

Psalm 145:20

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The LORD preserveth all them that love him: but all the wicked will he destroy.

Analysis

The LORD preserveth all them that love him: but all the wicked will he destroy. Divine preservation and destruction sharply contrasted—shomer Yahweh et-kol-ohavav (שָׁמֵר יְהוָה אֶת-כָל-אֶחָיו) "Yahweh keeps/guards all who love Him." Shomer (שָׁמֵר) means watchful protection, diligent preservation. God's ohavav (אֶחָיו) "ones loving Him" receive eternal security, echoing Romans 8:28-39—nothing can separate them from God's love.

All the wicked will he destroy (ve'et kol-harësha'im yashmid, וְאֶת כָל-הָרְשָׁעִים יִשְׁמִיד—yashmid (ישׁמִיד) means utter destruction, annihilation. The absolute contrast (all who love Him preserved / all wicked destroyed) eliminates middle ground. This anticipates final judgment where Christ separates sheep from goats (Matthew 25:31-46).

Historical Context

The psalm's conclusion returns to Psalm 1's two ways: the way of the righteous (preserved) and the way of the wicked (destroyed). This binary framework structured Israelite covenant theology—blessings for obedience, curses for disobedience (Deuteronomy 28). The New Testament affirms this ultimate division (2 Thessalonians 1:6-10).

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How does God's preservation of those who love Him differ from worldly notions of divine protection guaranteeing comfort?
2. What should be the church's posture toward the coming destruction of the wicked—indifference, satisfaction, grief?
3. How can believers maintain confidence in God's preservation during seasons of severe trial or persecution?

Interlinear Text

שׁׁמֵן ר	! הָוֶה	אַת	כָל	אָבִיךָ יי	כָל	אָת
preserveth	The LORD	H853	H3605	all them that love	H853	H3605
H8104	H3068			H157		

בְּרַשְׁעָם	וְשִׁמְיָד:
him but all the wicked	will he destroy
H7563	H8045

Additional Cross-References

Exodus 20:6 (Love): And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.

Psalms 97:10 (Love): Ye that love the LORD, hate evil: he preserveth the souls of his saints; he delivereth them out of the hand of the wicked.

Psalms 31:23 (Love): O love the LORD, all ye his saints: for the LORD preserveth the faithful, and plentifully rewardeth the proud doer.

Psalms 9:5 (Evil): Thou hast rebuked the heathen, thou hast destroyed the wicked, thou hast put out their name for ever and ever.

Psalms 1:6 (References Lord): For the LORD knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish.

Psalms 9:17 (Evil): The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God.

James 2:5 (Love): Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?

Psalms 37:28 (Love): For the LORD loveth judgment, and forsaketh not his saints; they are preserved for ever: but the seed of the wicked shall be cut off.

Matthew 25:41 (Evil): Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: