

*Of David*

1-6

Contend, Adonai, with those who contend with me. Wage war against those who wage war with me. ² Take hold of shield and buckler, and rise up for my help. ³ Arm Yourself with the spear and bar the way before my pursuers. Say to my soul, "I am your **Salvation**." ⁴ Let those be ashamed and dishonored who seek my life. Let those be turned back and abased who devise evil against me. ⁵ Let them be like chaff before the wind, with the **angel of Adonai** driving them on. ⁶ Let their way be dark and **slippery**, with the **angel of Adonai** pursuing them.

הללקות

(halaklakoṯ)

"slippery" and "flattery"

7-10

For **without cause** they hid their net for me. **Without cause** they dug a pit for my soul. ⁸ Let **destruction** come upon him unawares, and let the net which he hid catch himself. Into that very **destruction** let him fall. ⁹ And my soul shall rejoice in Adonai. It shall exult in His **salvation**. ¹⁰ All my bones will say, "Adonai, who is like You, who delivers the afflicted from him who is too strong for him, and the afflicted and the needy from him who robs him?"

חנם

(chinam)

"without cause / gratuitously"

שואה

(shoah)

"destruction, calamity" / "Holocaust"

11-12

Violent witnesses rise up; they ask me of things that I do not know. ¹² They repay me evil for good, to the bereave-ment of my soul.

חמס

(chamas)

"violence" / "Hamas"

13-16

But as for me, when they were sick, my clothing was sack-cloth. I humbled my soul with fasting, and my prayer kept returning to my bosom. ¹⁴ I went about as though it were my friend or brother. I bowed down mourning, as one who sorrows for a mother. ¹⁵ But at my stumbling they rejoiced, and gathered themselves together. The smiters whom I did not know gathered together against me, they slandered me without ceasing. ¹⁶ Like godless jesters at a feast, they gnashed at me with their teeth.

17-21

Adonai, how long will You look on? Rescue my soul from their ravages, my only life from the lions. ¹⁸ I will give You thanks in the great **congregation**; I will praise You among a mighty throng. ¹⁹ Do not let my false enemies rejoice over me. Neither let those who hate me **without cause** wink maliciously. ²⁰ For what they speak is not peace, but they devise deceitful words against those who are quiet in the land. ²¹ And they opened their mouth wide against me. They said, “Aha, aha, our eyes have seen it!”

22-28

You have seen it, Adonai, do not keep silent. O Adonai, do not be far from me. ²³ Stir up Yourself, and awake to my right, and to my cause, my God and my Master. ²⁴ Judge me, Adonai my God, according to Your righteousness, and do not let them rejoice over me. ²⁵ Do not let them say in their heart, “Aha, our desire!” Do not let them say, “We have swallowed him up!” ²⁶ Let those be ashamed and abased altogether who rejoice at my distress. Let those be clothed with shame and dishonor who magnify themselves over me.

27-28

Let them shout for joy and rejoice, who favor my vindication, and let them say continually, “Adonai be magnified, who delights in the prosperity of His servant.” ²⁸ And my tongue shall declare Your righteousness and Your praise all day long.



REFERENCES:

Verse 1

“These are enemies whose opposition to David and Yisrael is an essential part of their character and basic outlook on life.” (R' Samson Raphael Hirsch, penned in 1882)

Verse 6

Jeremiah 23:12 Therefore their way shall be to them like slippery [הללקקות, *halaklakot*] paths in the darkness, into which they shall be driven and fall, for I will bring disaster upon them in the year of their punishment, declares Adonai.

Daniel 11:21 In his place shall arise a contemptible person to whom royal majesty has not been given. He shall come in without warning and obtain the kingdom by flatteries [הללקקות, *halaklakot*].

Daniel 11:34 When they stumble, they shall receive a little help. And many shall join themselves to them with flattery [הללקקות, *halaklakot*].

Verses 7,19

Psalms 69:4 More in number than the hairs of my head are those who hate me without cause [חנם, *chinam*]. Mighty are those who would destroy me, those who attack me with lies. What I did not steal must I now restore?

John 15:25 But the word that is written in their Torah must be fulfilled: “They hated me without a cause.”

“Why was the Second Temple destroyed? It was destroyed due to ‘hatred without a cause’ during that period. This comes to teach you that the sin of ‘hatred without a cause’ is equivalent to the three severe transgressions: idol worship, forbidden sexual relations and bloodshed [the sins that were the cause of the First Temple’s destruction].” (b.Yoma 9b)

Verses 7-8

“They plot to strike me suddenly with unexpected destruction, allegedly only in order to prevent me from carrying out the plots which they claim I have laid against them.” Even in David’s day it was the standard maneuver for men of base malice to project their own wickedness into the object of their hatred and to represent their fight to the rest of the world as a justified means of self-defense. (R' Samson Raphael Hirsch, penned in 1882)

Verse 11

Genesis 6:11,13 Now the earth was corrupt in the sight of God, and the earth was filled with violence [חמס, *chamas*] ...Then God said to Noah, “The end of all flesh has come before Me, for the earth is filled with violence [חמס, *chamas*] because of them, and behold, I am about to ruin them with the earth.”

Psalms 11:5 Adonai tests the righteous and the wicked, and the one who loves violence [חמס, *chamas*] His soul hates.