

Psalms 109:7

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

When he shall be judged, let him be condemned: and let his prayer become sin.

Analysis

When he shall be judged, let him be condemned (בְּהַשְׁפָטָו יָצָא רָשָׁע) (behishhafto yetse rasha)—literally "when he is judged, let him go out wicked/guilty." The verb **אָצַא** (yatsa, "go out") refers to leaving the courtroom with a guilty verdict. **And let his prayer become sin** (וְתִפְלַתָּו תְּהִיָּה לְפָטָאָה) (utefilato tiyah lechata'ah)—a devastating curse. Prayer normally brings mercy; here it compounds guilt.

Proverbs 28:9 explains: "He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination." When the wicked pray while clinging to wickedness, their prayers insult God. Isaiah 1:15 and 59:2 show God refusing to hear prayers from blood-stained hands and unrepentant hearts. This isn't David wishing evil on random enemies—it's covenant theology: those who betray covenant loyalty forfeit covenant privileges. Their prayers, offered in hypocrisy, become evidence against them at judgment.

Historical Context

David likely faced enemies who maintained outward religious observance while plotting murder—like Saul consulting Samuel's ghost while hunting David (1 Sam 28), or Absalom's vow at Hebron that masked rebellion (2 Sam 15:7-12). Hypocritical worship compounded their guilt.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. What makes prayer itself become sin—what heart conditions turn sacred acts into abominations?
2. How does Proverbs 28:9 challenge religious activity divorced from obedience and integrity?
3. In what ways might our own prayers compound guilt rather than obtain mercy if offered hypocritically?

Interlinear Text

תְּהִלֵּה וְתִפְלַת וְבָשָׂטָן יִצְאֶנּוּ רָשָׁע וְבָשָׂטָן הַיְלֵדָה
When he shall be judged let him be condemned and let his prayer H1961
H8199 H3318 H7563 H8605

לְחַטָּאת
become sin

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Additional Cross-References

Proverbs 28:9 (Prayer): He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination.

Proverbs 15:8 (Prayer): The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD: but the prayer of the upright is his delight.

Proverbs 21:27 (Parallel theme): The sacrifice of the wicked is abomination: how much more, when he bringeth it with a wicked mind?

Isaiah 1:15 (Prayer): And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you: yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood.

Isaiah 66:3 (Parallel theme): He that killeth an ox is as if he slew a man; he that sacrificeth a lamb, as if he cut off a dog's neck; he that offereth an oblation, as if he offered swine's blood; he that burneth incense, as if he blessed an idol. Yea, they have chosen their own ways, and their soul delighteth in their abominations.

Romans 3:19 (Parallel theme): Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.

Matthew 23:13 (Parallel theme): But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in.

Galatians 3:10 (Parallel theme): For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.