

Psalm 97:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Rejoice in the LORD, ye righteous; and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness.

Analysis

The command to 'rejoice in the LORD' (samach ba-Yahweh) grounds joy in God Himself, not circumstances. Giving thanks 'at the remembrance of his holiness' (zecher qodsho) indicates that recalling God's holy character produces gratitude. Holiness here encompasses God's transcendent otherness and moral perfection. The psalm concludes where it began (v. 1)—with rejoicing—creating an inclusio that frames everything in worship. Christian joy is theological, rooted in who God is, not what we experience.

Historical Context

Israel's festivals regularly rehearsed God's holy acts in their history, using corporate memory to generate thanksgiving and renew covenant commitment.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. How can 'remembering' God's holiness—His past faithfulness and perfect character—generate thanksgiving even in difficult circumstances?

2. What difference does it make to rejoice 'in the LORD' rather than in temporary pleasures or accomplishments?

Interlinear Text

לְזִיכָר בְּיַהֲוֵה וְשָׁמָחַ אֶת־דִּיקָנִים
Rejoice ye righteous in the LORD and give thanks at the remembrance
H8055 H6662 H3068 H3034 H2143

לְזִיכָר־
of his holiness
H6944

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 30:4 (Holy): Sing unto the LORD, O ye saints of his, and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness.

Philippians 4:4 (References Lord): Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice.

Hebrews 12:10 (Holy): For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness.

Psalms 60:6 (Holy): God hath spoken in his holiness; I will rejoice, I will divide Shechem, and mete out the valley of Succoth.