

Psalms 6:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

My soul is also sore vexed: but thou, O LORD, how long?

Analysis

The distress deepens from bones to soul. 'Sore vexed' (Hebrew 'bahal me'od') intensifies the previous verse - not just troubled but utterly dismayed. The soul ('nephesh' - life, being) encompasses the inner person. 'How long?' is not doubt but the cry of faith under trial, echoing Job and Habakkuk. This rhetorical question acknowledges God's sovereignty over timing while expressing honest anguish. It teaches that authentic faith includes lament, not just praise. Jesus Himself asked 'How long?' of His generation (Mark 9:19).

Historical Context

The 'how long' formula appears throughout Psalms and prophetic literature, showing it was a legitimate prayer form. It assumes God will act but questions the timing. This reflects Israel's experience of prolonged suffering - exile, oppression, delayed promises - while maintaining covenant hope. Christians still pray this way, awaiting Christ's return.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. What prolonged trial has led you to cry 'how long' to God?
2. How can you maintain faith and hope when God's timing differs from your expectations?

Interlinear Text

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|----------------|--------------|---------------------|----------|------------------------|-------|----------------|
| מִנְפְּשִׁי | נִבְהַלָּה | מָאֵד | וְאַתָּה | הֵן הָאֵלֹהִים | עַד | מָה־יִּשְׁכַּח |
| My soul | vexed | is also sore | H859 | but thou O LORD | H5704 | H4970 |
| H5315 | H926 | H3966 | | H3068 | | |

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 90:13 (References Lord): Return, O LORD, how long? and let it repent thee concerning thy servants.

John 12:27 (Parallel theme): Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour.