

Verses 8-9 find the Psalmist asking for the life of the wicked.

(These verses are given an interesting application in Acts 1).

The writer desires that the foe

8. Let his days be few, and let another take his office.
9. Let his children be fatherless and his wife a widow.

should be no more and he does it very emphatically. But these expressions are not unlike the suggestions of 1 Cor. 5:5 (and the implied facts of 1 John 5) although there are some sweeping differences. An enormous difference exists between the Christian character at view in the New Testament epistles and the wicked foe of the Psalm. But the overall idea is very similar. It is the thrust that a life may be so wicked as to merit death and that in so dealing with the wicked party God honors himself in accord with His righteous character.

The third block of material centers in vss. 10-11 and the aim

of the prayer is that the foe should lose his material possessions. At any rate, there should be nothing left for his heirs to

10. Let his children be continually vagabonds, and beg: let them seek their bread also out of their desolate places.
11. Let the extortioner catch all that he hath; and let the strangers spoil his labour.

gain at his death. It is a striking request and seems to suggest that the continual possession of goods appeared as a mark of virtue. Though not a necessary conclusion, the Psalmist would like him to depart from this life as empty as he came.

What may be involved in this case is the idea of exampleship.

Those who prosper without regard for God should not be allowed to think they will be permitted to escape with ill-gotten gains. No one else should be tempted towards a path of unrighteousness by seeing a wicked person successfully amass great goods. Mere possessions in the Old Testament are neither a proof of blessing or a witness against blessing. There are some other variables that must be considered. But in effect the writer of the Psalm is saying: "Don't let anyone be confused about the ungodly character and think that it is the basis for