

Psalm 119:78

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Let the proud be ashamed; for they dealt perversely with me without a cause: but I will meditate in thy precepts.

Analysis

Let the proud be ashamed; for they dealt perversely with me without a cause—(יבשׁו זָדִים פִּישָׁקָר עֲוֹתָנִי) the petition for enemies' shame (yevoshu) isn't personal vindictiveness but appeal for divine justice. Zedim (proud/arrogant ones) denotes those who presumptuously oppose God's purposes. Sheker (falsehood) and ivvetuni (they twisted/perverted me) describe slander—they distorted truth about him without cause (chinnam).

But I will meditate in thy precepts (אֶנְיֶ אֲשִׁיךְ בְּפִקְדָּךְ) contrasts his response: while enemies attack, he will asiach (meditate/muse) on God's pikudim (precepts). This models Jesus's response to false accusers (1 Peter 2:23) and Paul's counsel to overcome evil with good (Romans 12:21).

Historical Context

During the Babylonian exile and post-exilic period, the faithful remnant faced mockery from both pagan oppressors and apostate Israelites. The imprecatory elements in Psalms aren't personal revenge but prayers for God to vindicate His name and justice. Jesus quoted these psalms (John 15:25), identifying with the righteous sufferer.

Related Passages

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. How do you respond when falsely accused—with defensive arguing or by returning to meditation on God's Word?
2. What does it mean to pray for the shame of the proud while maintaining love for enemies?
3. When persecution comes 'without cause,' how does this identify you with Christ's undeserved suffering?

Interlinear Text

עִזָּת וּבִ	יְבָשָׂו	זֶה קָרְבָּן	כִּי זֶה דִּים	עִזָּת וּבִ
be ashamed	Let the proud	H3588	with me without a cause	for they dealt perversely
H954	H2086		H8267	H5791
אַבְנֵי	אֲשֵׁר יְמִ	בְּפְקָדֵיךְ		
H589	but I will meditate		in thy precepts	
	H7878		H6490	

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 35:7 (Parallel theme): For without cause have they hid for me their net in a pit, which without cause they have digged for my soul.

Psalms 119:21 (Parallel theme): Thou hast rebuked the proud that are cursed, which do err from thy commandments.

Psalms 69:4 (Parallel theme): They that hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of mine head: they that would destroy me, being mine enemies wrongfully, are mighty: then I restored that which I took not away.

Psalms 35:26 (Parallel theme): Let them be ashamed and brought to confusion together that rejoice at mine hurt: let them be clothed with shame and dishonour that magnify themselves against me.

Psalms 25:3 (Parallel theme): Yea, let none that wait on thee be ashamed: let them be ashamed which transgress without cause.

Psalms 1:2 (Parallel theme): But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.

Psalms 109:3 (Parallel theme): They compassed me about also with words of hatred; and fought against me without a cause.

Psalms 119:23 (Parallel theme): Princes also did sit and speak against me: but thy servant did meditate in thy statutes.

Psalms 119:51 (Parallel theme): The proud have had me greatly in derision: yet have I not declined from thy law.

Jeremiah 50:32 (Parallel theme): And the most proud shall stumble and fall, and none shall raise him up: and I will kindle a fire in his cities, and it shall devour all round about him.