

Psalms 69:33

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For the LORD heareth the poor, and despiseth not his prisoners.

Analysis

The humble shall see this, and be glad: and your heart shall live that seek God. David's anticipated praise and deliverance will benefit not only himself but other believers who witness it. "The humble" (אֲנָוִים/anavim)—the poor, afflicted, meek ones who trust God—will observe David's vindication and "be glad" (וַיִּשְׂמַח/veyismakhu), finding joy and encouragement. One person's deliverance strengthens the faith of all who wait on God.

This communal dimension of worship and testimony is central to biblical piety. Individual suffering and deliverance aren't private matters but corporate realities affecting the whole community's faith. When God vindicates His servant, all who trust Him are encouraged. Conversely, when the righteous suffer unrelieved, others' faith is tested (as verse 6 acknowledged).

"Your heart shall live that seek God" (וַיְחִי לְבַבְכֶּם דֹּרְשֵׁי אֱלֹהִים/yechi levavkhem doreshai elohim) promises renewal, vitality, and encouragement to those who seek God. "Shall live" (וַיְחִי/yechi) suggests revivification, restoration of vitality and hope that suffering had depleted. Those who persistently seek God—maintaining faith through trials—will find their hearts renewed through witnessing God's faithfulness to David.

Historical Context

The anawim (humble, poor, afflicted) feature prominently in Psalms as those who trust God despite oppression and suffering (Psalm 9:12, 18, 10:12, 17, 22:26, 25:9, 34:2, 37:11, 149:4). They're characterized by humility before God, dependence on His deliverance, and solidarity with fellow sufferers. Jesus blessed the "poor in spirit" and "meek" (Matthew 5:3, 5), identifying with this tradition.

Corporate testimony was central to Israel's worship. Individual deliverances were shared publicly so the community's faith was strengthened. Psalms frequently move from individual lament to communal praise precisely because one person's vindication encouraged all. This shaped Christian worship where testimony and shared stories of God's faithfulness build corporate faith.

The promise that hearts will "live" through witnessing God's deliverance anticipates New Testament teaching on mutual encouragement. Believers bear one another's burdens (Galatians 6:2), rejoice with those who rejoice (Romans 12:15), and spur one another toward love and good works (Hebrews 10:24-25).

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How does your testimony of God's faithfulness encourage other believers struggling through similar trials?
2. What does it mean for your 'heart to live' through witnessing God's deliverance of others?
3. In what ways does contemporary individualism undermine the biblical emphasis on corporate testimony and mutual encouragement?

Interlinear Text

כִּי	שָׁמַעַ	אֶל	אֲבוֹנֵי יָם	יְהוָה	וְאֶת	אֲסִיכֵי יוֹ	לֹא
H3588	heareth	H413	the poor	For the LORD	H853	not his prisoners	H3808
	H8085		H34	H3068		H615	
בְּזֶה:							
and despiseth							
H959							

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 68:6 (Parallel theme): God setteth the solitary in families: he bringeth out those which are bound with chains: but the rebellious dwell in a dry land.

Revelation 2:10 (Parallel theme): Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.

Psalms 12:5 (References Lord): For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise, saith the LORD; I will set him in safety from him that puffeth at him.

Psalms 146:7 (References Lord): Which executeth judgment for the oppressed: which giveth food to the hungry. The LORD looseth the prisoners:

Psalms 102:20 (Parallel theme): To hear the groaning of the prisoner; to loose those that are appointed to death;

Psalms 34:6 (References Lord): This poor man cried, and the LORD heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles.

Ephesians 3:1 (Parallel theme): For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles,