

# Psalms 80:6

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Thou makest us a strife unto our neighbours: and our enemies laugh among themselves.

## Analysis

**Thou makest us a strife unto our neighbours: and our enemies laugh among themselves.** This verse describes Israel's international humiliation. "Thou makest us a strife" (tesimenu madon lishkeneinu, תְּשִׁימֵנוּ מָדוֹן לִשְׁכֵנֵינוּ) indicates God has positioned Israel as object of contention—neighboring nations dispute over and mock them. Madon (מָדוֹן) means strife, contention, object of quarreling. Israel has become what nations argue about, likely mocking their weakness and debating territorial claims over conquered land.

"Our enemies laugh among themselves" (ve'oyvenu yil'agu lamo, וְאֹיְבֵינוּ יִלְעָגוּ-לָמוֹ) uses la'ag (לַעַג), meaning to mock, deride, scorn. The phrase "among themselves" suggests private mockery—enemies don't even bother confronting Israel directly but ridicule them in internal discussions. This compounds humiliation: Israel isn't even worthy of direct engagement, only behind-the-back derision. This echoes Psalm 79:4 and anticipates ongoing biblical theme of God's people as objects of international mockery during judgment periods.

The verse's theology is stark: God Himself has made Israel contemptible. This isn't external attack against God's will but divine positioning of Israel for humiliation as covenant discipline. Yet the lament's continuation demonstrates that even God-ordained judgment invites prayer for restoration. The psalmist doesn't resign to permanent disgrace but appeals for renewed blessing that will silence mockery by demonstrating renewed divine favor.

## Historical Context

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This description fits multiple historical contexts when Israel faced international derision: the Assyrian conquest of Northern Kingdom (722 BC), Babylonian exile of Judah (586 BC), or periods of Aramean or Philistine oppression during the judges and monarchy. Surrounding nations—Edom, Moab, Ammon, Tyre, Egypt—regularly mocked Israel during weak periods. The prophets frequently addressed this theme (Ezekiel 36:3-7; Zephaniah 2:8-10), promising eventual vindication when God would restore Israel's honor and judge the mockers.

## Related Passages

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**James 2:17** — Faith and works

**Romans 1:17** — The righteous shall live by faith

## Study Questions

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1. How should believers respond when their faith makes them objects of public ridicule and mockery?
2. What is the relationship between accepting God's discipline (acknowledging He has made us objects of scorn) and praying for restoration?
3. How can Christians maintain witness and dignity when cultural contempt makes them strife and laughter to surrounding society?

## Interlinear Text

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|                    |                    |                            |                        |              |       |
|--------------------|--------------------|----------------------------|------------------------|--------------|-------|
| תַּשִּׁיחַ נֹו     | מִן דָּוֹן         | לְשֹׂכְנֵי יֵנוּ           | וְאֹיְבֵי יֵנוּ        | וְלִצְחָו    | לְמֹו |
| <b>Thou makest</b> | <b>us a strife</b> | <b>unto our neighbours</b> | <b>and our enemies</b> | <b>laugh</b> |       |
| H7760              | H4066              | H7934                      | H341                   | H3932        | H0    |

## Additional Cross-References

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**Psalms 79:4** (Parallel theme): We are become a reproach to our neighbours, a scorn and derision to them that are round about us.

