

Psalms 143:9

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Deliver me, O LORD, from mine enemies: I flee unto thee to hide me.

Analysis

Deliver me, O LORD, from mine enemies: I flee unto thee to hide me. After rehearsing distress (vv. 3-4), remembering God's works (v. 5), and crying for swift help (v. 7), David now makes his primary petition: "Deliver me" (hatsileini, הַצִּילֵנִי) from enemies. The verb natsal (נָצַל) means to snatch away, rescue, or save from danger. It's the language of deliverance from mortal threat—the same verb used for Israel's exodus rescue (Exodus 3:8).

"From mine enemies" (me'oyevai, מֵאֹיְבָי) identifies the threat as personal adversaries, though these may include both human foes and spiritual enemies (sin, Satan, death). David doesn't ask for strength to fight them himself but for God to deliver him—acknowledging his own inability and God's sufficiency.

"I flee unto thee to hide me" (elekha kisiti, אֶלֶיְכָּה כִּסִּיתִי) uses kasah (כָּסָה), meaning to cover, conceal, or hide. David runs to God for refuge, as one might flee to a fortified city or sanctuary. This echoes Psalm 142:5: "Thou art my refuge." Proverbs 18:10 declares, "The name of the LORD is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe." David's refuge isn't geographic location, military alliance, or personal resourcefulness—it's God Himself.

Historical Context

Cities of refuge provided sanctuary in Israel for those fleeing vengeance (Numbers 35:9-15; Joshua 20). The altar also offered asylum (Exodus 21:13-14; 1 Kings 1:50;

2:28). These institutions reflected theological truth: God Himself is ultimate refuge. David's fugitive years taught him this reality—no physical location guaranteed safety, but God's presence did. This experience shaped David's theology of divine refuge, expressed throughout his psalms (Psalm 7:1; 11:1; 16:1; 31:1; 71:1; 141:8).

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. What 'enemies' (whether human adversaries, besetting sins, or spiritual forces) do you need deliverance from?
2. How does 'fleeing to God to hide' differ from escapism or avoidance of necessary action?
3. In what practical ways can you make God your refuge when threatened or afraid?

Interlinear Text

הַצִּילֵנִי	מֵאֹיְבֵי י	יְהוָה	אֵל יֵי	כִסְתֵּנִי:
Deliver	from mine enemies	me O LORD	^{H413}	I flee unto thee to hide
^{H5337}	^{H341}	^{H3068}		^{H3680}

Additional Cross-References

Proverbs 18:10 (References Lord): The name of the LORD is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe.

Psalms 59:1 (Parallel theme): Deliver me from mine enemies, O my God: defend me from them that rise up against me.

Psalms 142:5 (References Lord): I cried unto thee, O LORD: I said, Thou art my refuge and my portion in the land of the living.

Psalms 56:9 (Parallel theme): When I cry unto thee, then shall mine enemies turn back: this I know; for God is for me.

Psalms 31:15 (Parallel theme): My times are in thy hand: deliver me from the hand of mine enemies, and from them that persecute me.

From KJV Study • kjevstudy.org