

Psalm 109:22

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For I am poor and needy, and my heart is wounded within me.

Analysis

For I am poor and needy, and my heart is wounded within me. David declares his condition using ani (עני, poor/afflicted) and evyon (אָבִיוֹן, needy), terms denoting socioeconomic vulnerability but primarily spiritual destitution. The phrase **my heart is wounded** uses chalal (חַלָּל), meaning pierced or slain, describing trauma deeper than physical suffering.

This self-description grounds David's imprecatory prayers (verses 6-19) in genuine affliction, not vindictive spite. The wounded heart reveals emotional and spiritual anguish—betrayal by a trusted friend (verse 4) has left him psychologically devastated. This parallels Christ's experience, who quoted this psalm (verse 8 in Acts 1:20) and knew intimate betrayal by Judas.

The poverty David describes transcends material lack, encompassing complete dependence on God for vindication and deliverance. Like the anawim (the humble poor) throughout Scripture, David positions himself as one who has nowhere to turn but to God's mercy. This spiritual poverty anticipates Jesus's beatitude: "Blessed are the poor in spirit" (Matthew 5:3).

Historical Context

Psalm 109 is a lament psalm attributed to David, likely written during Absalom's rebellion or another period of betrayal by trusted associates. The imprecatory nature (cursing enemies) was understood as calling for divine justice, not personal revenge, within Israel's covenant framework. The early church recognized this

psalm as messianic, seeing David's betrayal as typological of Christ's betrayal by Judas.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. How does recognizing your spiritual poverty before God change your approach to prayer and worship?
2. What does it mean to bring a 'wounded heart' honestly before God rather than masking pain with religious performance?
3. How can Christ's fulfillment of this psalm inform your response when betrayed by trusted friends?

Interlinear Text

בַּקְרָבִי כִּלְלִי אֲנִי אֶלְבִּי וְעַתִּי
H3588 For I am poor H6041 and needy H595 and my heart H3820 is wounded H2490 within H7130

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 86:1 (Parallel theme): Bow down thine ear, O LORD, hear me: for I am poor and needy.

Psalms 40:17 (Parallel theme): But I am poor and needy; yet the Lord thinketh upon me: thou art my help and my deliverer; make no tarrying, O my God.

Isaiah 53:3 (Parallel theme): He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

Psalms 22:6 (Parallel theme): But I am a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people.

Psalms 109:16 (Parallel theme): Because that he remembered not to shew mercy, but persecuted the poor and needy man, that he might even slay the broken in heart.

Psalms 102:4 (Parallel theme): My heart is smitten, and withered like grass; so that I forget to eat my bread.

Job 6:4 (Parallel theme): For the arrows of the Almighty are within me, the poison whereof drinketh up my spirit: the terrors of God do set themselves in array against me.

Matthew 8:20 (Parallel theme): And Jesus saith unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.

John 12:27 (Parallel theme): Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour.

2 Corinthians 8:9 (Parallel theme): For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.