

Job 23:7

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

There the righteous might dispute with him; so should I be delivered for ever from my judge.

Analysis

There the righteous might dispute with him (שם ישר נוכח עמו) sham yashar nokhach immo)—Yashar (upright, righteous) describes moral integrity, while nokhach means to reason, prove, or argue a case. Job envisions a tribunal where the righteous can engage God in rational discourse on equal forensic footing. This remarkable claim—that God permits legal disputation with His creatures—contradicts pagan concepts of divine remoteness and capriciousness.

So should I be delivered for ever from my judge (אָפַלְתָּה לְנִצְחָה מִשְׁפָטִי) va'afalletah lanetzach mishofti)—Palat (escape, deliver) coupled with lanetzach (forever, perpetually) expresses Job's confidence in permanent vindication. The paradox is profound: Job calls God 'my judge' (shofti) yet believes encounter would bring deliverance, not condemnation. He trusts that divine judgment, unlike human judgment clouded by ignorance, would recognize his integrity. This foreshadows justification doctrine: God as both judge and justifier (Romans 3:26).

Historical Context

This verse reflects ancient legal culture where disputes were adjudicated in public forums at city gates. Job transposes earthly jurisprudence to cosmic dimensions, imagining a heavenly court where humans can plead their case. Early church fathers cited this passage when developing theology of final judgment, noting that Christ provides what Job intuited—a righteous advocate who secures eternal deliverance.

Related Passages

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. How does Job's confidence in vindication through divine encounter inform Christian assurance of justification?
2. What does it mean that God serves as both judge and deliverer in the believer's life?
3. How does Christ's work as both judge and advocate fulfill the tension Job expresses in this verse?

Interlinear Text

וְשָׁרֵךְ נִזְכָּר עַמְּנָי אֶפְלָטָה
H8033 **There the righteous** might dispute H5973 **with him so should I be delivered**
H3477 H3198 H6403

לְזִכְרָה מִשְׁפָטִים
for ever from my judge
H5331 H8199

Additional Cross-References

Job 13:3 (Parallel theme): Surely I would speak to the Almighty, and I desire to reason with God.

Romans 8:1 (Parallel theme): There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.