

Psalms 38:19

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But mine enemies are lively, and they are strong: and they that hate me wrongfully are multiplied.

Analysis

But mine enemies are lively, and they are strong: and they that hate me wrongfully are multiplied. The contrast: David weakens (vv.1-18) while enemies are lively (חַי, chay, vigorous/living) and strong (עָצוּם, atsum, mighty/numerous). Those who hate wrongfully (שִׂנְאָה שְׁקֶר, sane sheqer, hate with deception/falsehood) are multiplied (רָבַב, rabab, increased).

David experiences the paradox of discipline: while he's crushed under God's hand, his adversaries flourish. The phrase 'hate me wrongfully' (Hebrew: sheqer, without cause/falsehood) anticipates Psalm 69:4 and Christ's prophecy: 'They hated me without a cause' (John 15:25). Unjust suffering while weakened by legitimate discipline creates profound tension—testing whether David will trust God's justice or despair.

Historical Context

David's conspiring enemies (Absalom, Ahithophel, others) gained strength precisely when illness/discipline weakened him. Ancient near eastern politics operated on perceived strength—vultures circled the wounded. The multiplication of 'wrongful' enemies suggests opportunistic allies joining David's downfall. Yet this same pattern would characterize Messiah's rejection.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. How do you respond when legitimate discipline from God coincides with illegitimate attacks from enemies?
2. What does the flourishing of 'wrongful' enemies while you're weakened teach about temporal versus eternal justice?
3. How does knowing Christ was 'hated wrongfully' encourage you when suffering unjust opposition during seasons of discipline?

Interlinear Text

וְ, אֹיְבֵי	חַיִּים	עָצָמוֹ	וְכַבּוֹ	שׂוֹנְאֵי
But mine enemies	are lively	and they are strong	are multiplied	and they that hate
H341	H2416	H6105	H7231	H8130
שָׂקָר:				
me wrongfully				
H8267				

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 35:19 (Parallel theme): Let not them that are mine enemies wrongfully rejoice over me: neither let them wink with the eye that hate me without a cause.