

Psalms 58:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Yea, in heart ye work wickedness; ye weigh the violence of your hands in the earth.

Analysis

The contrast between speaking justice (v.1) and working wickedness 'in heart' reveals that sin originates internally before manifesting in action (Mark 7:21-23). 'Weigh the violence of your hands' uses courtroom imagery—judges who should weigh evidence instead weigh out (dispense) violence. This inversion of justice anticipates eschatological judgment where earthly judges face divine scrutiny.

Historical Context

Ancient judges literally used balances/scales, making the metaphor vivid. Corrupt judges accepting bribes (Exodus 23:8) or showing partiality (Leviticus 19:15) violated covenant law, warranting the prophetic denunciation this psalm represents.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How does heart wickedness manifest in institutional injustice?
2. What does God's judgment of judges reveal about standards for those in authority?

Interlinear Text

אָף	בְּלֵב	עֹלֶת	תִּפְעַלְוִי	בְּאָרֶץ	סִמְמָה
H637	Yea in heart	wickedness	ye work	in the earth	the violence
H3820	H5766	H6466	H776	H2555	

תִּפְלֹתָן: וְדִיכָּה
of your hands ye weigh
H3027 H6424

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 94:20 (Parallel theme): Shall the throne of iniquity have fellowship with thee, which frameth mischief by a law?

Isaiah 10:1 (Parallel theme): Woe unto them that decree unrighteous decrees, and that write grievousness which they have prescribed;

Isaiah 26:7 (Parallel theme): The way of the just is uprightness: thou, most upright, dost weigh the path of the just.

Psalms 21:11 (Evil): For they intended evil against thee: they imagined a mischievous device, which they are not able to perform.

Ecclesiastes 3:16 (Evil): And moreover I saw under the sun the place of judgment, that wickedness was there; and the place of righteousness, that iniquity was there.

Ezekiel 22:27 (Parallel theme): Her princes in the midst thereof are like wolves ravening the prey, to shed blood, and to destroy souls, to get dishonest gain.

Ezekiel 22:12 (Parallel theme): In thee have they taken gifts to shed blood; thou hast taken usury and increase, and thou hast greedily gained of thy neighbours by extortion, and hast forgotten me, saith the Lord GOD.

Malachi 3:15 (Evil): And now we call the proud happy; yea, they that work wickedness are set up; yea, they that tempt God are even delivered.

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