

Psalms 90:7

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For we are consumed by thine anger, and by thy wrath are we troubled.

Analysis

For we are consumed by thine anger, and by thy wrath are we troubled. This verse shifts from describing mortality's effects (v.3-6) to explaining its cause: divine anger against sin. The "for" (ki) indicates this verse provides the reason for humanity's swift withering like grass. Death isn't natural or neutral but judicial—God's wrath against human rebellion manifests in mortality, suffering, and trouble throughout life.

"For we are consumed" (כִּי־כָלִינוּ וְאֶפֶקְחָהּ/ki-chalinu ve'apekha) uses kalah (to be complete, finished, consumed, destroyed). The perfect tense indicates accomplished reality: we ARE consumed, already experiencing this consumption. Kalah suggests thorough completion—not partial diminishment but complete consumption, like fire burning fuel until nothing remains. This is death's ultimate trajectory: complete consumption of mortal life.

"By thine anger" (בְּאֶפֶקְחָהּ/ve'apekha) identifies the consuming agent. Af literally means nose or nostril, idiomatically representing anger (from the ancient association of flaring nostrils with rage). God's af burns against sin, consuming sinners like fire. This isn't arbitrary divine temper but righteous response to human rebellion. Romans 1:18 declares: "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men."

"And by thy wrath are we troubled" (וּבְחַמַּתְךָ נִיְהָלֵנוּ/uvachamatkha nivhalnu) parallels and intensifies the first clause. Chemah (wrath, heat, rage) represents hot

burning anger, even stronger than af. Bahal means to be terrified, dismayed, troubled, hurried away. The Niphal form (passive) indicates we are acted upon—God's wrath troubles us, terrifies us, hurries us to death. We don't merely die peacefully but are troubled throughout life by awareness of divine displeasure.

Historical Context

Moses witnessed God's wrath firsthand throughout wilderness wandering. After the golden calf, God threatened to consume Israel (Exodus 32:10). When Israel rejected Canaan at Kadesh, God's anger flared and He sentenced that generation to death in the wilderness (Numbers 14:11-23). Korah's rebellion brought consuming fire and earthquake (Numbers 16:31-35). Complaining brought fiery serpents (Numbers 21:6). Throughout forty years, divine wrath consumed the rebellious generation—approximately 85 people died daily until the entire generation perished.

This verse reflects post-fall reality. Before sin, humans weren't subject to death—Adam and Eve had potential immortality through the tree of life. But Genesis 3:19 pronounced death as judgment: "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." Romans 6:23 declares: "The wages of sin is death." Death entered through sin and represents God's judicial response to rebellion. Every funeral, every grave, every tear testifies to divine wrath against sin.

Yet even in wrath, God remembers mercy (Habakkuk 3:2). Christ absorbed divine wrath on the cross, becoming sin for us (2 Corinthians 5:21), enduring God's consuming anger in our place. Believers still die physically (mortality's continuation) but death's sting is removed (1 Corinthians 15:55-57)—physical death no longer represents divine wrath but transition to glory.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. How does understanding death as manifestation of God's wrath against sin (not merely natural process) change your view of mortality and the gospel?
2. What does it mean that we are 'troubled' by God's wrath throughout life, and how does this manifest in human experience apart from Christ?
3. How does Christ's absorption of divine wrath on the cross change the believer's relationship to death, even though we still die physically?

Interlinear Text

כִּי	כָּל יְנוּ	בְּאַף רַ	וּבַחֲמַתְךָ	נִבְהָלְנוּ:
H3588	For we are consumed	by thine anger	and by thy wrath	are we troubled
	H3615	H639	H2534	H926

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 39:11 (Parallel theme): When thou with rebukes dost correct man for iniquity, thou makest his beauty to consume away like a moth: surely every man is vanity. Selah.