

Job 12:25

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

They grope in the dark without light, and he maketh them to stagger like a drunken man.

Analysis

'They grope in the dark without light, and he maketh them to stagger like a drunken man.' Job describes leaders whom God confounds: they 'grope' (מְמַשֵּׁשׁ, memasheshu—feel about blindly) in 'dark' (חֹשֶׁךְ, choshek) without 'light' (אוֹר, or), staggering like drunkards (שְׁכַׁרְמָלִים, shikkor). This inverts the friends' confidence—they think they see clearly while Job gropes. Job suggests all humans fumble in darkness regarding God's ways. This echoes Isaiah 29:9-14 and 1 Corinthians 1:20 where God confounds human wisdom. The image of staggering leaders warns against trusting human authority divorced from divine revelation. Only Scripture provides sure light (Psalm 119:105). Job anticipates God's own speech revealing human ignorance.

Historical Context

Ancient peoples relied heavily on leaders and wise counselors. Job's image of confused, staggering leaders would be profoundly disturbing, suggesting even the wise lack sure knowledge apart from divine revelation.

Related Passages

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. How does awareness of our limitations in understanding God's ways produce humility?
2. Where do we place false confidence in human wisdom regarding suffering and divine purposes?

Interlinear Text

וְיָמַשׁ שָׁמַךְ כִּי לֹא אִם אָרֶךְ תַּחַת מִלְחָמָה
They grope in the dark without light and he maketh them to stagger like a drunken man

H4959 H2822 H3808 H216 H8582

לְשָׁכֹר:

like a drunken

H7910

Additional Cross-References

Job 5:14 (Darkness): They meet with darkness in the daytime, and grope in the noonday as in the night.

Psalms 107:27 (Parallel theme): They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wits' end.

Isaiah 24:20 (Parallel theme): The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage; and the transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it; and it shall fall, and not rise again.

Isaiah 19:14 (Parallel theme): The LORD hath mingled a perverse spirit in the midst thereof: and they have caused Egypt to err in every work thereof, as a drunken man staggereth in his vomit.