

Zephaniah 3:11

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

In that day shalt thou not be ashamed for all thy doings, wherein thou hast transgressed against me: for then I will take away out of the midst of thee them that rejoice in thy pride, and thou shalt no more be haughty because of my holy mountain.

Analysis

In that day shalt thou not be ashamed for all thy doings, wherein thou hast transgressed against me—"that day" (bayom hahu, בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא) references the eschatological restoration following judgment. "Not be ashamed" (lo tevoshi, לא תשׁוּשׁ) promises removal of disgrace and guilt accompanying sin. "All thy doings, wherein thou hast transgressed" (kol alilotayikh asher pasha'at bi, כל־עֲלִילוֹתֶיךָ אֲשֶׁר פְּשֻׁעָתֶךָ) acknowledges comprehensive covenant violation—Jerusalem's sins merited permanent shame, but God promises its removal. This isn't minimizing sin but announcing complete atonement and forgiveness.

For then I will take away out of the midst of thee them that rejoice in thy pride—God explains how shame is removed: by purging the proud. "Take away" (asir, אָסֵר) means to remove, take out, put aside. "Out of the midst of thee" (mikirkbek, מִקְרַבְךָ) reverses the language of God dwelling "in the midst" (3:5, 15, 17)—the proud are expelled from the community. "Them that rejoice in thy pride" (alizey ga'avatekh, עַלִּיזֵי גָּאוֹתֶךָ) describes those who exult in arrogance. Ga'avah (גָּאוֹה) means pride, arrogance, or presumption—the root sin behind all others. These are people who rejoice in self-exaltation, boasting in privilege without corresponding righteousness.

And thou shalt no more be haughty because of my holy mountain—lo tosipi legabheah be-har qodshi (לא תזספי לך בָּהָה בְּהָר קָדוֹשִׁי) promises permanent removal of pride connected to covenant privilege. "Holy mountain" refers to Zion/Jerusalem, God's chosen dwelling. Judah had pridefully presumed on election: possessing God's temple, law, and covenant made them proud while lacking corresponding obedience. This presumptuous pride brought judgment. The purified remnant will possess humble gratitude, not arrogant presumption. Paul warns against similar pride: Gentile Christians shouldn't boast against cut-off branches (Romans 11:18-22). All covenant privilege should produce humility and grateful obedience, never self-exalting pride.

Historical Context

Jerusalem's pride in covenant privilege permeates the prophets' indictments. Jeremiah confronted false confidence in the temple: "Trust ye not in lying words, saying, The temple of the LORD, The temple of the LORD" (Jeremiah 7:4). The people believed possessing God's sanctuary guaranteed protection regardless of behavior. Micah condemned similar presumption: "Is not the LORD among us? none evil can come upon us" (Micah 3:11). This was theological truth twisted into excuse for sin—yes, God dwells among His people, but that increases rather than decreases accountability.

The exile purged this proud presumption. When Babylon destroyed the temple and exiled the population (586 BC), it shattered false confidence in automatic protection based on covenant status. The humbled remnant that returned (538 BC onward) showed different character: broken, dependent, trusting God's mercy rather than claiming entitlement. Ezra and Nehemiah record their humble prayers confessing sin and acknowledging they deserved judgment (Ezra 9:6-15, Nehemiah 9:6-37). This was the purified remnant from whom the Messiah would come.

The warning remains relevant. Churches and believers can pridefully presume on orthodox doctrine, denominational heritage, or religious activity while lacking corresponding obedience and humility. Jesus confronted this in first-century Judaism: "We have Abraham to our father" (Matthew 3:9, John 8:39)—presuming ethnic/religious privilege guaranteed standing with God. Paul addresses similar

pride in Romans 2:17-29: possessing the law means nothing without obeying it. Covenant privilege should produce humble gratitude and faithful obedience, never proud presumption.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. In what ways might contemporary believers or churches pridefully presume on theological knowledge, denominational heritage, or religious heritage while lacking humble obedience?
2. How does God's promise to remove those who "rejoice in pride" warn against self-exalting attitudes within the covenant community?
3. What is the difference between appropriate joy in God's grace and election versus inappropriate pride in privilege or status?

Interlinear Text

עֲלִילָתֶךָ יְהִי מִלְּפָנֶיךָ וְבַיּוֹם תִּתְבֹּשֶׁת וְאַתָּה לֹא תִּאֲנַזֵּן

אָשָׁר	פָּשָׁעַת	בְּ	כִּי	אֵלִי
H834	wherein thou hast transgressed	H0	H3588	H227

עַלְיוֹן מִקְרָב בָּאָס יְרָא
against me for then I will take away out of the midst of thee them that rejoice

בָּהּ רַעַד לְגַבְבָּהּ הַיְלָא גָּאִיתּ רַעַד
in thy pride and thou shalt no more be haughty but I
H1346 H3808 H3254 H1361 H5750 H2022

בְּדָשִׁים

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 54:4 (Parallel theme): Fear not; for thou shalt not be ashamed: neither be thou confounded; for thou shalt not be put to shame: for thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth, and shalt not remember the reproach of thy widowhood any more.

Isaiah 11:9 (Holy): They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.

Isaiah 61:7 (Parallel theme): For your shame ye shall have double; and for confusion they shall rejoice in their portion: therefore in their land they shall possess the double: everlasting joy shall be unto them.

Isaiah 45:17 (Parallel theme): But Israel shall be saved in the LORD with an everlasting salvation; ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end.

Jeremiah 7:4 (Parallel theme): Trust ye not in lying words, saying, The temple of the LORD, The temple of the LORD, The temple of the LORD, are these.

Romans 9:33 (Parallel theme): As it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and rock of offence: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.

Matthew 3:9 (Parallel theme): And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.

Daniel 9:16 (Holy): O Lord, according to all thy righteousness, I beseech thee, let thine anger and thy fury be turned away from thy city Jerusalem, thy holy mountain: because for our sins, and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and thy people are become a reproach to all that are about us.

1 Peter 2:6 (Parallel theme): Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded.

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