

Psalm 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 (עַמְּשָׁא, lo shomea) and offers no reproofs (תְּקַחְתָּ, 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

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

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

וְאֵת	שָׁמַע	וְאֵת	אֲשֶׁר	לֹא	אֲשֶׁר	כִּי	אִישׁ	וְאֵת
H1961	Thus I was as a man		H834	H3808	that heareth		H369	
	H376				H8085			

תֹּצְחֹתִים בְּ פַּי
not and in whose mouth are no reproofs

From KJV Study • kjvstudy.org