

Psalm 139:19

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Surely thou wilt slay the wicked, O God: depart from me therefore, ye bloody men.

Analysis

Surely thou wilt slay the wicked, O God: depart from me therefore, ye bloody men. The psalm's tone shifts dramatically from wonder to indignation. Slay (תַּקְתַּל, tqtol, from קָטַל, qatal) is a strong term for violent death—David calls for divine judgment, not personal vengeance. **The wicked** (רָשָׁעִים, resha'im) are not just sinners generally but God's enemies specifically, those who oppose His righteous rule.

Bloody men (אַנְשֵׁי דָמִים, anshei damim) literally means 'men of bloods'—those guilty of violence and murder. David's prayer reflects the imprecatory psalms tradition: those who align with God must oppose His enemies. This isn't personal vindictiveness but holy jealousy for God's honor. The imperative **depart from me** shows David's refusal to compromise with wickedness—knowing God intimately (vv. 1-18) produces moral clarity and separation.

Historical Context

Written during a period of conflict (possibly Absalom's rebellion or Saul's persecution), David faced real 'bloody men' seeking his life. Imprecatory psalms (35, 69, 109, 137, 139) were prayers for God's justice, not private revenge. Jesus quotes Psalm 109 (Acts 1:20), and Revelation depicts final judgment on God's enemies.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 – Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How do you reconcile David's prayer for God to slay the wicked with Jesus's command to love enemies?
2. In what ways are you tempted to tolerate or compromise with 'bloody men'—those whose values violently oppose God's?
3. What is the difference between personal vindictiveness and holy desire for God's justice?

Interlinear Text

אָמַר	תְּקַטֵּל	אֶל-וּפָה	רְשָׁעִים	אַבְנֵשׁ
H518	Surely thou wilt slay	O God	the wicked	men

מִנְיָם	מִן	מִן	מִן	מִן	מִן
from me therefore ye bloody	depart	H1818	H5493		H4480

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 5:6 (Blood): Thou shalt destroy them that speak leasing: the LORD will abhor the bloody and deceitful man.

Isaiah 11:4 (Evil): But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.

Psalms 6:8 (Parallel theme): Depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity; for the LORD hath heard the voice of my weeping.

Psalms 119:115 (Evil): Depart from me, ye evildoers: for I will keep the commandments of my God.

Psalms 9:17 (Evil): The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God.

Psalms 55:23 (Blood): But thou, O God, shalt bring them down into the pit of destruction: bloody and deceitful men shall not live out half their days; but I will trust in thee.

Psalms 64:7 (References God): But God shall shoot at them with an arrow; suddenly shall they be wounded.

Psalms 94:23 (Evil): And he shall bring upon them their own iniquity, and shall cut them off in their own wickedness; yea, the LORD our God shall cut them off.

Matthew 25:41 (Evil): Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:

2 Corinthians 6:17 (Parallel theme): Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you,