

Job 34:28

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

So that they cause the cry of the poor to come unto him, and he heareth the cry of the afflicted.

Analysis

So that they cause the cry of the poor to come unto him (לְפָנָיו עַלְיוֹ צְעַק תִּצְלָל) —The infinitive lehavi (to cause to come) shows the wicked's actions produce direct consequences—oppression reaches God's ears. Tsa'aqath-dal (cry of the poor/weak) depicts desperate appeals from the oppressed. Dal denotes those reduced to poverty, weakness, or helplessness. God hears the marginalized whom earthly powers ignore. Exodus 3:7 establishes this pattern: 'I have surely seen the affliction of my people... and have heard their cry.'

And he heareth the cry of the afflicted (וְיִשְׁמָא אֲשֶׁר יִשְׁמַע) —The verb yishma (He hears) indicates attentive response, not mere auditory reception. Aniyim (afflicted/oppressed ones) describes those under unjust burden. God's hearing guarantees eventual intervention—justice may be delayed but never denied. James 5:4 warns the rich: 'The cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth.' This verse explains why the wicked face sudden judgment (verses 24-26)—their oppression of the vulnerable provokes divine intervention. God sides with the powerless against powerful oppressors.

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern society operated on patron-client relationships where the powerless depended on powerful advocates. The poor, widows, and orphans had no legal standing without advocates. Israel's law uniquely emphasized divine advocacy for the marginalized (Exodus 22:21-24; Deuteronomy 10:18). Elihu

presents God as the ultimate advocate who hears when human systems fail. This theology undergirds biblical justice—God holds the powerful accountable for how they treat the vulnerable.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. How should knowing God hears the cry of the oppressed shape our treatment of the poor and powerless?
2. In what ways might you be contributing to the 'cry of the poor' through participation in unjust systems or neglect of the vulnerable?
3. How does this verse challenge prosperity theology that equates wealth with God's favor and poverty with divine disfavor?

Interlinear Text

וְלֹא	לְבָב	יָא	לְלֹא	וְלֹא	לְבָב	יָא	לְלֹא	וְלֹא	לְבָב	יָא
to come	H5921	So that they cause the cry		of the poor		So that they cause the cry				
H935		H6818		H1800		H6818				
עַנִּים		שְׁמַע	:							
of the afflicted		unto him and he heareth								
H6041		H8085								

Additional Cross-References

James 5:4 (Parallel theme): Behold, the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth.

Job 35:9 (Parallel theme): By reason of the multitude of oppressions they make the oppressed to cry: they cry out by reason of the arm of the mighty.

Exodus 3:7 (Parallel theme): And the LORD said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows;

Psalms 12:5 (Parallel theme): For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise, saith the LORD; I will set him in safety from him that puffeth at him.

Exodus 3:9 (Parallel theme): Now therefore, behold, the cry of the children of Israel is come unto me: and I have also seen the oppression wherewith the Egyptians oppress them.

Isaiah 5:7 (Parallel theme): For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah his pleasant plant: and he looked for judgment, but behold oppression; for righteousness, but behold a cry.

Job 24:12 (Parallel theme): Men groan from out of the city, and the soul of the wounded crieth out: yet God layeth not folly to them.