

Job 20:23

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

When he is about to fill his belly, God shall cast the fury of his wrath upon him, and shall rain it upon him while he is eating.

Analysis

'When he is about to fill his belly, God shall cast the fury of his wrath upon him, and shall rain it upon him while he is eating.' Zophar describes judgment striking during eating: filling 'belly' (בִּתְנוֹ, bitno), God casts 'fury of wrath' (חרוֹן אֲפֹן, charon apo) and 'rains it' (יִמְטֵר, yamter) while eating (בְּלִכְחָמוֹ, bilchumo). The image: divine wrath interrupting consumption. This reflects sudden judgment in the midst of prosperity (Luke 12:20). Theologically sound: God can judge anytime. Applied to Job: suggests Job was struck down while greedily consuming. But Job's loss came through Satan's attacks permitted by God for testing, not judgment on gluttony. Zophar consistently mistakes testing for judgment. The Reformed distinction between trial and judgment is crucial.

Historical Context

Judgment striking during feasting appeared in ancient literature (Daniel 5—Belshazzar's feast). Zophar uses this motif to suggest Job's catastrophe interrupted his greedy consumption.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How do we distinguish between testing and judgment when both involve suffering?
2. What prevents us from mistaking God's testing for His wrath?

Interlinear Text

סְרֵן בְּנֵי לְמַלְאֵת בָּטָן וְיִשְׁלַח חָרָז הָרָזָה
H1961 When he is about to fill his belly God shall cast the fury
H4390 H990 H7971 H2740

בְּלֹחִזְתּוֹ אֵפֶן רִימְסֵר עַל יָמֶן
of his wrath upon him and shall rain it upon him while he is eating
H639 H4305 H5921 H3894

Additional Cross-References

Numbers 11:33 (Judgment): And while the flesh was yet between their teeth, ere it was chewed, the wrath of the LORD was kindled against the people, and the LORD smote the people with a very great plague.

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