

# Job 30:29

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

I am a brother to dragons, and a companion to owls.

## Analysis

**I am a brother to dragons** (אֶחָיִי לַתַּנִּינִים, ach hayiti le-tannim)—The noun tannim (תַּנִּינִים) likely refers to jackals (so ESV, NIV), desert scavengers, though some interpret as sea dragons/serpents. The word ach (אֶחָ, brother) indicates kinship or companionship. Job identifies with wild, mournful creatures of desolate places. The phrase **companion to owls** (וְרֵעַ לְבִנּוֹת יַעֲנָה) uses rea' (רֵעַ, friend, companion). Owls (ya'anah, likely referring to ostriches or owls) inhabit ruins, their cry symbolizing desolation (Isaiah 13:21, Micah 1:8).

This is social alienation imagery. Job, once community leader (Job 29), now identifies with outcasts of wilderness. Isaiah 34:13-14 describes Edom's judgment as becoming habitation of dragons and owls—a place of divine curse. Job experiences curse-level desolation. This anticipates Christ "numbered with the transgressors" (Isaiah 53:12), forsaken, despised, rejected (Isaiah 53:3). The gospel's paradox: the Holy One became companion to sinners so they could become children of God (John 1:12).

## Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern texts use animal imagery to express extreme states. Job's self-description as kin to jackals and owls indicates total social marginalization. In honor/shame cultures, this is existential death—loss of community standing. Lepers experienced similar ostracism (Leviticus 13:45-46), living "outside the camp." Job, though righteous, experiences the outcast status reserved for the unclean.

## Related Passages

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**1 John 4:8** — God is love

**1 Corinthians 13:4** — Characteristics of love

## Study Questions

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1. How does Christ's identification with outcasts (Matthew 11:19, friend of sinners) transform social marginalization?
2. What comfort does Job 30:29 offer to believers experiencing social isolation?
3. How should the church respond to those who feel like spiritual outcasts?

## Interlinear Text

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אָח	הִי יְתִי	לְתַנִּים	וְיָרֵעַ	לְבָנֵי אוֹת	יַעֲנֶה:
<b>I am a brother</b>		<b>to dragons</b>	<b>and a companion</b>	<b>to owls</b>	
H251	H1961	H8577	H7453	H1323	H3284

## Additional Cross-References

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**Micah 1:8** (Parallel theme): Therefore I will wail and howl, I will go stripped and naked: I will make a wailing like the dragons, and mourning as the owls.

**Psalms 102:6** (Parallel theme): I am like a pelican of the wilderness: I am like an owl of the desert.