

Psalms 69:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

I am become a stranger unto my brethren, and an alien unto my mother's children.

Analysis

I am become a stranger unto my brethren, and an alien unto my mother's children. This verse intensifies the description of suffering by revealing familial alienation. "Stranger" (זָר/zar) and "alien" (נוֹכְרִי/nokhri) are strong terms for outsider, foreigner, one who doesn't belong. David isn't merely misunderstood by family but treated as if no kinship bond existed—the most painful form of rejection in collectivist, family-centered culture.

"My brethren" and "my mother's children" might refer literally to David's biological siblings (who showed contempt for him in 1 Samuel 17:28) or metaphorically to fellow Israelites, his covenant brothers. The repetition emphasizes completeness of rejection. Even those who should stand with him by blood and covenant have turned away.

This verse profoundly anticipates Christ, who "came unto his own, and his own received him not" (John 1:11). His brothers didn't believe in Him (John 7:5). Jesus warned disciples they would experience similar alienation: "a man's foes shall be they of his own household" (Matthew 10:36).

Historical Context

Ancient Israelite society was intensely familial and tribal. Identity, security, inheritance, and social standing all flowed from family connections. To be treated as a stranger by one's own family meant losing all social foundation and

protection. This wasn't merely emotional pain but threatened survival itself.

David's brothers did show contempt for him (1 Samuel 17:28), and his wife Michal despised him (2 Samuel 6:16). Throughout his life, David experienced betrayal by those closest: his son Absalom, his counselor Ahithophel, and others.

For the early church, this verse captured the experience of Jewish Christians expelled from synagogues and disowned by families for confessing Jesus as Messiah.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. How does experiencing rejection from those closest to us uniquely test and refine faith?
2. What comfort does Christ's experience of familial alienation provide to believers facing similar rejection?
3. In what ways might faithfulness to Christ require choosing spiritual family over biological family?

Interlinear Text

מ וְזָר	הִי יְתִי	לְאָחֵי י	! נֶכְרִי י	לְבָנֵי י
I am become a stranger	H1961	unto my brethren	and an alien	children
H2114		H251	H5237	H1121
אִמִּי:				
unto my mother's				
H517				

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 31:11 (Parallel theme): 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.

John 1:11 (Parallel theme): He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

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

John 7:5 (Parallel theme): For neither did his brethren believe in him.