

# Psalms 109:9

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Let his children be fatherless, and his wife a widow.

## Analysis

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**Let his children be fatherless, and his wife a widow** (יהי־וּבָנָיו יְתֻמִּים וְאֲשֶׁר־אָלְמָנָה) —this verse intensifies the judgment to include generational consequences. The words יְתֻמָּה (yatom, "orphan") and אָלְמָנָה (almanah, "widow") denote the most vulnerable classes in Israelite society, those God specifically protects (Ex 22:22-24; Deut 10:18).

The irony is deliberate: the persecutor made others vulnerable; now his own family joins the ranks of the defenseless. Yet this isn't arbitrary cruelty—it reflects covenant curses in Deuteronomy 28:41 ("Thou shalt beget sons and daughters, but thou shalt not enjoy them") and the principle of intergenerational consequences (Ex 20:5). David isn't creating new punishments; he's invoking Torah-prescribed sanctions for covenant betrayal. Critically, God's special care for widows and orphans means even the enemy's family ultimately falls under divine providence—justice doesn't contradict mercy for the innocent.

## Historical Context

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Ancient Near Eastern warfare routinely resulted in widowhood and orphanhood. David himself became fatherless when Jesse likely died during his fugitive years, and he made orphans and widows through legitimate warfare. But David never betrayed covenant loyalty—that distinction justifies this imprecation against covenant-breakers.

## Related Passages

**Romans 1:17** — The righteous shall live by faith

## James 2:17 — Faith and works

## **Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment**

## **Romans 2:1 — Judging others**

## Study Questions

1. How do generational consequences of sin reflect both God's justice and the seriousness of covenant leadership?
2. What does God's special protection of widows and orphans reveal about His character even in contexts of judgment?
3. How should the reality of our actions affecting our families motivate holiness and faithfulness?

## Interlinear Text

## Additional Cross-References

**Exodus 22:24** (Parallel theme): And my wrath shall wax hot, and I will kill you with the sword; and your wives shall be widows, and your children fatherless.

**Jeremiah 18:21** (Parallel theme): Therefore deliver up their children to the famine, and pour out their blood by the force of the sword; and let their wives be bereaved of their children, and be widows; and let their men be put to death; let their young men be slain by the sword in battle.

**Lamentations 5:3** (Parallel theme): We are orphans and fatherless, our mothers are as widows.

