

Psalms 119:61

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The bands of the wicked have robbed me: but I have not forgotten thy law.

Analysis

The bands of the wicked have robbed me: but I have not forgotten thy law.

The phrase **bands of the wicked** (חֲבֵלֵי רֶשָׁעִים, chevlei resha'im) literally means 'cords' or 'snares'—enemies conspiring together to entrap and plunder the righteous. The verb **robbed** (יָדַעַנִי, ivveduni) implies violent theft and oppression, possibly referencing persecution or economic exploitation.

But I have not forgotten thy law—the adversative **but** (וְ, ve) marks the contrast between external suffering and internal faithfulness. **Forgotten** (שָׁכַח, shakhach) means more than memory lapse—it implies neglecting covenant obligations. Despite material loss, the psalmist's spiritual treasure remains intact. This echoes Job's faithfulness despite catastrophic loss and anticipates Jesus's teaching that thieves steal earthly treasures but cannot touch heavenly ones (Matthew 6:19-20).

Historical Context

God's people frequently suffered material plundering—Egypt's oppression, Philistine raids, Babylonian conquest stripped Israel of wealth and land. Yet the faithful maintained covenant loyalty despite loss. Job exemplifies this: 'The LORD gave, the LORD has taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD' (Job 1:21). Early Christians also faced property confiscation (Hebrews 10:34) yet 'joyfully accepted' loss, knowing they had 'better and enduring possessions.'

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. Has material loss or injustice ever caused you to compromise spiritual convictions, or has it strengthened them?
2. How can believers maintain focus on God's law (eternal treasure) when earthly treasures are stolen or threatened?
3. What does your reaction to financial loss or unfair treatment reveal about where you've truly stored your treasure?

Interlinear Text

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|------------------|----------------------|--------------------|----------------|-------|
| חֲבִלֵּי | רֶשָׁעִים | עָדְךָ | תּוֹכְתְּךָ | לֹא |
| The bands | of the wicked | have robbed | thy law | H3808 |
| H2256 | H7563 | H5749 | H8451 | |

שִׁכַּחְתִּי:

me but I have not forgotten

H7911

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 119:176 (Word): I have gone astray like a lost sheep; seek thy servant; for I do not forget thy commandments.

Hosea 6:9 (Parallel theme): And as troops of robbers wait for a man, so the company of priests murder in the way by consent: for they commit lewdness.

Psalms 119:95 (Evil): The wicked have waited for me to destroy me: but I will consider thy testimonies.

Psalms 3:1 (Parallel theme): LORD, how are they increased that trouble me! many are they that rise up against me.

Psalms 140:5 (Parallel theme): The proud have hid a snare for me, and cords; they have spread a net by the wayside; they have set gins for me. Selah.

Proverbs 24:29 (Parallel theme): Say not, I will do so to him as he hath done to me: I will render to the man according to his work.

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