

Psalms 38:14

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Thus I was as a man that heareth not, and in whose mouth are no reproofs.

Analysis

Thus I was as a man that heareth not, and in whose mouth are no reproofs.

David reinforces v.13's silence—he becomes one who heareth not (לֹא שָׁמָעָה, lo shomea) and offers no reproofs (תּוֹכַחֹת, tokachot, corrections/arguments). He refuses both to receive false accusations and to issue counter-accusations.

This restraint is not passive resignation but active submission to God's judgment. The absence of tokachot (same root as the Spirit's 'reproof' in John 16:8) means David won't usurp the Spirit's role. He trusts God to convict, correct, and vindicate. Self-defense often stems from pride; silence from humble confidence in divine justice.

Historical Context

Ancient legal proceedings often devolved into shouting matches where the loudest voice won. Proverbs repeatedly warns against the 'contentious' person (Proverbs 26:21). David's silence would shock observers accustomed to vigorous self-defense. This restraint demonstrates royal wisdom—a king secure in his true Judge doesn't need to win earthly courts.

Related Passages

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. What situations tempt you to offer 'reproofs' and self-justifications when silence would demonstrate greater trust?
2. How do you distinguish between appropriate self-defense and the prideful need to 'win' arguments?
3. When has choosing to 'hear not' malicious voices freed you to hear God's voice more clearly?

Interlinear Text

וַאֲנִי י'	כִּי אִישׁ	אֲשֶׁר	לֹא	שָׁמַע	וְאֵין
H1961	Thus I was as a man	H834	H3808	that heareth	H369
	H376			H8085	
בְּכִי	תוֹכְחוֹת:				
not and in whose mouth	are no reproofs				
H6310	H8433				

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