

Job 20:29

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

This is the portion of a wicked man from God, and the heritage appointed unto him by God.

Analysis

'This is the portion of a wicked man from God, and the heritage appointed unto him by God.' Zophar concludes: this is the wicked's 'portion' (קֶלֶק, cheleq) from God and appointed 'heritage' (נָחָלֶת אֶמְרוֹן, nachalat imro). 'Portion' and 'heritage' are covenant language, usually positive (Psalm 16:5, 73:26). Zophar inverts them: the wicked's inheritance is judgment. The theology is sound (Psalm 11:6). The application to Job is false: Job isn't receiving the wicked's portion but the righteous's testing. By calling Job's suffering the wicked's heritage, Zophar damns Job. Yet God ultimately vindicates Job and condemns Zophar's theology (42:7). This warns against presuming to know someone's eternal destiny from temporal circumstances. Only God assigns portions and heritages.

Historical Context

Inheritance and portion language was central to Israel's covenant theology. Zophar's use of this sacred language to condemn Job would have been particularly harsh, suggesting Job's covenant standing itself was false.

Related Passages

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. How do we avoid presuming to assign eternal portions based on temporal circumstances?
2. What does it mean that suffering doesn't determine our heritage in Christ?

Interlinear Text

ז ה	מְאֹלָה יִם	ר שָׁעָה	אֵד מִ	מְלָקָט	ז ה
H2088	This is the portion	man	of a wicked	from God	and the heritage
	H2506	H120	H7563	H430	H5159
	appointed unto him by God				

Additional Cross-References

Job 27:13 (Evil): This is the portion of a wicked man with God, and the heritage of oppressors, which they shall receive of the Almighty.

Job 18:21 (Evil): Surely such are the dwellings of the wicked, and this is the place of him that knoweth not God.

Matthew 24:51 (Parallel theme): And shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Lamentations 3:38 (Evil): Out of the mouth of the most High proceedeth not evil and good?

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