

Job 20:14

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Yet his meat in his bowels is turned, it is the gall of asps within him.

Analysis

Sin becomes poison: 'Yet his meat is turned in his bowels, it is the gall of asps within him.' What tasted sweet becomes poison internally. The imagery of transformation—meat turning to gall (bitter poison) in bowels—depicts sin's ultimate effects. Asp venom represents deadly toxicity. This principle (sin's pleasure gives way to destruction) is true but Zophar misapplies it, assuming all suffering indicates such self-poisoning.

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern texts recognized snake venom's deadliness. The asp (cobra) represented particular danger. Wisdom literature used poisoning metaphors for sin's effects (Proverbs 23:32 describes wine as biting like serpent).

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Study Questions

1. How does sin that initially appealed later poison us?

2. What is the difference between suffering from sin's consequences versus suffering for other reasons?
3. How does recognizing sin's poisonous effects motivate holiness without producing legalism?

Interlinear Text

בְּקִרְבָּוֹן פַּתְנֵי יְמֵי מְרוּבָּת גַּהְפָּת בְּמִשְׁעָה לְחִמּוֹן
 Yet his meat in his bowels is turned it is the gall of asps within
 H3899 H4578 H2015 H4846 H6620 H7130

Additional Cross-References

Romans 3:13 (Parallel theme): Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips:

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