

Psalms 71:13

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Let them be confounded and consumed that are adversaries to my soul; let them be covered with reproach and dishonour that seek my hurt.

Analysis

The imprecation asks that adversaries 'be consumed' and 'covered with reproach and dishonour' as they sought to bring on the psalmist. This mirrors Haman hanged on his own gallows (Esther 7:10) and Paul's warning that destruction comes on those who harm God's people (2 Thessalonians 1:6). These prayers aren't personal vengeance but appeals for divine justice. They acknowledge God as righteous judge who will vindicate His people and punish impenitent evil.

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern warfare included curses against enemies. Israel's imprecatory psalms channel this reality through proper theological channels—requesting God's justice rather than taking personal revenge.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. How do you process desires for justice on wrongdoers without taking vengeance into your own hands?
2. What is the proper Christian use of imprecatory psalms that call for enemies' destruction?
3. How do you balance praying for enemies' conversion with praying for their defeat if they persist in evil?

Interlinear Text

יְבֹשׁוּ	וְכָלוּ	שֹׁנְאֵי	בְּפֶשַׁעִי	
Let them be confounded	and consumed	that are adversaries	to my soul	
H954	H3615	H7853	H5315	
יִעֲטוּ	בְּרֶפָה	וְכִלְמוֹתַי	בְּקִשְׁתִּי	רָעָתִי
let them be covered	with reproach	and dishonour	that seek	my hurt
H5844	H2781	H3639	H1245	H7451

Additional Cross-References

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.

Jeremiah 20:11 (Parallel theme): But the LORD is with me as a mighty terrible one: therefore my persecutors shall stumble, and they shall not prevail: they shall be greatly ashamed; for they shall not prosper: their everlasting confusion shall never be forgotten.

Psalms 109:29 (Parallel theme): Let mine adversaries be clothed with shame, and let them cover themselves with their own confusion, as with a mantle.

Psalms 71:24 (Parallel theme): My tongue also shall talk of thy righteousness all the day long: for they are confounded, for they are brought unto shame, that seek my hurt.

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.

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