

Psalm 35:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

They rewarded me evil for good to the spoiling of my soul.

Analysis

The principle of returning evil for good violates natural justice and covenant loyalty (Hebrew 'chesed'). The phrase 'spoiling of my soul' indicates the devastating spiritual impact of betrayal—it depletes inner vitality and trust. This experience typologically points to Judas's betrayal of Christ, who received evil for good. Romans 12:21 reverses this dynamic: 'Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.'

Historical Context

David likely references specific betrayals, possibly during Saul's court when servants turned against him despite his loyal service, or during Absalom's conspiracy when former allies became enemies.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How do you continue doing good when it's been rewarded with evil?
2. What does it look like to overcome evil with good in your relationships?

Interlinear Text

לְנַפְשֵׁי: שָׁכַל טוֹב הַנּוֹתֵר בְּעֵת חֹתֶם וְעַל יְשָׁלָם וְנִי
They rewarded me evil for good to the spoiling of my soul
H7999 H7451 H8478 H2896 H7908 H5315

Additional Cross-References

John 10:32 (Good): Jesus answered them, Many good works have I shewed you from my Father; for which of those works do ye stone me?

Psalms 38:20 (Evil): They also that render evil for good are mine adversaries; because I follow the thing that good is.

Jeremiah 18:20 (Evil): Shall evil be recompensed for good? for they have digged a pit for my soul. Remember that I stood before thee to speak good for them, and to turn away thy wrath from them.

Proverbs 17:13 (Evil): Whoso rewardeth evil for good, evil shall not depart from his house.

1 Samuel 19:15 (Parallel theme): And Saul sent the messengers again to see David, saying, Bring him up to me in the bed, that I may slay him.