

Psalms 109:11

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Let the extortioner catch all that he hath; and let the strangers spoil his labour.

Analysis

Let the extortioner catch all that he hath (וְנִקְשֶׁתְּנֹשֶׁתְ לְכָל-אֲשֶׁר-לוֹ, yenakesh noseh lechol-asher-lo)—the verb נִקְשֶׁתְ (nakash) means "ensnare, lay snares," used of hunters trapping prey. The noun noseh (noseh) is a creditor or extortioner. The imagery depicts creditors seizing every asset, reducing the enemy to absolute poverty. **And let the strangers spoil his labour** (וְיִבּוֹזְוּ זָרִים יְגִיעָוָן, veyavozu zarim yegio)—(zarim, "strangers, foreigners") plunder (yegia, "the fruit of toil").

This fulfills the covenant curse of Deuteronomy 28:33: "The fruit of thy land, and all thy labours, shall a nation which thou knowest not eat up." David prays for measure-for-measure justice: those who sought to plunder his kingdom through treachery will themselves be plundered. The involvement of "strangers" adds humiliation—in honor-shame culture, losing inheritance to foreigners was ultimate disgrace. Lamentations 5:2 mourns this: "Our inheritance is turned to strangers, our houses to aliens."

Historical Context

In ancient agrarian economies, debt-seizure was catastrophic and regulated by Torah (Deut 15:1-11, Jubilee provisions). Unscrupulous creditors could reduce families to slavery. David himself showed extraordinary mercy to debtors (the 400 gathered at Adullam, 1 Sam 22:2); his enemies showed none.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How does the principle of "strangers spoiling your labor" connect to spiritual fruitlessness when we oppose God's purposes?
2. What does this curse teach about earthly security apart from covenant faithfulness?
3. How should awareness of financial/material vulnerability drive us to mercy and justice in our dealings?

Interlinear Text

לִבְדֵּק שֶׁבֶת וְלֹא אָשֶׁר לְכָל נְשָׁה

catch Let the extortioner spoil
H5367 H5383 H962

מִן יָמָן יְגִיעָה:

all that he hath and let the strangers his labour
H2114 H3018

Additional Cross-References

Job 5:5 (Parallel theme): Whose harvest the hungry eateth up, and taketh it even out of the thorns, and the robber swalloweth up their substance.