

Job 27:14

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

If his children be multiplied, it is for the sword: and his offspring shall not be satisfied with bread.

Analysis

If his children be multiplied, it is for the sword—Job describes the futility of the wicked person's legacy. The Hebrew verb רָבָה (ravah, multiply) ironically inverts the covenant blessing of Genesis 1:28; what should be blessing becomes curse. **For the sword** (לְמַזְחֵרֶב, lemo-cherev) indicates violent death awaits numerous offspring—quantity provides no security. The parallelism intensifies: **his offspring shall not be satisfied with bread** uses עַבְשָׁ (sava, be satisfied/filled), the same word used of divine satisfaction (Psalm 17:15). Job argues that wickedness produces generational futility—children inherit hunger, not abundance.

This verse belongs to Job's final speech defending his integrity (chapters 27-31). Having endured his friends' accusations that suffering proves guilt, Job now affirms traditional wisdom about divine justice—but with personal authority. He speaks from experience, having lost his own children suddenly. The irony is devastating: Job describes the wicked's fate while embodying its very pattern. Yet he maintains his innocence, trusting that his children's deaths don't prove divine judgment on him.

Historical Context

Job 27 occurs in the dialogue's final cycle, where Job responds to Bildad's third speech (chapter 25). By this point, the friends' arguments have exhausted themselves—Zophar doesn't even speak in the third cycle. Job's speech spans

chapters 26-31, his longest uninterrupted discourse. In ancient Near Eastern wisdom literature, generational punishment was assumed—children bore consequences of parental sin (Exodus 20:5). Job both affirms this principle (vv. 14-23) yet denies its application to himself, creating theological tension the book explores.

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. How does Job maintain belief in divine justice while experiencing apparent injustice in his own life?
2. What does this verse teach about the limits of earthly legacy when disconnected from covenant faithfulness?
3. How do we reconcile God's justice toward the wicked with His compassion toward innocent children affected by their parents' sin?

Interlinear Text

אָמַר יְהֹוָה בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לֹמֵד כִּי כִּי וְאֶתְּנָאֵל

H518 **be multiplied** H1121 **If his children** H3926 **it is for** H2719 **the sword** H3808 **and his offspring**

H7235

H1121

H3926

H2719

H3808

H6631

לֹמֵד יִשְׂבָּעַ

shall not be satisfied with bread

H7646

H3899

Additional Cross-References

Deuteronomy 28:41 (Parallel theme): Thou shalt beget sons and daughters, but thou shalt not enjoy them; for they shall go into captivity.

Job 20:10 (Parallel theme): His children shall seek to please the poor, and his hands shall restore their goods.

Luke 23:29 (Parallel theme): For, behold, the days are coming, in the which they shall say, Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the paps which never gave suck.

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