

Job 20:15

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

He hath swallowed down riches, and he shall vomit them up again: God shall cast them out of his belly.

Analysis

'He hath swallowed down riches, and he shall vomit them up again: God shall cast them out of his belly.' Zophar's grotesque imagery: ill-gotten riches 'swallowed down' (בָּלָא, bala) must be 'vomited up' (יִקְיֶנּוּ, yeqiennu), and God will 'cast them out' (יֹרִישֵׁנּוּ, yorishenu) of his 'belly' (מִבִּיטְנוֹ, mibbitno). The digestive metaphor portrays wealth as poison requiring expulsion. Proverbs 23:8 uses similar imagery. The point: unjustly gained wealth cannot be retained. This is theologically sound (Jeremiah 17:11, Luke 12:20). Applied to Job, it's cruel—implying Job's wealth was ill-gotten and his loss is divine purging. Job's wealth was legitimate, his loss part of testing, not judgment. Zophar weaponizes truth against innocence.

Historical Context

Ancient peoples used bodily metaphors extensively. Zophar's vomiting imagery would be viscerally powerful, suggesting Job's wealth was toxic and his loss was God's necessary purging.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Study Questions

1. How do we distinguish between God's judgment of injustice and testing of the righteous?
2. What dangers exist in assuming all loss indicates divine purging of ill-gotten gain?

Interlinear Text

חַיִּל	כָּ לַע	וַיִּקֶּץ נֹו	מִבֶּטֶן וֹ
riches	He hath swallowed down	and he shall vomit them up again	of his belly
H2428	H1104	H6958	H990
וַיִּרְשׁ נֹו	אֱלֹ:		
shall cast them out	God		
H3423	H410		

Additional Cross-References

Proverbs 23:8 (Parallel theme): The morsel which thou hast eaten shalt thou vomit up, and lose thy sweet words.