

Psalms 110:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath.

Analysis

This verse returns to the theme of judgment and vindication. 'The Lord at thy right hand' reinforces the close association established in verse 1, where the Messiah sits at God's right hand. The repetition emphasizes ongoing divine support and partnership. 'Shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath' presents the Messiah as an instrument of divine judgment against hostile rulers. The word 'strike through' (Hebrew 'makah') is the verb used of God's plagues against Egypt and suggests overwhelming, decisive judgment. 'Kings' likely refers to the world powers that oppose God's kingdom, encompassing both historical adversaries and eschatological enemies. 'In the day of his wrath' indicates a specific time of divine judgment - the day when God's long-suffering patience ends and justice is executed. This is consistent with apocalyptic imagery throughout Scripture regarding the 'day of the Lord.' The Messiah, though appearing vulnerable in His earthly ministry, is revealed as God's agent of judgment against those who reject His authority. This verse would have encouraged persecuted believers to recognize that apparent defeat is temporary; ultimate judgment belongs to Christ.

Historical Context

The theme of judgment through God's anointed one appears throughout the prophetic tradition (Psalm 2:8-9, Isaiah 63:1-6, Revelation 19:11-16). The specific mention of 'striking through kings' connects to warnings against resisting God's Messiah (Psalm 2:10-12). First-century Jewish expectations often included a militant Messiah who would overthrow Rome, which partly explains why Jesus'

crucifixion scandalized His followers. However, Psalm 110:5 indicates judgment would come 'in the day of his wrath' - a future event. The apostolic church understood this as describing the eschatological judgment at Christ's return rather than the earthly ministry. Paul describes this in 1 Thessalonians 1:7-10, where he mentions Jesus 'revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance.' The timing of this judgment was understood as the Parousia (return) when Christ would be revealed in power and glory. Early Christians expected both Christ's gentle first coming and His righteous judgment at His second coming. Some passages (like 1 Corinthians 15:25) describe an interim period where Christ reigns while His enemies are progressively subdued.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. How does the Messiah 'at thy right hand' correlate with His role as judge, and what does this reveal about His relationship to God?
2. What is the significance of judgment being executed 'in the day of his wrath' rather than continuously throughout history?
3. How did early Christians reconcile the gentle, merciful Jesus of the gospels with the wrathful judge described in Psalm 110:5?
4. In what ways does the judgment of 'kings' represent judgment against all human rebellion against God's authority?
5. What comfort or warning does this verse offer to believers regarding the ultimate triumph of God's kingdom?

Interlinear Text

יְהוָה	עַל	יְמִינְךָ	מָחָץ	בַּיּוֹם	אֵפ וְ
The Lord	H5921	at thy right hand	shall strike	in the day	of his wrath
H136		H3225	H4272	H3117	H639
מְלָכִים:					
through kings					
H4428					

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 16:8 (References Lord): I have set the LORD always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.

Romans 2:5 (Judgment): But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God;

Psalms 68:14 (Kingdom): When the Almighty scattered kings in it, it was white as snow in Salmon.

Revelation 11:18 (Judgment): And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth.

Mark 16:19 (References Lord): So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God.