

Psalms 119:84

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

How many are the days of thy servant? when wilt thou execute judgment on them that persecute me?

Analysis

How many are the days of thy servant? (כמה ימי-עבדך)—this isn't casual curiosity but urgent appeal: how much longer must I endure? Kamah (how many) pleads for numbered days, finite suffering. By claiming covenant status (avdekhah, thy servant), he appeals to God's obligations toward His own. **When wilt thou execute judgment on them that persecute me?** (מתי תשׁפַח בָּרָדִי מִשְׁפָט) intensifies with matai (when?)—the cry for divine justice against rodephai (my persecutors) through mishpat (judgment).

The martyrs under the altar cry identically: 'How long, O Lord...dost thou not judge and avenge our blood?' (Revelation 6:10). This isn't vindictiveness but theodicy—will God vindicate His name and His people? Habakkuk asked the same (Habakkuk 1:2), as did Jesus's parable of the persistent widow (Luke 18:7-8).

Historical Context

Israel's history oscillated between persecution and deliverance. During exile and under foreign oppression, the faithful asked how long God would tolerate injustice. The prophets assured that though judgment tarries, it will come (Isaiah 13:11, Ezekiel 7:27). God's timetable differs from human urgency, testing patient faith.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. How do you pray for justice against persecutors while maintaining love for enemies?
2. What does claiming identity as God's 'servant' teach about approaching Him with urgent petitions?
3. When God's timeline differs from yours, how do you balance honest lament with patient trust?

Interlinear Text

כֹּה	הַיְמִינִים	בְּעֵד	מֵת	תַּעֲשֶׂה
H4100	How many are the days	of thy servant	H4970	when wilt thou execute
H3117		H5650		H6213

בְּרֵדָפִים	מִשְׁפָט
on them that persecute	judgment

H7291	H4941
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Additional Cross-References

Psalms 90:12 (Parallel theme): So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.