

Job 30:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

They were driven forth from among men, (they cried after them as after a thief;)

Analysis

They were driven forth from among men (מִן־הֶגְּזוּ יִגְרָשׁוּ)—The verb גָּרַשׁ (garash) means to expel violently, used of Adam's expulsion from Eden (Genesis 3:24) and Israel's enemies from Canaan. This is forced exile, not voluntary withdrawal. **(They cried after them as after a thief;)** (יָרִיעוּ עֲלֵימֹו בִּגְנָב)—The community 'shouted' (יָרִיעוּ, yariu, raised the alarm) as if pursuing thieves (גָּנָב, ganav).

Job describes systematic social ostracism approaching ethnic cleansing. The parenthetical comment reveals community violence maintaining boundaries against the unclean. This echoes leper laws (Leviticus 13:45-46) where contaminated persons were expelled with shouts. Yet Messiah welcomed lepers, touched unclean, ate with sinners—reversing the purity politics Job describes. The kingdom inverts social hierarchies, exalting the expelled (Luke 6:20-23).

Historical Context

Ancient communities maintained strict purity boundaries, expelling those deemed contaminated—ritually, morally, or medically. The shouting 'as after a thief' suggests both warning others and humiliating the expelled. This public shaming reinforced social cohesion through exclusion, a practice Jesus consistently opposed in His ministry to outcasts.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. What modern forms of social expulsion mirror the violent ostracism Job describes?
2. How does Jesus's ministry to outcasts challenge the church's tendency toward boundary-keeping?
3. In what ways do Christian communities still 'cry after' certain people 'as after a thief'?

Interlinear Text

מִן	גַּם	יִגְדּוּ שׁוֹ	יָרִי עוֹ	עַל יְמוֹ
H4480	from among	They were driven forth	men (they cried	H5921
	H1460	H1644	H7321	
כַּגִּנָּב:				
after them as after a thief				
H1590				

Additional Cross-References

Daniel 4:25 (Parallel theme): That they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and they shall wet thee with the dew of heaven, and seven times shall pass over thee, till thou know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will.