

Psalms 74:18

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Remember this, that the enemy hath reproached, O LORD,
and that the foolish people have blasphemed thy name.

Analysis

Remember this, that the enemy hath reproached, O LORD—The imperative זְקֹר-זֹת (תְּזִקְרָא, "remember this!") is striking in its boldness. The psalmist commands God to remember, using the same verb (zākar) that appears when God "remembered" Noah (Genesis 8:1) and His covenant (Exodus 2:24). The Hebrew הֶרְעֵב (רְעֵב, reproached/taunted) isn't mere insult but covenant violation—the enemy's mockery challenges God's character and reliability.

And that the foolish people have blasphemed thy name—Nābāl (נָבָל, foolish) is the same word used for the fool who says "there is no God" (Psalm 14:1, 53:1). This isn't intellectual deficiency but moral rebellion—practical atheism. To nā'aš (נָאֵשׁ, blaspheme/despise) God's Name is to deny His character, power, and covenant faithfulness. Babylon's destruction of the temple proclaimed that Yahweh was just another defeated deity.

Asaph's appeal rests on God's jealousy for His own glory. This isn't selfish but righteous: God's Name represents truth about reality itself. When enemies blaspheme, they spread lies about the nature of God, leading souls astray. God must vindicate His Name, not for petty revenge but to restore truth. Jesus would later pray "hallowed be thy name" (Matthew 6:9), recognizing that God's reputation matters supremely. His resurrection answered all blasphemy by demonstrating God's power over death itself.

Historical Context

Babylonian victory inscriptions mocked defeated gods, claiming Marduk's supremacy. From a pagan perspective, Judah's defeat proved Yahweh's weakness. This theological crisis forced Israel to develop deeper understanding of divine sovereignty: God used pagan nations to judge His people without compromising His supremacy (Isaiah 10:5-15).

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How does the enemy still 'reproach' God's name today through mockery of biblical truth and Christian failure?
2. What does it mean to pray for God to vindicate His name rather than merely defending your own reputation?
3. How should believers respond when God's apparent silence seems to confirm blasphemous claims about His character?

Interlinear Text

זְכָר	זֶה	אֵיךְ	חָרַג	עַמְּךָ
Remember	H2063	this that the enemy	hath reproached	O LORD
H2142		H341	H2778	H3068
וְ	זֶה	אֵיךְ	חָרַג	עַמְּךָ
and	that	the	foolish	have blasphemed
H5036		H5006		H8034
שְׁמָךְ	נָאָצָה	תִּבְלַע		
thy	name			

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 39:8 (Parallel theme): Deliver me from all my transgressions: make me not the reproach of the foolish.

Revelation 16:19 (Parallel theme): And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath.

Deuteronomy 32:6 (References Lord): Do ye thus requite the LORD, O foolish people and unwise? is not he thy father that hath bought thee? hath he not made thee, and established thee?

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