

Job 12:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

He that is ready to slip with his feet is as a lamp despised in the thought of him that is at ease.

Analysis

Job responds to Zophar's harsh accusations with biting irony: 'He that is ready to slip with his feet is as a lamp despised in the thought of him that is at ease.' The Hebrew **לְפָלָל** (lappid, 'lamp/torch') refers to something meant to give light but here treated with contempt (**בָּז**, buz). Job identifies the cruel dynamic: those 'at ease' (**שָׁאַנְן**, sha'anah—secure, careless) despise those who suffer, viewing calamity as proof of moral failure. This exposes the self-righteousness of prosperity—the comfortable assume their ease reflects virtue and others' suffering proves guilt. James 2:6 warns against this very prejudice. The Reformed doctrine of common grace reminds us that earthly prosperity never proves spiritual status.

Historical Context

In ancient Near Eastern wisdom traditions, prosperity was considered evidence of divine favor and wisdom. Job here challenges this assumption, pointing out how the comfortable develop contempt for sufferers, using theology to justify their disdain.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. In what ways do prosperity and comfort tempt us toward contempt for those who suffer?
2. How does our own security bias our theological judgments about others' circumstances?

Interlinear Text

לְפָנֶיךָ וְתַבְזַבֵּז בְּעֵשֶׂת וְתַבְזַבֵּז שָׁאָן | תְּכַלֵּל

is as a lamp despised in the thought of him that is at ease He that is ready

H3940 H937 H6248 H7600 H3559

לֹמַד עַדְלָה:
to slip with his feet

H4571 H7272

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 17:5 (Parallel theme): Hold up my goings in thy paths, that my footsteps slip not.

Proverbs 13:9 (Parallel theme): The light of the righteous rejoiceth: but the lamp of the wicked shall be put out.

Matthew 25:8 (Parallel theme): And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out.