

# Deuteronomy 31:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then my anger shall be kindled against them in that day, and I will forsake them, and I will hide my face from them, and they shall be devoured, and many evils and troubles shall befall them; so that they will say in that day, Are not these evils come upon us, because our God is not among us?

## Analysis

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**Then my anger shall be kindled against them in that day**—covenant violation would provoke divine wrath. **And I will forsake them, and I will hide my face from them**—the terrifying withdrawal of God's presence and protection. **And they shall be devoured**—by enemies and circumstances. **And many evils and troubles shall befall them**—covenant curses enumerated in Deuteronomy 28:15-68. **So that they will say in that day, Are not these evils come upon us, because our God is not among us?**—belated recognition that calamity resulted from God's absence due to their rebellion.

God's 'hidden face' is Scripture's most dreadful judgment—not annihilation but abandonment (Psalm 27:9, Isaiah 59:2). Israel would recognize consequences of forfeiting divine protection but apparently not repent adequately, since God describes their response as question rather than confession. The prophets repeatedly warned that judgment was coming, exile was inevitable, yet mercy would eventually restore remnants (Jeremiah 29:10-14). Christ experienced the ultimate 'hidden face' on the cross ('My God, why have You forsaken Me?') to ensure believers never face final abandonment.

## Historical Context

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Prophesied circa 1406 BC, fulfilled progressively through Israel's history. Periods of divine protection alternated with judgment—Philistine oppression, Assyrian invasion, Babylonian exile. Each demonstrated that military defeat wasn't merely geopolitical misfortune but covenant consequences. The question 'Is not God among us?' tragically echoed their presumptuous confidence before disasters (Jeremiah 7:4, Micah 3:11). Only after seventy years of exile did Judah adequately repent, and the return remained incomplete until Christ established the new covenant.

## Related Passages

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**1 John 4:8** — God is love

**John 15:13** — Greatest form of love

## Study Questions

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1. What does it mean that God 'hides His face'? How is divine absence worse than direct punishment?
2. How do people recognize consequences of sin yet fail to adequately repent? What's the difference?
3. How does Christ's experience of God's hidden face on the cross guarantee believers never face ultimate abandonment?

## Interlinear Text

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וְנִדְּכָה הַ	אֲפִי	בַּיּוֹם	הַהוּא	
shall be kindled	Then my anger	against them in that day		
H2734	H639	H3117	H1931	
וְעִזַּבְתִּי יָם	וְהִסְתַּרְתִּי יָם	פָּנַי	מֵהֶם	וְהִי הַ
and I will forsake	them and I will hide	my face		
H5800	H5641	H6440	H1992	H1961
לָאֵכָל לְ	מָצָא וְנִי	הֲרָע וְ	כַּב וְ	
from them and they shall be devoured	come	Are not these evils	and many	
H398	H4672	H7451	H7227	
וְצָר וְ	וְאָמַר	בַּיּוֹם	הַהוּא	הֲלֹא
and troubles	them so that they will say	against them in that day		
H6869	H559	H3117	H1931	H3808
לְ	אֵין	אֱלֹהֵי	בְּקִרְבִּי	מָצָא וְנִי
H5921	H3588	H369		
	upon us because our God	is not among	come	
	H430	H7130	H4672	
הֲרָע וְ	הֲאֵלֶּה:			
Are not these evils				
H7451	H428			

## Additional Cross-References

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**Isaiah 8:17** (Parallel theme): And I will wait upon the LORD, that hideth his face from the house of Jacob, and I will look for him.

**Psalms 104:29** (Parallel theme): Thou hidest thy face, they are troubled: thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to their dust.

**2 Chronicles 15:2** (Parallel theme): And he went out to meet Asa, and said unto him, Hear ye me, Asa, and all Judah and Benjamin; The LORD is with you, while ye be with him; and if ye seek him, he will be found of you; but if ye forsake him, he will forsake you.

**Numbers 14:42** (Parallel theme): Go not up, for the LORD is not among you; that ye be not smitten before your enemies.

**Judges 6:13** (Parallel theme): And Gideon said unto him, Oh my Lord, if the LORD be with us, why then is all this befallen us? and where be all his miracles which our fathers told us of, saying, Did not the LORD bring us up from Egypt? but now the LORD hath forsaken us, and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites.

**Isaiah 64:7** (Parallel theme): And there is none that calleth upon thy name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee: for thou hast hid thy face from us, and hast consumed us, because of our iniquities.

**Psalms 30:7** (Parallel theme): LORD, by thy favour thou hast made my mountain to stand strong: thou didst hide thy face, and I was troubled.

**Jeremiah 23:33** (Parallel theme): And when this people, or the prophet, or a priest, shall ask thee, saying, What is the burden of the LORD? thou shalt then say unto them, What burden? I will even forsake you, saith the LORD.

**1 Chronicles 28:9** (References God): And thou, Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind: for the LORD searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts: if thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever.