

Matthew 5:11

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.

Analysis

Jesus personalizes the persecution beatitude: 'Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake' (Greek: ἔνεκεν ἐμοῦ, 'on account of me'). The shift from third person to second person ('ye') makes this directly applicable to disciples. Three forms of opposition are listed: verbal abuse (όνειδίσωσιν, 'revile'), active persecution (διώξωσιν), and slander (ψευδόμενοι, 'lying'). The crucial phrase 'for my sake' identifies Christ Himself as the offense that provokes hostility, not merely ethical teaching. Allegiance to Jesus, not just moral living, brings opposition.

Historical Context

Within decades of Jesus' ministry, His followers experienced all three forms of opposition: verbal mockery ('Christians' as a derisive term), active persecution (Acts 8:1-3), and false accusations (blamed for Rome's fire under Nero, accused of cannibalism). Jesus prepares disciples for this reality. The qualifier 'falsely' indicates that some accusations would have basis, but twisted truth would be weaponized against them. This verse sustained early martyrs.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How does persecution for Christ's sake differ from persecution for generally moral living?
2. Why does allegiance to Jesus specifically provoke such intense opposition?
3. How should we respond when falsely accused because of our Christian identity?

Interlinear Text

Μακάριοί ἔστε ὅταν ὄνειδίσωσιν ὑμᾶς καὶ διώξωσιν
Blessed are ye when men shall revile you and persecute
G3107 G2075 G3752 G3679 G5209 G2532 G1377

καὶ εἴπωσιν πᾶν πονηρὸν ῥῆμα καθ' ὑμῶν
and shall say all manner of evil against you
G2532 G2036 G3956 G4190 G4487 G2596 G5216

ψευδόμενοι ἐνεκεν ἐμοῦ
falsely for my sake G1700
G5574 G1752

Additional Cross-References

1 Peter 4:14 (Evil): If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified.

Luke 21:17 (Parallel theme): And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake.

Mark 13:13 (Parallel theme): And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.

Matthew 24:9 (Parallel theme): Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake.

Luke 6:22 (Evil): Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake.

1 Peter 2:23 (Evil): Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously:

John 15:21 (Parallel theme): But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me.

Isaiah 66:5 (Parallel theme): Hear the word of the LORD, ye that tremble at his word; Your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for my name's sake, said, Let the LORD be glorified: but he shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed.

Matthew 10:22 (Parallel theme): And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved.

Matthew 10:39 (Parallel theme): He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.