

Psalms 44:20

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

If we have forgotten the name of our God, or stretched out our hands to a strange god;

Analysis

The impossible hypothetical: 'If we have forgotten the name of our God, or stretched out our hands to a strange god.' These actions represent complete apostasy--abandoning Yahweh's identity and worship for foreign deities. The psalmist categorically denies such betrayal, insisting suffering is not punishment for idolatry.

Historical Context

Stretching hands to foreign gods describes worship posture. Israel's history included episodes of syncretism and idolatry, often followed by judgment. The psalmist insists this generation has not committed such apostasy.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Study Questions

1. What would 'stretching hands to a strange god' look like in our contemporary context?
2. Why is maintaining exclusive worship so central to covenant faithfulness?

Interlinear Text

אִם	שָׁכַחְנוּ	שֵׁם	אֱלֹהֵינוּ	וְנִפְרָשׁ	כַּיְיָנוּ
H518	If we have forgotten	the name	of our God	or stretched out	our hands
	H7911	H8034	H430	H6566	H3709
לֹא	לֵאלֹהִים				
god	to a strange				
H410	H2114				

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 81:9 (References God): There shall no strange god be in thee; neither shalt thou worship any strange god.

Job 11:13 (Parallel theme): If thou prepare thine heart, and stretch out thine hands toward him;

Psalms 68:31 (References God): Princes shall come out of Egypt; Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God.