

Psalms 31:11

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

I was a reproach among all mine enemies, but especially among my neighbours, and a fear to mine acquaintance: they that did see me without fled from me.

Analysis

I was a reproach among all mine enemies, but especially among my neighbours, and a fear to mine acquaintance: they that did see me without fled from me. Social death—isolation and rejection compounding physical and emotional suffering. This illustrates how sin and suffering alienate from community, prefiguring Christ's rejection.

A reproach (cherpah—disgrace, scorn) means David has become mockery target, his suffering interpreted as divine judgment. Reformed theology recognizes world often reads God's providence backwards—assuming suffering equals guilt. Job's friends made this error; David experiences it personally.

But especially among my neighbours intensifies pain. Strangers' scorn stings; neighbors' scorn devastates. Those who knew David, who should offer support, join reproach. Betrayal within community compounds external persecution.

A fear to mine acquaintance reveals active avoidance. Hebrew pachad suggests dread or terror. His condition has become so associated with divine displeasure that acquaintances fear contamination by association. This prefigures Christ, despised and rejected, from whom people hid faces (Isaiah 53:3). The Suffering Servant experiences comprehensive abandonment so believers need never be ultimately forsaken.

Historical Context

Social isolation was more painful in ancient collectivist cultures than modern individualistic societies. Hebrew identity was deeply communal—family, clan, tribe, nation. To be cut off meant loss of identity, protection, purpose. David's isolation would be experienced as partial death even while physically alive.

Jesus experienced this rejection supremely. Disciples fled, people chose Barabbas, nation rejected Him as Messiah. The Righteous One bore reproach of unrighteous, absorbing shame so believers can be welcomed into eternal community.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. How does social isolation compound other suffering forms, and why is community essential?
2. Have you experienced avoidance during hardship, and how did this affect you?
3. In what ways does Christ's experience of reproach comfort believers who face rejection?
4. How should Christians respond when others interpret someone's suffering as divine judgment?
5. What does David's experience teach about maintaining fellowship with suffering believers?

Interlinear Text

מִכָּל H3605	צָרָי among all mine enemies H6887	הִי יָתִי H1961	חֶרֶף הִ I was a reproach H2781	וְלִשְׁכֵּנִי among my neighbours H7934
מְאֹד but especially H3966	וּפֶחַד and a fear H6343	לְמֵיֶדַע י to mine acquaintance H3045	רָאִי they that did see H7200	בְּחַוְיָ me without H2351
וַיִּפְדֵּם fled H5074	מִמֶּנִּי H4480			

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 38:11 (Parallel theme): My lovers and my friends stand aloof from my sore; and my kinsmen stand afar off.

Psalms 88:8 (Parallel theme): Thou hast put away mine acquaintance far from me; thou hast made me an abomination unto them: I am shut up, and I cannot come forth.

Psalms 88:18 (Parallel theme): Lover and friend hast thou put far from me, and mine acquaintance into darkness.

Matthew 26:56 (Parallel theme): But all this was done, that the scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled. Then all the disciples forsook him, and fled.

Isaiah 49:7 (Parallel theme): Thus saith the LORD, the Redeemer of Israel, and his Holy One, to him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nation abhorreth, to a servant of rulers, Kings shall see and arise, princes also shall worship, because of the LORD that is faithful, and the Holy One of Israel, and he shall choose thee.

Psalms 64:8 (Parallel theme): So they shall make their own tongue to fall upon themselves: all that see them shall flee away.