

Psalms 119:31

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

I have stuck unto thy testimonies: O LORD, put me not to shame.

Analysis

I have stuck unto thy testimonies (דָּבָקָתִי בְּעֲדָנוֹתֶךָ)—Again davaq (cleave, cling), used in verse 25 for clinging to dust but here for clinging to God's edut (testimonies, witnesses). The testimonies are God's self-revelation in Scripture—His witness about Himself and His ways. The contrast is devastating: our souls naturally cling to death (v.25) but must intentionally cling to life-giving revelation. **O LORD, put me not to shame** (וְהִנֵּה אַל-תִּתְּשַׁׁחַן)—Bosh (to be ashamed, disappointed) fears the shame of trusting God's promises and being abandoned. The psalmist's confidence rests entirely on Yahweh's covenant faithfulness, not personal worthiness.

This verse assumes that clinging to Scripture in a hostile world invites mockery. The psalmist fears not persecution itself but the possibility that God might not vindicate those who trust His Word. This is the tension every believer faces: will faithfulness to Scripture result in vindication or abandonment? The answer comes in Christ, who was 'put to shame' on the cross so that those who cling to Him will never be ashamed (Romans 10:11).

Historical Context

Ancient honor-shame cultures made public disgrace worse than death. For a Hebrew believer to cling to Yahweh's testimonies while surrounding nations prospered in idolatry created intense pressure. Would covenant faithfulness lead to

blessing or shame? This tension runs through Israel's entire history from Abraham to the prophets.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. What does it look like practically to 'cling' to God's testimonies with the same intensity souls naturally cling to dust?
2. In what areas of life do you fear that faithfulness to Scripture might lead to shame rather than vindication?
3. How does Christ's willing embrace of shame on the cross secure the promise that God will not put to shame those who cling to His Word?

Interlinear Text

תִּבְשַׂנִּי אֶל ! הִנֵּה בְּעִדּוֹת יְהִי זֶבֶת קָרְבָּנִי
put me not to shame O LORD unto thy testimonies I have stuck
H954 H3068 H408 H1692 H5715

Additional Cross-References

John 8:31 (Parallel theme): Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed;

Acts 11:23 (References Lord): Who, when he came, and had seen the grace of God, was glad, and exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord.

Romans 5:5 (Parallel theme): And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

Proverbs 23:23 (Parallel theme): Buy the truth, and sell it not; also wisdom, and instruction, and understanding.

Isaiah 45:17 (References Lord): But Israel shall be saved in the LORD with an everlasting salvation: ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end.

1 John 2:28 (Parallel theme): And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming.

From KJV Study • kjvstudy.org