

Psalm 119:22

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Remove from me reproach and contempt; for I have kept thy testimonies.

Analysis

Remove from me reproach and contempt; for I have kept thy testimonies.

The psalmist prays for vindication from social shame. **Remove** (gal, גָּל) means to roll away, like rolling a stone from a well. **Reproach** (cherpah, חֶרְפָּה) is disgrace or scorn, while **contempt** (buz, בָּז) is disdain or derision. The psalmist suffers social rejection and public mockery, likely because of his commitment to God's Word in a hostile environment.

The **for** clause provides the basis for his appeal: **I have kept thy testimonies** (edotekha natsarti, עֲדֹתֶךָ נָצַרְתִּי). Natsar (נָצַר) means to guard, watch over, preserve carefully. The psalmist's suffering results from obedience, not sin. This anticipates Jesus' teaching that faithful disciples will face reproach (Matthew 5:11) and Paul's reminder that 'all who will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution' (2 Timothy 3:12). Yet Christ bore ultimate reproach (Hebrews 13:13), and God promises to vindicate His faithful servants.

Historical Context

Reproach and contempt were particularly painful in honor-shame cultures where social standing was paramount. The righteous frequently faced mockery for their devotion (Nehemiah 2:19, Jeremiah 20:7-8). The psalmist's appeal for vindication reflects confidence in God's justice, trusting that temporary social shame will give way to eternal honor for those who remain faithful despite opposition.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. When has obedience to God's Word brought you reproach or contempt from others?
2. How do you respond when following Scripture makes you a social outcast or object of ridicule?
3. What comfort do you find in knowing that Christ bore reproach and promises to vindicate His faithful people?

Interlinear Text

עֲדַת יְהָוָה מִשְׁלָמָה
Remove from me reproach and contempt thy testimonies
H1556 H5921 H2781 H937 H3588 H5713

לְאַרְתִּינִי
for I have kept
H5341

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 39:8 (Parallel theme): Deliver me from all my transgressions: make me not the reproach of the foolish.

Psalms 119:39 (Parallel theme): Turn away my reproach which I fear: for thy judgments are good.

1 Peter 2:20 (Parallel theme): For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God.

Hebrews 13:13 (Parallel theme): Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach.

Psalms 119:42 (Parallel theme): So shall I have wherewith to answer him that reproacheth me: for I trust in thy word.

Psalms 37:3 (Parallel theme): Trust in the LORD, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed.

Psalms 42:10 (Parallel theme): As with a sword in my bones, mine enemies reproach me; while they say daily unto me, Where is thy God?

Psalms 37:6 (Parallel theme): And he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday.

Job 16:20 (Parallel theme): My friends scorn me: but mine eye poureth out tears unto God.

1 Samuel 25:10 (Parallel theme): And Nabal answered David's servants, and said, Who is David? and who is the son of Jesse? there be many servants now a days that break away every man from his master.