

Isaiah 26:6

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The foot shall tread it down, even the feet of the poor, and the steps of the needy.

Analysis

"The foot shall tread it down, even the feet of the poor, and the steps of the needy." This verse completes the reversal—those once oppressed by the lofty city now walk upon its ruins. **"The foot shall tread it down"** (תִּרְמֶסֶנָּה רַגְלִי/tirmesennah ragel)—tirmesennah means to trample, tread down, stamp upon, walk over. This was the ultimate humiliation in ancient warfare; victors literally walked over the ruins of conquered cities, and kings placed their feet on the necks of defeated enemies (Joshua 10:24). The singular "foot" becomes plural in the next phrase, expanding to include multitudes.

"Even the feet of the poor, and the steps of the needy" (רַגְלֵי אֲנִי פָעֲמֵי דַלִּים/raglei ani pa'amei dallim)—ani means poor, afflicted, humble, oppressed. Dallim means weak, helpless, poor, insignificant. These are the very people the lofty city once oppressed and despised. Now they trample its ruins. Pa'amei (steps, footsteps) suggests steady, purposeful walking—not fearful tiptoeing but confident striding. This is complete role reversal: the oppressed become victorious, the lowly exalted, the weak empowered. This anticipates Jesus's beatitude: "Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth" (Matthew 5:5) and James's promise that "God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble" (James 4:6).

Historical Context

In the ancient world's rigid class systems, the poor and needy had no voice, no power, no rights. They were trampled by the powerful. Isaiah consistently

championed God's concern for the poor, condemning rulers who "grind the faces of the poor" (Isaiah 3:15). The image of the poor walking on the ruins of proud cities would have been shocking—complete reversal of the social order. This prefigures the gospel pattern where God chooses "the foolish things of the world to confound the wise...and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen" (1 Corinthians 1:27-28).

Related Passages

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How does God's pattern of exalting the humble and humbling the proud challenge worldly definitions of success and power?
2. In what ways might you be aligned with the 'lofty city' rather than identifying with 'the poor and needy' before God?
3. How should this promised reversal shape the church's treatment of the poor and marginalized today?

Interlinear Text

תִּרְמָס נָה	רַגְלִי י	רַגְלִי י	עַנִּי י	פְּעָמִי י	דָּלִים:
shall tread it down	The foot	The foot	of the poor	and the steps	of the needy
H7429	H7272	H7272	H6041	H6471	H1800

Additional Cross-References

Romans 16:20 (Parallel theme): And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.

Luke 10:19 (Parallel theme): Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you.

Joshua 10:24 (Parallel theme): And it came to pass, when they brought out those kings unto Joshua, that Joshua called for all the men of Israel, and said unto the captains of the men of war which went with him, Come near, put your feet upon the necks of these kings. And they came near, and put their feet upon the necks of them.

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