

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' (עַלְצָה, bala) must be 'vomited up' (אַקְיָנָה, yeqiennu), and God will 'cast them out' (יָרִישָׁה, yorishenu) of his 'belly' (מִבְטָה, 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

נְתָנָה

לְעֵד

תִּקְרַבְתָּ

לִבְבָךְ

רִכְשֶׁ

הָתַחֲזָה

וְנַשְׁׁתָּהֵן

לִבְבָךְ

H2428

H1104

H6958

H990

יְרַשְׁתָּה

אֶל:

נַשְׁׁתָּהֵן

אֱלֹהִים

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.

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