

Psalms 109:26

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Help me, O LORD my God: O save me according to thy mercy:

Analysis

Help me, O LORD my God: O save me according to thy mercy: This urgent cry for divine intervention comes from one of the most intense imprecatory psalms. The Hebrew *ezreni* (אֶזְרָנִי, "help me") and *hoshi'eni* (הַשְׁעָנִי, "save me") are imperatives expressing desperate dependence on God. The psalmist (traditionally David) faces false accusation and vicious enemies who repay his good with evil and his love with hatred (verses 4-5).

The address "O LORD my God" (Yahweh Elohai) combines God's covenant name (Yahweh) with the personal possessive ("my God"), asserting both God's faithfulness to His promises and the psalmist's personal relationship with Him. This dual invocation grounds the appeal in covenant loyalty.

The phrase "according to thy mercy" (*k'chasdeka*, כְּחֶסֶדְךָ) is crucial—the psalmist appeals not to his own merit but to God's *hesed* (חֶסֶד), His covenant-keeping love and loyal faithfulness. This mercy-based appeal recognizes that salvation comes through God's gracious character, not human deserving. Theologically, this points forward to salvation by grace through faith in Christ (Ephesians 2:8-9). The psalm's imprecations against enemies ultimately find fulfillment in Christ's judgment against all who oppose God's kingdom, while His mercy saves those who trust Him.

Historical Context

Psalm 109 is attributed to David, likely composed during persecution by Saul or Absalom's rebellion. David faced repeated false accusations, betrayal by trusted allies, and death threats from those he had befriended. The historical superscription identifies it as "A Psalm of David," and Peter applies verse 8 to Judas Iscariot's betrayal (Acts 1:20), connecting David's experience to Christ's suffering.

This psalm belongs to the genre of imprecatory psalms (others include Psalms 69, 137, 140), which call down God's judgment on evildoers. Ancient Near Eastern culture understood such curses as invoking divine justice against covenant-breakers and oppressors. While modern readers often find these prayers troubling, they express several important truths:

1. righteous indignation against evil is appropriate
2. vengeance belongs to God, not personal retaliation
3. justice demands that wickedness be punished
4. God's kingdom will ultimately triumph over all opposition.

The historical context of persecution makes this prayer for help profoundly relevant.

David's enemies sought his destruction through slander, false witness, and conspiracy. His appeal to God's mercy rather than his own innocence demonstrates covenant faith. The New Testament shows that David's suffering prefigured Christ's, who also faced false accusation, betrayal, and unjust condemnation, yet committed Himself to God's just judgment (1 Peter 2:23).

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Study Questions

1. How does the psalmist's appeal to God's mercy rather than his own merit instruct us in how to approach God in prayer?
2. What is the proper role of imprecatory prayers in Christian life—when is it appropriate to call for God's judgment?
3. How does David's experience of betrayal and false accusation prefigure Christ's suffering and vindication?
4. In what ways does this verse teach us to depend entirely on God when facing unjust opposition?
5. How should believers balance trusting God's mercy with seeking His justice against those who oppose His kingdom?

Interlinear Text

כְּמַסְדָּךְ: הַ וְשִׁיעַ נִי אָלָפְּ יְהִי הַ נַּעֲזָרָבִּי
Help me O LORD my God O save me according to thy mercy
H5826 H3068 H430 H3467 H2617

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 119:86 (Parallel theme): All thy commandments are faithful: they persecute me wrongfully; help thou me.

Hebrews 5:7 (Salvation): Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared;

Psalms 57:1 (Grace): Be merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me: for my soul trusteth in thee: yea, in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be overpast.

Psalms 69:13 (Salvation): But as for me, my prayer is unto thee, O LORD, in an acceptable time: O God, in the multitude of thy mercy hear me, in the truth of thy salvation.

