

Job 21:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

They take the timbrel and harp, and rejoice at the sound of the organ.

Analysis

The wicked enjoy music: 'They take the timbrel and harp, and rejoice at the sound of the organ.' Musical instruments (timbrel/tambourine, harp, organ/pipe) represent joy and celebration. The wicked experience genuine happiness, not constant dread his friends claimed. Job's observation challenges theodicy that assumes all joy indicates righteousness. The wicked DO enjoy temporal pleasures —judgment is often deferred, not immediate.

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern cultures used music for celebration and worship. Timbrels, harps, and pipes were common instruments for festivities. Job's point: the wicked aren't constantly miserable as his friends claimed—they genuinely enjoy life, at least temporarily.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. How do we reconcile the wicked's genuine happiness with doctrine of divine justice?
2. What is the difference between temporal enjoyment and eternal blessing?
3. How does understanding deferred judgment help us make sense of present injustice?

Interlinear Text

עוֹגֶב: לְקָרְבָּן וְשָׁאָו
They take the timbrel and harp and rejoice at the sound of the organ
H5375 H8596 H3658 H8055 H6963 H5748

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 5:12 (Parallel theme): And the harp, and the viol, the tabret, and pipe, and wine, are in their feasts: but they regard not the work of the LORD, neither consider the operation of his hands.

Genesis 4:21 (Parallel theme): And his brother's name was Jubal: he was the father of all such as handle the harp and organ.