

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' (בִּטְנוֹ, bitno), God casts 'fury of wrath' (חֲרוֹן אַפּוֹ, charon apo) and 'rains it' (יָמָטֵר, yamter) while eating (בִּלְחֻמוֹ, 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

יְהוָה י	לִמְלֵא	בִטֶּן ו	יִשְׁלַח	ב ו	חַר־וֹן
H1961	When he is about to fill	his belly	God shall cast	H0	the fury
	H4390	H990	H7971		H2740
אֶפְרוֹ	וַיִּמְטֵר	עַל יָמוֹ	בְּלִחוּמוֹ:		
of his wrath	upon him and shall rain	H5921	it upon him while he is eating		
H639	H4305		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.