

Mark 6:11

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear you, when ye depart thence, shake off the dust under your feet for a testimony against them. Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for that city.

Analysis

And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear you, when ye depart thence, shake off the dust under your feet for a testimony against them. Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for that city. Jesus prepares disciples for rejection with solemn response protocol. 'Whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear you' (ὅς ἂν τόπος μὴ δέξηται ὑμᾶς μηδὲ ἀκούσωσιν ὑμῶν, hos an topos mē dexētai hymas mēde akousōsin hymōn) acknowledges rejection's inevitability. 'Shake off the dust under your feet' (ἐκτινάξατε τὸν χοῦν τὸν ὑποκάτω τῶν ποδῶν ὑμῶν, ektinaxate ton choun ton hypokatō tōn podōn hymōn) was symbolic act declaring separation and judgment.

Jews returning from Gentile territory would shake off dust to avoid bringing ritual impurity into Israel—using this gesture toward fellow Jews who rejected the gospel was shocking, treating them as pagans. 'For a testimony against them' (εἰς μαρτύριον αὐτοῖς, eis martyrion autois) means the act served as witness/warning of judgment. The comparison to Sodom and Gomorrah emphasizes that rejecting Christ's gospel is worse than ancient sexual immorality—privilege increases accountability. Greater light rejected brings greater condemnation. Reformed theology emphasizes degrees of punishment in hell corresponding to degrees of

knowledge rejected (Luke 12:47-48). This sobers gospel preachers: we bring either salvation or greater condemnation to hearers.

Historical Context

Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 19) were proverbial examples of divine judgment for egregious sin—cities destroyed by fire from heaven. Jewish tradition considered them the worst sinners in history. Jesus' statement that rejecting the gospel brings worse judgment than Sodom received would have shocked original hearers. The implication: Sodom's sin was against natural law and limited revelation; rejecting Christ meant rejecting fuller revelation, eyewitness miracles, and the very Son of God. The 'day of judgment' (ἡμέρα κρίσεως, *hēmera kriseōs*) refers to final judgment when all stand before God. Ancient Jewish thought recognized varying degrees of punishment in Gehenna based on sin's severity. Jesus' teaching affirmed this: judgment will be proportionate to privilege and revelation rejected. The dust-shaking gesture was prophetic drama, enacted parable declaring covenant rejection—those who refuse God's messenger place themselves outside covenant community. Early church practice included formal separation from persistent unbelievers (1 Corinthians 5), though debate continued about when and how to apply this discipline.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How does Jesus' warning about degrees of judgment based on privilege challenge modern assumptions that all face equal condemnation regardless of exposure to gospel truth?
2. What does the command to 'shake off the dust' teach about ministers' responsibility after faithful proclamation meets determined rejection?

Interlinear Text

καὶ	ὅσοι	ἂν	μὴ	δέξωνταί	ὑμᾶς	μηδὲ	ἀκούσωσιν
And	whosoever	G302	not	receive	you	nor	hear
G2532	G3745		G3361	G1209	G5209	G3366	G191
ὑμῶν	ἐκπορευόμενοι	ἐκεῖθεν	ἐκτινάξατε	τὸν	χοῦν	τὸν	
you	when ye depart	thence	shake off	G3588	the dust	G3588	
G5216	G1607	G1564	G1621		G5522		
ὑποκάτω	τῶν	ποδῶν	ὑμῶν	εἰς	μαρτύριον	αὐτοῖς	
under	G3588	feet	you	for	a testimony	against them	
G5270		G4228	G5216	G1519	G3142	G846	
ἀμὴν	λέγω	ὑμῖν,	ἀνεκτοτερον	ἔσται	Σοδόμοις	ἢ	
Verily	I say	unto you	more tolerable	It shall be	for Sodom	and	
G281	G3004	G5213	G414	G2071	G4670	G2228	
Γομόρροις	ἐν	ἡμέρᾳ	κρίσεως,	ἢ	τῇ	πόλει	ἐκείνῃ
Gomorrha	in	the day	of judgment	and	G3588	city	for that
G1116	G1722	G2250	G2920	G2228		G4172	G1565

Additional Cross-References

Acts 18:6 (Parallel theme): And when they opposed themselves, and blasphemed, he shook his raiment, and said unto them, Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean: from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles.

Nehemiah 5:13 (Parallel theme): Also I shook my lap, and said, So God shake out every man from his house, and from his labour, that performeth not this promise, even thus be he shaken out, and emptied. And all the congregation said, Amen, and praised the LORD. And the people did according to this promise.