

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 לָפִיד (lappid, 'lamp/torch') refers to something meant to give light but here treated with contempt (בִּזָּה, buz). Job identifies the cruel dynamic: those 'at ease' (שְׁאֲנָן, sha'anān—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

לֶפֶךָ יֵד	בִּזְוֹן	לְעֵשֶׂת וַת	שָׁאֵן	נָ כֹן
is as a lamp	despised	in the thought	of him that is at ease	He that is ready
H3940	H937	H6248	H7600	H3559
לֵמָּה וְעָדִי	רַגְלֵי:			
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.