

Psalms 78:62

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

He gave his people over also unto the sword; and was wroth with his inheritance.

Analysis

He gave his people over also unto the sword; and was wroth with his inheritance. The phrase **gave his people over** (vayyasger, וַיַּסֵּג) means to deliver up or surrender—God withdrew protective covering. **Unto the sword** describes military slaughter; 30,000 Israelites died at Aphek (1 Samuel 4:10). Divine wrath manifested in removing divine protection, exposing Israel to their enemies' violence.

Was wroth with his inheritance (charah benachalato, חָרָה בְּנַחֲלָתוֹ) contains tragic irony. Israel was God's special possession, His nachalah (נַחֲלָה)—inherited treasure (Exodus 19:5, Deuteronomy 32:9). Yet their Benefactor became their Judge. Covenant privilege doesn't exempt from covenant curses; it intensifies accountability. Those who know more are judged more strictly (Luke 12:47-48).

This verse anticipates Paul's repeated phrase about God's judicial abandonment: 'God gave them up/over' (Romans 1:24, 26, 28). When people persistently reject God, He eventually grants their desire for autonomy—a terrifying judgment. Hell is God saying, 'Your will be done.'

Historical Context

The Aphek disaster under Eli's weak leadership demonstrated that God doesn't automatically defend covenant people who violate covenant. This shocking reversal—Israel massacred by Philistines—shattered presumptuous confidence in election

privileges apart from obedience. It prepared the way for Samuel's reforms and the monarchy.

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 being part of God's 'inheritance' (the church) increase rather than decrease accountability for faithfulness?
2. What does it mean that God's greatest judgment might be simply giving people over to their chosen autonomy?
3. How should believers respond when God withdraws blessing or protection due to communal sin?

Interlinear Text

וַתֵּן ר	לְהָרֹב	עַם י	וּ בְנִיחָלֶת י	הִתְעַבֵּר:
He gave	also unto the sword	his people	with his inheritance	and was wroth
H5462	H2719	H5971	H5159	H5674