

Psalm 37:32

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The wicked watcheth the righteous, and seeketh to slay him.

Analysis

The wicked watcheth the righteous (צָפֵה רָשָׁע לְצַדִּיק, tzofeh rasha la-tzaddik)—Tzafah means to spy, observe with hostile intent. **And seeketh to slay him** (וְמִבְּקֵשׁ, u-mevakesh lahamito)—This isn't paranoia but reality: righteous living provokes persecution (2 Timothy 3:12).

David experienced this from Saul's murderous pursuit to Absalom's rebellion. Jesus was watched constantly by religious leaders seeking accusations (Luke 14:1, 20:20). The wicked's watchfulness betrays their insecurity—they cannot ignore righteousness. Yet verse 33 promises divine protection against this threat.

Historical Context

David wrote from experience of being hunted by Saul (1 Samuel 19-26) and betrayed by close associates. In the Greco-Roman world, early Christians faced similar surveillance, with neighbors reporting those who refused emperor worship or pagan festivals.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. When have you felt watched or opposed because of your Christian witness and testimony?
2. How should awareness of hostile scrutiny affect your conduct—toward paranoia or confidence in God?
3. Why does righteousness provoke such intense opposition rather than indifference or tolerance?

Interlinear Text

לְבָמִיתָן וְמַבְקֵה שְׁאָלָה יְקַנֵּתְךָ כִּי־
watcheth The wicked the righteous and seeketh to slay
H6822 H7563 H6662 H1245 H4191

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