

Psalm 118:16

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The right hand of the LORD is exalted: the right hand of the LORD doeth valiantly.

Analysis

The right hand of the LORD is exalted: the right hand of the LORD doeth valiantly. This verse intensifies verse 15's celebration through repetition. Y'min YHWH romemah (the right hand of the LORD is exalted/lifted high). Romemah (exalted/raised high) pictures victory gesture—warrior's arm lifted in triumph, standard raised high, victor acclaimed and honored. God's powerful intervention deserves public exaltation, visible recognition, corporate acclaim. The phrase appears twice in three verses (vv. 15-16), creating liturgical rhythm suggesting antiphonal worship—one group declaring God's right hand is exalted, another responding that it does valiantly.

The threefold repetition (vv. 15-16) of "the right hand of the LORD" emphasizes divine agency. Victory isn't attributed to human strategy, military superiority, or political maneuvering but solely to God's mighty arm. This recalls Moses's song: "Thy right hand, O LORD, is become glorious in power: thy right hand, O LORD, hath dashed in pieces the enemy" (Exodus 15:6). The pattern continues: God's right hand saved David (Psalm 138:7), vindicates the oppressed (Psalm 139:10), holds believers secure (Isaiah 41:10). Ultimately, Christ sits at God's right hand in exaltation (Mark 16:19, Acts 2:33-34, Hebrews 1:3, 13), defeating sin, death, and Satan.

Historical Context

Right-hand imagery pervaded ancient Near Eastern royal and military iconography. Kings sat at the right hand of deity in victory reliefs; warriors fought with right-hand weapons; right-hand position signified honor and authority. God's 'right hand' became metaphor for His active, saving power throughout redemptive history: delivering Israel from Egypt, conquering Canaan, defeating enemies in Judges, establishing David's throne, preserving Judah through Assyrian siege, restoring exiles from Babylon. The early church saw Christ's ascension to God's right hand as ultimate fulfillment (Acts 2:32-36, 5:31, Romans 8:34, Ephesians 1:20, Colossians 3:1, Hebrews 10:12). Stephen saw Christ standing at God's right hand before his martyrdom (Acts 7:55-56). This position guarantees believers' security: "because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved" (Psalm 16:8).

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. What does it mean to 'exalt' God's right hand through worship, testimony, and daily living?
2. How does the threefold repetition teach the importance of corporate, repeated declaration of God's mighty acts?
3. In what ways does Christ's position at God's right hand guarantee believers' present security and future vindication?

Interlinear Text

עַשְׂתָה יְמִינָה רָםְמָת הַיְמִינָה יְמִינָה עַשְׂתָה
The right hand of the LORD is exalted The right hand of the LORD doeth
H3225 H3068 H7426 H3225 H3068 H6213

:ל
עַל

valiantly

H2428

Additional Cross-References

Exodus 15:6 (References Lord): Thy right hand, O LORD, is become glorious in power: thy right hand, O LORD, hath dashed in pieces the enemy.

From KJV Study • kjvstudy.org