

Psalms 116:11

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

I said in my haste, All men are liars.

Analysis

I said in my haste, All men are liars. This verse admits a faith crisis—despairing words spoken in panic. **I said in my haste** (ani amarti vechofzi, אני אמרתי ב时效) uses chafaz (חָפֵץ), meaning haste, alarm, panic. In terrified extremity, the psalmist spoke rashly, declaring **all men are liars** (kol-haadam kozev, כָל-הָאָדָם כֹּזֵב).

Was this assessment accurate or faithless? Both. Humans are indeed unreliable—promises broken, help withheld, friends abandoning. Paul quotes this via Psalm 116 in Romans 3:4: 'Let God be true, but every man a liar.' Human unfaithfulness highlights divine faithfulness. Yet saying this 'in haste' suggests it was spoken as despairing complaint rather than theological truth.

The verse's honesty is striking. Scripture records faith's wobbles, not just triumphs. Abraham laughed in unbelief (Genesis 17:17), Moses struck the rock in anger (Numbers 20:11), Elijah despaired (1 Kings 19:4). Yet these were believers whose momentary failures didn't nullify covenant relationship. The psalm includes this confession to show that faith isn't absence of doubt but perseverance despite it.

Historical Context

The phrase 'all men are liars' reflects disillusionment with human help. Perhaps the psalmist experienced betrayal during the crisis described in verses 3-4. David knew betrayal intimately—Saul's murderous pursuit, Absalom's rebellion,

Ahithophel's treachery (2 Samuel 15-17). Learning that human help is unreliable drives believers to God, the only truly faithful one. Paul's use in Romans 3:4 makes this a universal truth: human unfaithfulness serves as dark background highlighting God's bright faithfulness. Even our failures magnify His reliability.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. What circumstances have tempted you to declare (in haste or otherwise) that 'all men are liars'?
2. How does recognizing universal human unreliability point you toward God's unique faithfulness?
3. What is the difference between honest lament (expressing doubt/despair to God) and settled unbelief?

Interlinear Text

גַּם: בָּאֵד מְכֻלָּב בְּחַפְזִין אָמֵן רְתִי אָנָּה
H589 I said in my haste H3605 All men are liars
H559 H2648 H120 H3576

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 31:22 (Parallel theme): For I said in my haste, I am cut off from before thine eyes: nevertheless thou heardest the voice of my supplications when I cried unto thee.

Romans 3:4 (Parallel theme): God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged.

Psalms 62:9 (Parallel theme): Surely men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree are a lie: to be laid in the balance, they are altogether lighter than vanity.

2 Kings 4:16 (Parallel theme): And he said, About this season, according to the time of life, thou shalt embrace a son. And she said, Nay, my lord, thou man of God, do not lie unto thine handmaid.

1 Samuel 27:1 (Parallel theme): And David said in his heart, I shall now perish one day by the hand of Saul: there is nothing better for me than that I should speedily escape into the land of the Philistines; and Saul shall despair of me, to seek me any more in any coast of Israel: so shall I escape out of his hand.