

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 (יִנָּקֵשׁ נוֹשֶׁה לְכֹל־אֲשֶׁר־לוֹ, yenakesh noseh lechol-asher-lo)—the verb נָקַשׁ (nakash) means "ensnare, lay snares," used of hunters trapping prey. The noun נוֹשֶׁה (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** (וַיַּבְּזוּ זָרִים יְגִיעוֹ, veyavozu zarim yegio)—זָרִים (zarim, "strangers, foreigners") plunder יְגִיעַ (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.

