

Amos 5:10

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

They hate him that rebuketh in the gate, and they abhor him that speaketh uprightly.

Analysis

They hate him that rebuketh in the gate (שֹׂנְאֵי בִשְׁעַר מוֹכִיחַ)—the "gate" (sha'ar) was the civic center where legal cases were heard and justice administered. The "rebuker" (mokhiach, from יָכַח yakach, "to reprove/judge") was the honest judge or witness who exposed injustice. Israel's corrupt elite hated those who exposed their exploitation because truth threatened their wealth built on oppression.

They abhor him that speaketh uprightly (וְיִתְעֲבּוּ דִבֶּר תָּמִים)—"abhor" (ta'av, תִּעֵב) is intense disgust, the same revulsion used for idolatry. "Uprightly" (tamim, תָּמִים) means complete, blameless, ethically whole—the word describes Noah (Genesis 6:9) and Job (Job 1:1). Israel had inverted moral values: they despised integrity and honored corruption. This moral inversion appears when societies prioritize profit over justice. Jesus faced identical hatred—truth-speakers are always threats to systems built on lies (John 7:7, 15:18-19).

Historical Context

In ancient Israel, the city gate functioned as courthouse, marketplace, and civic forum. Elders and judges sat at the gate to hear disputes (Deuteronomy 21:19, 22:15; Ruth 4:1-11). By Amos's time (760-750 BC), Israel's courts had become thoroughly corrupt—judges accepted bribes (Amos 5:12), perverted justice for the wealthy, and sold verdicts to the highest bidder. Anyone who spoke truth or defended the poor faced hatred from the powerful elite whose wealth depended on exploitation.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How does hatred of truth-tellers reveal the depth of moral corruption in any society?
2. In what settings today do people face hostility for speaking biblical truth or defending the vulnerable?

Interlinear Text

שָׂנְאֻ וְ	בֶּשַׁ עַר	מוֹכֵ יִם	וְדֹבֵר	תָּמָר יִם
They hate	in the gate	him that rebuketh	him that speaketh	uprightly
H8130	H8179	H3198	H1696	H8549

וְיִתְעַבּוּ:
and they abhor
H8581

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 29:21 (Parallel theme): That make a man an offender for a word, and lay a snare for him that reproveth in the gate, and turn aside the just for a thing of nought.

1 Kings 22:8 (Parallel theme): And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, There is yet one man, Micaiah the son of Imlah, by whom we may enquire of the LORD: but I hate him; for he doth not prophesy good concerning me, but evil. And Jehoshaphat said, Let not the king say so.

Revelation 11:10 (Parallel theme): And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth.

John 7:7 (Parallel theme): The world cannot hate you; but me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil.

John 15:19 (Parallel theme): If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.

John 3:20 (Parallel theme): For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.

1 Kings 18:17 (Parallel theme): And it came to pass, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said unto him, Art thou he that troubleth Israel?

1 Kings 21:20 (Parallel theme): And Ahab said to Elijah, Hast thou found me, O mine enemy? And he answered, I have found thee: because thou hast sold thyself to work evil in the sight of the LORD.

2 Chronicles 36:16 (Parallel theme): But they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of the LORD arose against his people, till there was no remedy.

2 Chronicles 25:16 (Parallel theme): And it came to pass, as he talked with him, that the king said unto him, Art thou made of the king's counsel? forbear; why shouldest thou be smitten? Then the prophet forbore, and said, I know that God hath determined to destroy thee, because thou hast done this, and hast not hearkened unto my counsel.