

Psalm 6:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For in death there is no remembrance of thee: in the grave
who shall give thee thanks?

Analysis

This verse reflects Old Testament understanding of death as separation from active worship. The Hebrew 'sheol' (grave) was conceived as the realm of the dead where conscious praise ceased. David's argument is not that the dead cease to exist but that they cannot fulfill worship's purpose on earth. This motivates his plea for life - so he can continue glorifying God. While we now understand fuller resurrection hope through Christ, the principle remains: God is glorified through our active worship and witness in this life.

Historical Context

Pre-resurrection Jewish theology viewed Sheol as a shadowy existence where God was not actively praised. This wasn't full theology of afterlife but reflected limited Old Testament revelation. Jesus's resurrection revolutionized this understanding, revealing conscious existence after death and bodily resurrection. Yet even now, our earthly witness for God has unique value.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How does the reality that you can worship God today motivate your daily choices?
2. Are you using your life to give God the thanks and praise He deserves?

Interlinear Text

מִ יְשָׁא יְלִיכָּה
H3588 H369 For in death there is no remembrance of thee in the grave H4310
בְּתַת יְהִיכָּה
H4194 H2143
who shall give thee thanks
H3034 הַלְּהָ

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 115:17 (Parallel theme): The dead praise not the LORD, neither any that go down into silence.

Ecclesiastes 9:10 (Parallel theme): Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.

Psalms 30:9 (Parallel theme): What profit is there in my blood, when I go down to the pit? Shall the dust praise thee? shall it declare thy truth?

Psalms 118:17 (Parallel theme): I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the LORD.

John 9:4 (Parallel theme): I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.