

Psalm 109:25

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

I became also a reproach unto them: when they looked upon me they shaked their heads.

Analysis

I became also a reproach unto them: when they looked upon me they shaked their heads. Public mockery compounds David's affliction. Cherpah (חֶרְפָּה, reproach/disgrace) indicates shameful contempt, while head-shaking was a gesture of scorn, derision, and triumph over the fallen. David has become a spectacle of humiliation, his enemies gloating over his reduced condition.

This verse finds profound fulfillment in Christ's passion. At the cross, passersby "shook their heads" at Jesus (Matthew 27:39, Mark 15:29), mocking Him with the same contempt David experienced. The reproach of God's anointed becomes the reproach of the Messiah, who bore ultimate shame and rejection on behalf of His people. What David suffered as type, Christ endured as antitype.

The public nature of suffering intensifies its pain—private affliction becomes communal spectacle. Yet this very publicity also establishes witnesses to God's eventual vindication. When God restores the scorned, the same crowd that mocked will see His power. David's confidence that God will answer (verse 26) rests on covenant promises that God will not ultimately abandon His anointed.

Historical Context

Head-shaking as mockery appears throughout Scripture (2 Kings 19:21, Job 16:4, Jeremiah 18:16, Lamentations 2:15), consistently depicting scorn for the defeated. In honor-shame cultures like ancient Israel, public humiliation was devastating,

threatening one's social standing and covenant community status. The fulfillment in Christ's crucifixion demonstrates how the righteous sufferer pattern in the Psalms reaches its climax in the Messiah's rejection and vindication.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 – Confession and belief for salvation

John 3:16 – God's love and salvation

James 2:17 – Faith and works

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. How should Christians respond when faith makes them objects of public mockery or derision?
2. What comfort does Christ's experience of identical mockery provide when you face contempt for following Him?
3. How can the certainty of future vindication sustain believers during present reproach and humiliation?

Interlinear Text

בְּיַתְּרָה

H589

H1961

I became also a reproach

H2781

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H1992

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H7200

יְנִיעַ

רָאשָׁם:

upon me they shaked

H5128

H7218

Additional Cross-References

Romans 15:3 (Parallel theme): For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me.

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