

Psalms 118:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Let Israel now say, that his mercy endureth for ever.

Analysis

"Let Israel now say, that his mercy endureth for ever." This verse begins a liturgical call-and-response pattern where different groups are called to testify to God's enduring mercy. Yomar na Yisrael (let Israel now say) summons the covenant community to corporate testimony. Ki le'olam chasdo (that forever His mercy/lovingkindness) uses chesed, the rich covenant term encompassing loyal love, steadfast faithfulness, merciful kindness. Le'olam (forever/continually) emphasizes perpetual duration—God's mercy never expires, never exhausts, never fails. Israel's entire history demonstrated this: deliverance from Egypt, provision in wilderness, conquest of Canaan, preservation through judges and kings, survival of exile, restoration to land. Corporate testimony reinforces faith—when God's people gather to recount His faithfulness, individual faith strengthens.

Historical Context

Psalms 118 likely served as temple liturgy, possibly for Feast of Tabernacles or dedication ceremonies. The call-and-response structure (vv. 2-4 calling Israel, Aaron's house, and God-fearers to testify) suggests antiphonal singing. Temple worship centered on recounting God's saving acts (Psalms 105-106, 135-136). This corporate testimony was essential to passing faith to succeeding generations (Deuteronomy 6:20-25, Psalm 78:3-7). Post-exile worship took on new urgency as the restored community sought to maintain covenant faithfulness. The New Testament church similarly practiced corporate testimony of God's mercy in Christ (Acts 2:42-47, Hebrews 10:23-25).

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. How does corporate testimony of God's faithfulness strengthen your individual faith?
2. What specific manifestations of God's "enduring mercy" should Israel (and believers today) regularly recount?
3. In what ways can you participate in the community of faith's ongoing testimony to God's character?

Interlinear Text

וְאָמְרִים	נְאֻם	לְיִשְׂרָאֵל	כִּי	לְעוֹלָם	חֲסִדּוֹ:
now say	H4994	Let Israel	H3588	endureth for ever	that his mercy
H559		H3478		H5769	H2617

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