

Job 16:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Not for any injustice in mine hands: also my prayer is pure.

Analysis

'Not for any injustice in mine hands: also my prayer is pure.' Job maintains innocence: no 'injustice' (עֲוֹנָה, chamas—violence, wrong) in his 'hands' (קְפָּי, kappay), and 'prayer' (תְּפִלָּה, tefillati) is 'pure' (זָקָה, zakhah—clean, innocent). This isn't claiming sinlessness but denying specific transgressions warranting his suffering. Job's appeal to pure prayer echoes Psalm 66:18—if harboring iniquity, God won't hear. Job's confidence in his prayer life indicates ongoing relationship with God despite feeling attacked. The distinction between general sinfulness and specific causative sins is crucial. The Reformed doctrine of total depravity doesn't mean every suffering results from particular sins. Job models maintaining integrity while acknowledging human limitation.

Historical Context

Ancient piety emphasized pure hands and pure prayer (Psalm 24:4, 1 Timothy 2:8). Job here appeals to this standard, not claiming absolute perfection but asserting he hasn't committed sins warranting his catastrophic suffering.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How do we distinguish between acknowledging general sinfulness and accepting false accusations?
2. What role does integrity play in enduring unexplained suffering?

Interlinear Text

לֹא עֲלֵיכָם סְתִמְךָ בְּכֶפֶל תִּפְלַת יְהוָה: Not for any injustice in mine hands also my prayer is pure

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Additional Cross-References

Proverbs 15:8 (Prayer): The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD: but the prayer of the upright is his delight.

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