

Psalms 37:14

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The wicked have drawn out the sword, and have bent their bow, to cast down the poor and needy, and to slay such as be of upright conversation.

Analysis

The weapons—sword and bow—represent both close combat and distance attack, indicating comprehensive assault. The targets—'poor and needy' and 'upright'—are vulnerable and righteous, those most deserving protection yet most often victimized. 'Cast down' and 'slay' reveal murderous intent. This verse exposes the wicked's cowardice: rather than confronting equals, they attack the defenseless. Yet verse 15 will reverse this, showing divine justice ensures the oppressor's weapons become instruments of self-destruction.

Historical Context

Swords and bows were primary ancient weapons. The poor and needy lacked resources for defense, making them easy targets for exploitation and violence by the powerful.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How are you called to defend the 'poor and needy' against those who would exploit them?
2. When has your uprightness made you a target for the wicked?

Interlinear Text

ל הַפִּיל ק שְׁתִּים פָּתַח וְ רַשְׁעִים יַדְרֵךְ וְ חַרְבָּה
the sword have drawn out The wicked and have bent their bow to cast down
H2719 H6605 H7563 H1869 H7198 H5307

דְּרָרָה ל טָב וּמָן וְאָבִי וּן עַנְּן
the poor and needy and to slay such as be of upright conversation
H6041 H34 H2873 H3477 H1870

Additional Cross-References

Proverbs 29:27 (Evil): An unjust man is an abomination to the just: and he that is upright in the way is abomination to the wicked.

Psalms 11:2 (Evil): For, lo, the wicked bend their bow, they make ready their arrow upon the string, that they may privily shoot at the upright in heart.

1 John 3:12 (Evil): Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous.