

Psalms 69:10

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

When I wept, and chastened my soul with fasting, that was to my reproach.

Analysis

When I wept, and chastened my soul with fasting, that was to my reproach.

David's spiritual disciplines—weeping, fasting, soul-examination—provoked mockery rather than respect. "Chastened" (בָּכִיתִי/vakhiti) combines mourning and self-discipline, the kind of godly sorrow that should evoke sympathy. "Fasting" (בָּצֹם/batzom) was normative spiritual practice for grief, repentance, and seeking God, yet David's enemies twisted even these holy exercises into grounds for scorn.

"That was to my reproach" (חֶרְפוֹת/cherpot) reveals the perversity: genuine piety became occasion for ridicule. Perhaps enemies mocked his tears as weakness, his fasting as pretense or madness. Religious hypocrisy had so corrupted society that authentic godliness appeared strange and contemptible. This anticipates Christ, whose compassionate weeping over Jerusalem (Luke 19:41) and intense prayer (Luke 22:44) were met with mockery and contempt.

The verse exposes a profound spiritual reality: genuine piety often provokes hostility because it implicitly condemns ungodliness. When someone takes God seriously through disciplines like fasting and prayer, it confronts others' spiritual complacency and nominalism, often triggering defensive mockery.

Historical Context

Fasting was central to Jewish spiritual life, practiced for mourning (2 Samuel 1:12), repentance (Joel 2:12), and seeking divine intervention (Ezra 8:21-23).

Public fasting was communal; private fasting was personal devotion. That David's fasting became reproach suggests either he was fasting when others weren't (implicating them) or his enemies were so hostile they mocked even legitimate piety.

The theme of righteous suffering through ridicule runs throughout Psalms (Psalm 22:7-8, 35:15-16). Jesus Himself warned that disciples would be "reviled" and have "all manner of evil said against you falsely, for my sake" (Matthew 5:11). Paul's tears and warnings were mocked by some (2 Corinthians 2:4, Acts 20:31).

Church history records countless examples of genuine spiritual discipline provoking mockery: desert fathers called escapists, reformers called fanatics, revivalists called emotional manipulators. The world consistently misinterprets authentic godliness.

Related Passages

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. Have you experienced mockery for spiritual disciplines like prayer, fasting, or Scripture reading, and how did you respond?
2. What does society's contempt for spiritual discipline reveal about its spiritual state?
3. How can believers maintain authentic piety without becoming self-righteous or judgmental toward those who mock?

Interlinear Text

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|-------------|--------------|-----------------------|------------|-------------------------|
| וָאֲבָכָה | בַּצּוֹם | נַפְשִׁי | וַתֵּהָיֵא | לְחִכְפִּי |
| When I wept | with fasting | and chastened my soul | H1961 | that was to my reproach |
| H1058 | H6685 | H5315 | | H2781 |
| לִי: | | | | |
| H0 | | | | |

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 35:13 (Parallel theme): But as for me, when they were sick, my clothing was sackcloth: I humbled my soul with fasting; and my prayer returned into mine own bosom.