformed understanding of mortality recognizes death's reality while affirming resurrection hope. Christ conquered death (1 Cor 15:54-57), ensuring believers aren't ultimately 'gone' but live eternally.

Historical Context

The hot sirocco winds from the desert could destroy vegetation in hours. Ancient peoples lived closer to nature and death, making these metaphors viscerally meaningful rather than merely poetic abstractions.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. How does acknowledging your mortality inform your daily decisions and relationships?
2. What difference does resurrection hope make in how you face death?

Interlinear Text

עַד יְדֵיכָם רַעַם עֲבָרָה וְאֵין כֵּן בְּזֶה לֹא יְדַעַת כֵּן יְדַעַת

H3588 For the wind H7307 passeth over H0 H369 H3808 thereof shall know H5750

H5674

מִלְאָמָר:

it and it is gone and the place

H4725

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 40:7 (Parallel theme): The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the spirit of the LORD bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass.

Job 20:9 (Parallel theme): The eye also which saw him shall see him no more; neither shall his place any more behold him.

Job 14:10 (Parallel theme): But man dieth, and wasteth away: yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he?

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