

Psalms 49:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Wherefore should I fear in the days of evil, when the iniquity of my heels shall compass me about?

Analysis

The riddle begins: 'Wherefore should I fear in the days of evil, when the iniquity of my heels shall compass me about?' The 'days of evil' are times of trouble and danger. 'Iniquity of my heels' may refer to enemies who dog the psalmist's steps or to sins that pursue him. Either way, the question probes the grounds of fear.

Historical Context

The heel imagery appears in Genesis 3:15 (the serpent strikes the heel) and Genesis 25:26 (Jacob grasped Esau's heel). It suggests being pursued, tripped up, or attacked from behind.

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. What are the 'days of evil' in which fear seems warranted?
2. How do past sins or present enemies 'compass us about'?

Interlinear Text

ל פה א יא ב ימי ב ע רו | עזב י
H4100 Wherefore should I fear in the days of evil when the iniquity of my heels
H3372 H3117 H7451 H5771 H6120

וְסַבְּנֵי
shall compass

Additional Cross-References

Acts 27:24 (Parallel theme): Saying, Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Caesar: and, lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee.

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