

# Psalms 69:20

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Reproach hath broken my heart; and I am full of heaviness:  
and I looked for some to take pity, but there was none; and for  
comforters, but I found none.

## Analysis

**Reproach hath broken my heart; and I am full of heaviness: and I looked for some to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none.** This verse captures devastating emotional and social isolation—the psalmist's heart is 'broken' (shavrah, שָׁבַר, shattered) by reproach, and he's 'full of heaviness' (anushti, אָנוּשְׁתִּי), meaning mortally sick or terminally weak. The compounding tragedy is complete abandonment—he looks for pity and comfort but finds neither.

This verse prophetically describes Christ's experience in Gethsemane and on the cross. Jesus told His disciples, 'My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death' (Mark 14:34)—His heart was breaking. He sought companionship from Peter, James, and John, but they slept (Matthew 26:40). On the cross, darkness covered the land, symbolizing His abandonment even by the Father (Matthew 27:45-46, 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?'). He found no comforter—He faced hell alone.

The emotional devastation described here often surprises modern readers who view Jesus as stoically enduring the cross. But Scripture emphasizes His genuine suffering—reproach genuinely broke His heart. He was 'a man of sorrows, acquainted with grief' (Isaiah 53:3). Yet this isolation secured our consolation. Because Christ found no comforter, the Father sent the Comforter—the Holy Spirit (John 14:26)—to indwell believers. Christ's abandonment means we're never abandoned; His broken heart means ours can be healed. 2 Corinthians 1:3-4 calls

God 'the Father of mercies and God of all comfort,' who comforts us so we can comfort others.

## Historical Context

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In ancient Israel, social isolation was perhaps more devastating than in modern individualistic cultures. Identity was corporate—individuals existed primarily as members of families, clans, and tribes. To be cut off from community meant losing identity, protection, and purpose. The psalmist's abandonment by potential comforters represented social death—he was treated as leprous, unclean, or cursed by God.

The Wisdom literature discusses the cruelty of fair-weather friends who abandon sufferers (Job's 'comforters' who accuse rather than console, Job 16:2). Proverbs warns against such false friends (Proverbs 19:4, 7). The righteous sufferer's isolation was particularly acute because suffering was often interpreted as divine punishment—people distanced themselves from those under God's apparent curse lest they share the judgment.

Jesus experienced this social dynamic. At His arrest, 'all the disciples forsook him and fled' (Matthew 26:56). Peter denied knowing Him (Matthew 26:69-75). The crowds who welcomed Him on Palm Sunday shouted 'Crucify him' by Friday (John 19:15). Even the Father withdrew His presence as Jesus bore sin's curse (Galatians 3:13). The early Christians, reading this psalm, saw their own suffering prefigured—they too faced rejection by family, community, and religious establishment. But they also found comfort knowing that Christ had walked this path before them and emerged victorious, transforming the way of suffering into the way of salvation.

## Related Passages

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**John 3:16** — God's love and salvation

**Ephesians 2:8** — Salvation by grace through faith

**Revelation 20:12** — Judgment according to deeds

## Study Questions

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1. When have you experienced heart-breaking reproach and looked for comfort but found none?
2. How does knowing Christ experienced utter isolation and abandonment comfort you in loneliness?
3. What does it mean that Christ became the ultimate 'comfortless one' so we could have the Comforter (Holy Spirit)?
4. How can you be a 'comforter' to others experiencing isolation rather than abandoning them?
5. In what ways do you need to receive God's comfort for your broken heart today?

## Interlinear Text

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חִרְפָּה	שִׁבְרָה	לִבִּי	וְאֲנִי מְלֵא	וְאֲנִי
Reproach	hath broken	my heart	and I am full of heaviness	and I looked
H2781	H7665	H3820	H5136	H6960
לְנֹד	וְאִין	לְמִנְחָם יֵם	וְלֹא	
for some to take pity	H369	but there was none and for comforters		H3808
H5110		H5162		
מָצָאתִי				
but I found				
H4672				

## Additional Cross-References

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**Isaiah 63:5** (Parallel theme): And I looked, and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold: therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me; and my fury, it upheld me.

**Psalms 142:4** (Parallel theme): I looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would know me: refuge failed me; no man cared for my soul.

**Job 16:2** (Parallel theme): I have heard many such things: miserable comforters are ye all.

**Mark 14:50** (Parallel theme): And they all forsook him, and fled.

**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.

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