

Psalm 119:81

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

My soul fainteth for thy salvation: but I hope in thy word.

Analysis

My soul fainteth for thy salvation (כלְמַה נֶּפֶשׁ לְתַשְׁעַתָּךְ)—kaletah (fainteth/fails/pines away) conveys extreme longing, even physical weakness. Naphshi (my soul/being) yearns for teshu'atekha (thy salvation/deliverance). This Kaph (כ) stanza (vv. 81-88) depicts a believer at the breaking point yet clinging to hope. **But I hope in thy word** (לִזְכָּרְךָ יִחְלֹתִי) contrasts present agony with confident waiting: yichalti (I hope/wait) anchors on God's davar (word/promise).

This mirrors Simeon who waited for the consolation of Israel (Luke 2:25) and Anna who looked for redemption (Luke 2:38)—both anchored hope in God's Word despite prolonged delay. Faith trusts the promise-keeper when deliverance tarries.

Historical Context

The Kaph section reflects the lament tradition found throughout Psalms—honest complaint combined with unwavering trust. Post-exilic Israel waited centuries for the Messiah while clinging to prophetic promises. This 'patient waiting' became a defining mark of biblical faith (Habakkuk 2:3, Hebrews 10:36-37).

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. When has your soul 'fainted' for God's deliverance while still choosing to hope in His Word?
2. How do you maintain hope during prolonged waiting when relief seems perpetually delayed?
3. What promises in Scripture anchor your soul when circumstances drain your strength?

Interlinear Text

פָּلָת הָ לְתַשְׁוֹעָתֶךָ נֶפֶשׁ יְ לְדִבְרָךְ יְפָלָתִי:
fainteth for thy salvation CAPH My soul in thy word but I hope
H3615 H8668 H5315 H1697 H3176

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 84:2 (Parallel theme): My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the LORD: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God.

Psalms 119:40 (Parallel theme): Behold, I have longed after thy precepts: quicken me in thy righteousness.

Psalms 119:114 (Word): Thou art my hiding place and my shield: I hope in thy word.

Psalms 73:26 (Parallel theme): My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.

Song of Solomon 5:8: I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, if ye find my beloved, that ye tell him, that I am sick of love.