

Psalm 119:139

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

My zeal hath consumed me, because mine enemies have forgotten thy words.

Analysis

My zeal hath consumed me (צִמְמַתִּי קִנָּתִי, tsimmetatni qinati)—Holy jealousy for God's honor has devoured the psalmist like fire. Qinah is the burning passion that cannot tolerate dishonor to the beloved. **Because mine enemies have forgotten thy words**—The cause of this consuming zeal is not personal injury but the neglect and contempt of God's revelation.

Jesus exhibited this same holy zeal when cleansing the temple: "The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up" (John 2:17, quoting Psalm 69:9). Paul felt similar anguish over Israel's unbelief (Romans 9:2-3). Godly zeal is provoked not by threats to self but by affronts to God's glory and the spiritual peril of those who reject His Word.

Historical Context

The Hebrew prophets consistently exhibited this zealous grief over covenant unfaithfulness (see Jeremiah's weeping, Ezekiel's passionate warnings). In post-exilic Judaism, this zeal for Torah became the hallmark of groups like the Pharisees and later the Zealots.

Related Passages

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. What provokes holy zeal in your heart—personal slights or dishonor to God's name and Word?
2. How can zeal for God's glory be channeled constructively rather than becoming self-righteous anger?

Interlinear Text

דְּבָרָךְ יְהָוָה
thy words
שָׁכַח אָתָּה
have forgotten
אָתָּה תִּנְאַתֶּה
thine house
אָתָּה תִּנְאַתֶּה
consumed
My zeal
H3588

אָתָּה
me because mine enemies
H6862

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 69:9 (Parallel theme): For the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up; and the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me.

John 2:17 (Parallel theme): And his disciples remembered that it was written, The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up.

Acts 13:27 (Parallel theme): For they that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets which are read every sabbath day, they have fulfilled them in condemning him.

1 Kings 19:10 (Word): And he said, I have been very jealous for the LORD God of hosts: for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away.