

Job 17:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

He that speaketh flattery to his friends, even the eyes of his children shall fail.

Analysis

He that speaketh flattery to his friends (לְחֵלֶק יַגְדִּיד רֵעִים, le-kheleq yaggid re'im)—Kheleq means 'portion, share, flattery'—here referring to those who betray friends for personal gain or approval. Yaggid (declares, informs against) has legal overtones of bearing witness.

Even the eyes of his children shall fail (וְעֵינֵי בָנָיו תִּכְלֶינָה, ve-einei vanav tikhleinah)—Tikhleinah (shall fail/waste away/be consumed) describes complete depletion. This proverbial curse warns that false testimony brings generational judgment—the informer's children will suffer for the father's treachery. Job applies this to his friends who have abandoned him in suffering to maintain their theological comfort.

Historical Context

Ancient honor-shame cultures valued loyalty above correctness. Job's friends chose theological reputation over covenantal friendship (compare Proverbs 17:17, 'A friend loves at all times'). Their abandonment when Job needed them most constituted the deepest betrayal, worthy of proverbial curse.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. In what situations are you tempted to choose theological correctness over loyal friendship?
2. How does our treatment of suffering friends reveal what we truly value—doctrine or people?
3. What generational consequences might follow when religious communities abandon the suffering?

Interlinear Text

לִּפְתֹּלָה	יְגִיד	רֵעֵים	וְעֵינָיו	בְּנֵי	תִכְלֶנָּה:
flattery	He that speaketh	to his friends	even the eyes	of his children	shall fail
H2506	H5046	H7453	H5869	H1121	H3615

Additional Cross-References

Proverbs 20:19 (Parallel theme): He that goeth about as a talebearer revealeth secrets: therefore meddle not with him that flattereth with his lips.

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