

Job 20:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

He shall not see the rivers, the floods, the brooks of honey and butter.

Analysis

The wicked won't enjoy prosperity: 'He shall not see the rivers, the floods, the brooks of honey and butter.' Zophar describes covenant blessings—the land flowing with milk and honey—that the wicked forfeit. The imagery of rivers, floods, and brooks emphasizes abundance. While covenant theology affirms that persistent wickedness forfeits blessing, this doesn't explain Job's situation. Job lived righteously yet lost blessings.

Historical Context

Ancient Israel's covenant promised material blessing for obedience (Deuteronomy 28). The land flowing with milk and honey represented God's generous provision. However, Job's story demonstrates that covenant theology is more complex than simple prosperity-for-righteousness formula.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How do we understand covenant blessing theology without falling into prosperity gospel?
2. What is the difference between forfeiting blessing through wickedness versus losing blessing in trials?
3. How does New Testament spiritualize Old Testament material blessing promises?

Interlinear Text

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|------|-------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| אֵל | ! רָא | בְּכָל־וְת | נְהַר־י | בְּחַלְי־י | דִּב־שׁ | וְחֶמְאָה: |
| H408 | He shall not see | the rivers | the floods | the brooks | of honey | and butter |
| | H7200 | H6390 | H5104 | H5158 | H1706 | H2529 |

Additional Cross-References

Job 29:6 (Parallel theme): When I washed my steps with butter, and the rock poured me out rivers of oil;