

Job 14:20

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Thou prevailest for ever against him, and he passeth: thou changest his countenance, and sendest him away.

Analysis

God's power overwhelms human resistance: 'Thou prevailest for ever against him, and he passeth: thou changest his countenance, and sendest him away.' The Hebrew 'takeph' (prevail) suggests overpowering strength—humans cannot resist divine power. The changed countenance may refer to death's effects or the shame of defeat. Humans 'pass away'—they're transient before eternal God. This stark realism about human powerlessness before God prepares for later hope in divine mercy.

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern texts often depicted divine-human conflict with gods triumphing through superior power. Scripture agrees God always prevails but uniquely emphasizes that divine triumph serves redemptive purposes, not arbitrary dominance.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How does honest acknowledgment of God's overpowering strength lead to worship rather than despair?
2. What comfort comes from knowing that the God who always prevails is the God who loves us?
3. How does Christ's incarnation and suffering reveal God's power serving redemptive love?

Interlinear Text

תִּתְקַף הוּ	לְנֶצַח	יָהִל רַ	מִשְׁנֶה
Thou prevailest	for ever	against him and he passeth	thou changest
H8630	H5331	H1980	H8138
פָּנָיו	וַתִּשְׁלַחַהוּ:		
his countenance	and sendest him away		
H6440	H7971		

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