

Job 11:16

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Because thou shalt forget thy misery, and remember it as waters that pass away:

Analysis

Zophar promises Job will 'forget' (נָשָׁח, tishkach) his misery (אִמָּל, amal—toil, trouble), remembering it only 'as waters that pass away' (מַיִם עֹבְרִים, mayim avru). The imagery suggests suffering becoming like floodwaters that recede, leaving only a memory. This contains truth—God does heal and restore (Revelation 21:4, Isaiah 65:17). However, Zophar's timeline is wrong; he promises immediate relief upon repentance. The reality is more complex: God does eventually wipe away all tears, but often through suffering, not around it. Job's restoration comes in God's timing, not according to Zophar's formula. The Reformed doctrine of providence affirms God's good purposes work through, not despite, our afflictions.

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern wisdom often promised quick relief for the repentant. The book of Job subverts this prosperity gospel by showing that God's ways are more mysterious and His purposes deeper than simple cause-and-effect.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How do we balance hope for relief with patient endurance when suffering continues?
2. What false timelines do we impose on God's promises?

Interlinear Text

כִּי	אֵתָהּ	עַמִּי ל	תִּשְׁכַּח	כִּימַי	עָבְרוּ
H3588	H859	thy misery	Because thou shalt forget	it as waters	that pass away
		H5999	H7911	H4325	H5674
תִּזְכֹּר:					
and remember					
H2142					

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 65:16 (Parallel theme): That he who blesseth himself in the earth shall bless himself in the God of truth; and he that sweareth in the earth shall swear by the God of truth; because the former troubles are forgotten, and because they are hid from mine eyes.

Ecclesiastes 5:20 (Parallel theme): For he shall not much remember the days of his life; because God answereth him in the joy of his heart.

John 16:21 (Parallel theme): A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world.

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 54:9 (Parallel theme): For this is as the waters of Noah unto me: for as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth; so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee.

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