

Psalm 145:18

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The LORD is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth.

Analysis

This verse emphasizes God's availability in response to prayer: 'The LORD is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth.' The word 'nigh' (Hebrew 'karov') means near, close, or accessible. This is not describing God's geographical proximity (God is omnipresent) but His relational availability - He listens and responds when called upon. The phrase 'that call upon him' (qoreah), meaning to invoke, cry out, or summon, suggests desperate earnestness rather than casual reference. The qualifier 'in truth' (be'emet) is crucial: God is near to those who call upon Him genuinely, with sincerity and authenticity. This excludes magical thinking or manipulative prayer; God responds to genuine invocation. The verse establishes that the relationship between human calling and divine response is not transactional but relational. God does not reward correct prayers or formulas but responds to authentic seeking. This provides immense pastoral comfort: prayer does not depend on eloquence, education, or social status but on truthfulness of heart.

Historical Context

This verse appears in Israel's long tradition of prayer and petition, exemplified in stories like Hannah's prayer (1 Samuel 1:10-11) and Hezekiah's prayer (Isaiah 37:14-20), where sincere, desperate prayer received divine response. In post-exilic Judaism, when temple sacrifice was limited, prayer became the primary means of accessing God, making this verse central to religious practice. The phrase 'call upon him in truth' relates to biblical warnings against idolatry and false worship.

(Isaiah 29:13, Jeremiah 29:13). In the Psalms themselves, verses 3, 4, 6, and 9 of this same chapter emphasize calling upon God. Jewish prayer practice (before and after the temple's destruction in 70 AD) emphasized the availability of God to those who pray sincerely. The verse provided hope that, despite political dispersion and loss of centralized worship, every individual maintained direct access to God through prayer.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 – Judgment according to deeds

Romans 2:1 – Judging others

Study Questions

1. What does it mean for God to be 'nigh' to those who call upon Him, and how does this comfort those facing isolation or abandonment?
2. Why is calling upon God 'in truth' essential to experiencing His nearness?
3. How does this promise of God's nearness to all who call upon Him challenge privilege-based approaches to accessing God?
4. In what ways does the assurance of God's availability transform our approach to suffering and difficulty?
5. How should understanding God's nearness in prayer affect our confidence in presenting needs and struggles to Him?

Interlinear Text

אֲשֶׁר	לֹכֶל	אִלְכָא	הָוֶה	לְכָל	וְהָיָה	לֹכֶר	וְבָרֶךְ
is nigh	The LORD	H3605	unto all them that call	H3605		H834	

בְּאָמָתָן לְקַרְאָה
unto all them that call upon him in truth
H7121 H571

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 34:18 (References Lord): The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit.

Deuteronomy 4:7 (References Lord): For what nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them, as the LORD our God is in all things that we call upon him for?

John 4:24 (Truth): God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

Isaiah 58:9 (References Lord): Then shalt thou call, and the LORD shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am. If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger, and speaking vanity;

John 14:23 (Parallel theme): Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.

James 4:8 (Parallel theme): Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded.

Psalms 119:2 (Parallel theme): Blessed are they that keep his testimonies, and that seek him with the whole heart.

Psalms 46:5 (Parallel theme): God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved: God shall help her, and that right early.

Psalms 17:1 (References Lord): Hear the right, O LORD, attend unto my cry, give ear unto my prayer, that goeth not out of feigned lips.

Hosea 7:14 (Parallel theme): And they have not cried unto me with their heart, when they howled upon their beds: they assemble themselves for corn and wine, and they rebel against me.