

Psalm 40:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For innumerable evils have compassed me about: mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up; they are more than the hairs of mine head: therefore my heart faileth me.

Analysis

The shift to lament reveals David's honest assessment: 'innumerable evils have compassed me about.' His 'iniquities' (avonot) have 'taken hold' of him, suggesting consequences of sin that entangle and bind. The phrase 'they are more than the hairs of mine head' echoes verse 5's abundance language but now applied to troubles, creating a striking contrast.

Historical Context

David's candid confession of personal iniquity distinguishes biblical faith from works-righteousness systems. Even the 'man after God's own heart' acknowledges moral failure before the holy God.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. How does David's honesty about his own iniquity challenge superficial approaches to worship?
2. What does it mean that our sins can 'take hold' of us?

Interlinear Text

מִסְפָּר	רַא	אֵין	עַד	בְּעֵזֶת	עַלְיָה	אַפְפָא	כִּי	כִּי
H3588	have compassed	H5921	evils	H5704	H369	For innumerable		
	H661		H7451				H4557	
הָשִׁיג וָנַי	עַז וּנְתִי	אֵלָא	לֹא	לְתִי				
have taken hold	me about mine iniquities	H5381	H5771	H3808	upon me so that I am not able		H3201	
לְרָא וְת	עַצְמָה וְ	מִשְׁעָר וְת	רַאשְׁׁה וְ	לִבְבָּנִים				
to look up	they are more	H8185	H7218	H7200	than the hairs	of mine head	therefore my heart	faileth
	H6105						H3820	H5800

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 38:4 (Parallel theme): For mine iniquities are gone over mine head: as an heavy burden they are too heavy for me.

Psalms 73:26 (Parallel theme): My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.

Psalms 69:4 (Parallel theme): They that hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of mine head: they that would destroy me, being mine enemies wrongfully, are mighty: then I restored that which I took not away.

Psalms 19:12 (Parallel theme): Who can understand his errors? cleanse thou me from secret faults.

Psalms 116:3 (Parallel theme): The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me: I found trouble and sorrow.

