

Job 20:13

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Though he spare it, and forsake it not; but keep it still within his mouth:

Analysis

The wicked cherish sin: 'Though he spare it, and forsake it not; but keep it still within his mouth.' Continuing the taste metaphor, the wicked won't swallow or spit out sin—they hold it in their mouth, savoring it. The Hebrew 'chamal' (spare) suggests protective attachment. This describes loving sin, not mere failure. While accurately depicting hardened sinners, this doesn't apply to Job, who genuinely sought righteousness.

Historical Context

Ancient wisdom distinguished between stumbling in sin versus cherishing it. The righteous might fall but hate their sin; the wicked embrace and protect theirs. Zophar assumes Job must cherish hidden sin, unable to conceive of righteous suffering.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How do we distinguish between struggling with sin versus cherishing it?

2. What does it mean to hate our sin while acknowledging ongoing struggle?
3. How does the Gospel transform our relationship with sin from cherishing to mortifying it?

Interlinear Text

בַּתְּ וָגָן	וְיִחַם	לִפְנֵי	לִפְנֵי	יְשַׁעַת	בָּהּ	וְיִתְּחַנֵּן	בְּהָנָסָה	וְיִתְּחַנֵּן	בְּנֵת	וְיִתְּחַנֵּן
Though he spare				it and forsake		it not but keep it still			within	
H2550	H5921	H3808	H5800			H4513			H8432	
חַפּוֹן										
his mouth										
H2441										

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