

Hebrews 13:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body.

Analysis

Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body. This command requires solidarity with imprisoned and suffering believers. 'Remember' (μimnēskethe, μιμνήσκεσθε) means more than mental recollection—it demands active care and support. 'As bound with them' (hōs syndesmoi, ὡς σύνδεσμοι, 'as fellow-prisoners') calls for empathetic identification, feeling their suffering as personal experience.

The phrase 'as being yourselves also in the body' can mean

1. being in the same physical body (vulnerable to similar persecution), or
2. being in the same spiritual body (church).

Both apply. Believers should remember imprisoned Christians both because we could face same fate and because we're united in Christ's body—when one member suffers, all suffer (1 Corinthians 12:26). This unity transcends geographic separation.

This challenges comfortable Christianity that ignores persecuted global church. Today, millions of Christians worldwide face imprisonment, torture, and death for faith. We're called to remember and support them through prayer, advocacy, and material aid. Organizations like Voice of the Martyrs exist to facilitate this biblical duty. Reformed theology's emphasis on church's visible, universal nature reminds

us that believers across the world are our brothers and sisters whose suffering demands our active concern and aid.

Historical Context

The original readers had 'had compassion of me in my bonds' (Hebrews 10:34), showing they supported imprisoned believers. In Roman world, prisoners depended on outside support for food, clothing, and basic necessities since prisons didn't provide these. Visiting prisoners was dangerous—it identified visitors as Christians and sympathizers, risking arrest. Yet early Christians courageously supported imprisoned brothers and sisters despite danger. Church father Tertullian (c. 200 AD) described Christian communities collecting funds for prisoners. Visiting imprisoned believers was considered mark of genuine faith. Polycarp's martyrdom account describes Christian community supporting him before execution. This sacrificial care testified powerfully to pagan observers.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Study Questions

1. How are you actively remembering and supporting persecuted Christians globally through prayer, advocacy, or financial support?
2. What prevents you from identifying with suffering believers 'as bound with them'—ignorance, comfort, or indifference?
3. In what practical ways can you demonstrate solidarity with imprisoned and persecuted Christians today?

Interlinear Text

μυμνήσκεσθε	τῶν	δεσμίων	ὥς	συνδεδεμένοι	τῶν	
Remember	G3588	them that are in bonds	as	bound with them	G3588	
G3403		G1198	G5613	G4887		
κακουχουμένων	ὥς	καὶ	αὐτοὶ	ὄντες	ἐν	σώματι
and them which suffer adversity	as	also	yourselves	being	in	the body
G2558	G5613	G2532	G846	G5607	G1722	G4983

Additional Cross-References

Matthew 25:36 (Parallel theme): Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.

Hebrews 10:34 (Parallel theme): For ye had compassion of me in my bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance.

Romans 12:15 (Parallel theme): Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.

1 Corinthians 12:26 (Parallel theme): And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it.

Colossians 4:18 (Parallel theme): The salutation by the hand of me Paul. Remember my bonds. Grace be with you. Amen.

1 Peter 3:8 (Parallel theme): Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous:

Matthew 25:43 (Parallel theme): I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not.

Acts 24:23 (Parallel theme): And he commanded a centurion to keep Paul, and to let him have liberty, and that he should forbid none of his acquaintance to minister or come unto him.

Ephesians 4:1 (Parallel theme): I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called,

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