

# Jeremiah 23:40

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And I will bring an everlasting reproach upon you, and a perpetual shame, which shall not be forgotten.

## Analysis

**And I will bring an everlasting reproach upon you, and a perpetual shame, which shall not be forgotten** (וַנְתַּתִּי עֲלֵיכֶם חֶרְפָּת עוֹלָם וְכִלְמוֹת עוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר לֹא תִשְׁכַּח, v'natatti aleikhem cherpah olam ukhlilmut olam asher lo tisshakech). The dual judgment—חֶרְפָּה (cherpah, 'reproach/disgrace') and כִּלְמוֹת (k'lilmah, 'shame/humiliation')—both modified by עוֹלָם (olam, 'everlasting/perpetual') creates emphatic finality. The irony is sharp: though God will forget them (v. 39), their shame **shall not be forgotten** (לֹא תִשְׁכַּח, lo tisshakech). They wanted to be remembered; they will be—as objects of reproach.

This reverses covenant blessing. God promised Abraham, 'I will make thy name great' (Genesis 12:2). Now His people will have everlasting infamy instead. The 'reproach' (חֶרְפָּה) is public disgrace—nations mocking Judah's fall. The 'shame' (כִּלְמוֹת) is internal humiliation—psychological devastation of recognizing deserved judgment. Being forgotten by God yet remembered in shame is tragic irony. Jesus warned similarly: better to never have been born (Matthew 26:24). The chapter concludes where it began—false prophecy leads to everlasting shame. Truth may be temporarily unpopular, but lies produce permanent disgrace.

## Historical Context

Jewish exile became proverbial in the ancient world—Babylon, then Rome (70 AD), used 'Judah' as example of divine abandonment and national catastrophe. For 2,500+ years, the reproach of exile has marked Jewish history, from Babylonian

taunts to modern anti-Semitism. Yet God's covenant faithfulness eventually overcame even 'everlasting' reproach—Israel's restoration demonstrates that with God, even perpetual shame can be redeemed, though never forgotten as warning to future generations.

## Related Passages

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**James 2:17** — Faith and works

**Hebrews 11:1** — Definition of faith

## Study Questions

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1. What legacy are you creating—one of faithfulness or one of 'everlasting reproach'?
2. How does the fear of being forgotten by God compare to being remembered in shame?
3. In what ways can even 'perpetual shame' serve redemptive purposes as warning to others?

## Interlinear Text

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וְנִתַּתִּי י'	עָלֶיךָ מַ	חֶרֶפַּ ת	עוֹלָם מַ	וְכָל־מִוֹת	עוֹלָם מַ
And I will bring	H5921	reproach	an everlasting	shame	an everlasting
H5414		H2781	H5769	H3640	H5769
לֹא אֶשְׁכַּח	תִּשְׁכַּח:				
H834	H3808	which shall not be forgotten			
		H7911			

## Additional Cross-References

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**Jeremiah 20:11** (Eternal Life): But the LORD is with me as a mighty terrible one: therefore my persecutors shall stumble, and they shall not prevail: they shall be

greatly ashamed; for they shall not prosper: their everlasting confusion shall never be forgotten.

**Jeremiah 42:18** (Parallel theme): For thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; As mine anger and my fury hath been poured forth upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem; so shall my fury be poured forth upon you, when ye shall enter into Egypt: and ye shall be an execration, and an astonishment, and a curse, and a reproach; and ye shall see this place no more.

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