

Psalm 118:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the LORD.

Analysis

"I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the LORD." The confident assertion lo amut ki echyeh (I shall not die but live) expresses faith in preservation through mortal danger. Mut (die) indicates physical death; chayah (live) means to remain alive, be preserved. The purpose: va'assaper ma'asei Yah (and I will declare the works of Yah). Saper (declare/recount/proclaim) means to tell, number, make known. Ma'asei (works/deeds) encompasses God's saving acts. Deliverance from death isn't for self-preservation but for testimony—preserved life becomes platform for declaring God's works. This anticipates Paul's testimony: "I will not die, but live" to proclaim Christ (Acts 20:24, Philippians 1:21-26). Christian life's purpose is God's glory through testimony.

Historical Context

David faced repeated near-death experiences—Goliath, Saul's spear, fleeing through wilderness, Philistine enemies, Absalom's rebellion. Each deliverance deepened his testimony. His Psalms recount God's saving works for future generations. Post-exile Israel similarly experienced corporate preservation—Cyrus's decree, return from Babylon, temple rebuilding despite opposition, survival despite Persian plots (Esther). Each deliverance authenticated YHWH as living God. Early Christians faced martyrdom but testified fearlessly (Acts 7:54-60, Revelation 2:10, 13). Some were preserved to continue testifying (Paul: Acts 14:19-20, 2 Corinthians 11:23-27); others died as martyrs whose blood seeded church growth.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. How does viewing preserved life as opportunity for testimony transform daily living?
2. What specific "works of the LORD" has God enabled you to declare through deliverance from danger?
3. How can believers faithfully testify to God's works whether preserved from death or called to martyrdom?

Interlinear Text

לֹא	אָמַת	וְתַ	גַּי	אָחִי	הַ	רַ	אָסַפֵּ	רֵ	לִ	אָסַפֵּ	רֵ	מְעַשׁ	וְ	יְהִי
H3808	I shall not die	H4191	H3588	but live	H2421	H5608	and declare	H4639	the works	H3050	of the LORD			

Additional Cross-References

John 11:4 (Parallel theme): When Jesus heard that, he said, This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby.

Psalms 73:28 (References Lord): But it is good for me to draw near to God: I have put my trust in the Lord GOD, that I may declare all thy works.

Psalms 6:5 (Parallel theme): For in death there is no remembrance of thee: in the grave who shall give thee thanks?

Habakkuk 1:12 (References Lord): Art thou not from everlasting, O LORD my God, mine Holy One? we shall not die. O LORD, thou hast ordained them for judgment; and, O mighty God, thou hast established them for correction.

Psalms 145:4 (Parallel theme): One generation shall praise thy works to another, and shall declare thy mighty acts.

Psalms 107:22 (Parallel theme): And let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving, and declare his works with rejoicing.

Psalms 40:10 (Parallel theme): I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart; I have declared thy faithfulness and thy salvation: I have not concealed thy lovingkindness and thy truth from the great congregation.

Psalms 119:13 (Parallel theme): With my lips have I declared all the judgments of thy mouth.

Psalms 40:5 (References Lord): Many, O LORD my God, are thy wonderful works which thou hast done, and thy thoughts which are to us-ward: they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee: if I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered.

Jeremiah 51:10 (References Lord): The LORD hath brought forth our righteousness: come, and let us declare in Zion the work of the LORD our God.