

Isaiah 1:15

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you: yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood.

Analysis

The shocking imagery of God hiding His eyes and refusing to hear prayers indicts hands 'full of blood'—metaphorical for violence and oppression (cf. Isaiah 59:3). Prayer without repentance is futile; God's holiness cannot fellowship with unconfessed sin. This echoes Psalm 66:18 and foreshadows James 4:3. The Reformed doctrine of God's immutability affirms that He consistently responds to genuine faith but resists the proud and unrepentant.

Historical Context

Judah's leaders perpetrated judicial violence, exploiting widows and orphans (Isaiah 1:23). Their bloodguilt rendered religious exercises offensive, demonstrating that social injustice nullifies ceremonial piety.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. What 'blood' on our hands might hinder our prayers today—exploitation, indifference to injustice, complicity in systemic evil?
2. How does this verse correct misconceptions that God mechanically answers prayer regardless of moral condition?

Interlinear Text

וּבְפָרְשְׁךָ מִ	כַּפֶּיֶךָ מִ	אֶעֱלֶה יָמַי	עֵינָי	מִמֶּךָ מִ	גִּּ	כִּי
And when ye spread forth	your hands	I will hide	mine eyes	H4480	H1571	H3588
H6566	H3709	H5956	H5869			
תִּרְבּוּ וְ	תִּפְלֶה הַ	אֵינִי נִי	שִׁמְעֵה עֲ	יָדֶיךָ מִ		
from you yea when ye make many	prayers	H369	I will not hear	your hands		
H7235	H8605		H8085	H3027		
מְלֹאֵי דָמַי יָמַי						
of blood	are full					
H1818	H4390					

Additional Cross-References

Micah 3:4 (Parallel theme): Then shall they cry unto the LORD, but he will not hear them: he will even hide his face from them at that time, as they have behaved themselves ill in their doings.

Proverbs 1:28 (Parallel theme): Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me:

Zechariah 7:13 (Parallel theme): Therefore it is come to pass, that as he cried, and they would not hear; so they cried, and I would not hear, saith the LORD of hosts:

Psalms 66:18 (Parallel theme): If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me:

Jeremiah 14:12 (Parallel theme): When they fast, I will not hear their cry; and when they offer burnt offering and an oblation, I will not accept them: but I will consume them by the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence.

1 Kings 8:22 (Parallel theme): And Solomon stood before the altar of the LORD in the presence of all the congregation of Israel, and spread forth his hands toward heaven:

Isaiah 58:7 (Parallel theme): Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?

Psalms 55:1 (Prayer): Give ear to my prayer, O God; and hide not thyself from my supplication.

Job 27:20 (Parallel theme): Terrors take hold on him as waters, a tempest stealeth him away in the night.

1 Kings 8:54 (Prayer): And it was so, that when Solomon had made an end of praying all this prayer and supplication unto the LORD, he arose from before the altar of the LORD, from kneeling on his knees with his hands spread up to heaven.