

Psalms 70:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Let them be ashamed and confounded that seek after my soul:
let them be turned backward, and put to confusion, that
desire my hurt.

Analysis

The imprecatory prayer for enemies to be 'ashamed and confounded' seeks their defeat and humiliation. 'Turned backward' means routed in battle. 'Put to confusion' depicts total disarray. These prayers aren't personal vengeance but appeals for God's justice against those opposing His purposes. Such psalms anticipate final judgment on impenitent evil (Revelation 19:11-21) while modeling how to process anger righteously—bringing it to God rather than taking revenge (Romans 12:19).

Historical Context

Psalm 70 parallels Psalm 40:13-17, a cry for help against enemies. In David's context, personal enemies often opposed God's anointed king, making attacks on David attacks on God's purposes.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How can you pray for God's justice on evildoers without harboring personal bitterness or seeking revenge?
2. What is the proper Christian use of imprecatory psalms that call for judgment on enemies?
3. How do you balance praying for enemies' conversion (Romans 10:1) with praying for their defeat if they persist in evil?

Interlinear Text

יִבְשׂוּ	וַיִּחְפֹּרוּ	תְּמִבְקֵשׁ	בְּפָשָׁע	וְעַזְבּוּ
Let them be ashamed	and confounded	that seek	after my soul	let them be turned
H954	H2659	H1245	H5315	H5472
אַחֲרֵךְ	וַיַּכְלִם אֶת	בְּשִׁתְבֵּחַ	בְּשִׁתְבֵּחַ	
backward	and put to confusion	that desire	my hurt	
H268	H3637	H2655	H7451	

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 35:4 (Parallel theme): Let them be confounded and put to shame that seek after my soul: let them be turned back and brought to confusion that devise my hurt.

Psalms 35:26 (Parallel theme): Let them be ashamed and brought to confusion together that rejoice at mine hurt: let them be clothed with shame and dishonour that magnify themselves against me.