

Job 22:15

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Hast thou marked the old way which wicked men have trodden?

Analysis

Hast thou marked the old way which wicked men have trodden? (הֲאֵרַח עֹלָם) (תִּשְׁמֹר אֶשֶׁר דָּרְכוּ מִתִּי-אֵין)—Orach olam (ancient path) typically refers to godly tradition (Jeremiah 6:16), but here Eliphaz uses it ironically for the metey-aven (men of iniquity). Shamar (to keep/guard/observe) asks if Job is following their example.

Eliphaz invokes the Flood generation as proof that wickedness brings swift judgment. The question implies Job has chosen the path of the pre-diluvian rebels. This represents the climax of Eliphaz's false accusation: not only has Job sinned, he's aligned with history's most notorious sinners. The rhetoric escalates because the retribution theology demands proportional wickedness to explain Job's suffering.

Historical Context

The 'old way' or 'ancient path' language appears in ancient Near Eastern wisdom as moral instruction. Eliphaz alludes to Genesis 6, where universal wickedness preceded the Flood. The rhetorical question expects the answer 'no,' but Eliphaz implies Job has indeed followed the wicked path.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. How does Eliphaz's escalating rhetoric reveal the bankruptcy of strict retribution theology when confronted with innocent suffering?
2. What ancient 'paths' of wickedness might modern believers be tempted to assume others are following based solely on their circumstances?
3. How should we distinguish between genuine moral warning and false accusation driven by theological assumptions?

Interlinear Text

הַאֲרֵץ	עוֹלָם	תָּשָׂמָה	אֶשָּׂר	דָּרְכֵי	מִיָּתִי	אֲנִי:
way	the old	Hast thou marked	have trodden	men	which wicked	
H734	H5769	H8104	H834	H1869	H4962	H205