

Job 27:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For what is the hope of the hypocrite, though he hath gained,
when God taketh away his soul?

Analysis

Job asks rhetorically, "What is the hope of the hypocrite, though he hath gained, when God taketh away his soul?" The Hebrew chaneph (חָנֵף, "hypocrite") denotes a godless, profane person—one who may maintain religious appearance without genuine faith. The verb batsa' (בָּצָא, "gained") means to cut off or gain profit, often with connotations of unjust gain. Job recognizes that temporal prosperity means nothing at death when God "taketh away his soul" (nesho, נֶשֶׁה). This anticipates Jesus' parable of the rich fool (Luke 12:20) and His question, "What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" (Mark 8:36). From a Reformed perspective, this demonstrates the futility of profession without possession—mere external religion without regeneration. True hope lies not in accumulated wealth but in a right relationship with God that extends beyond death. Job's question exposes the ultimate bankruptcy of hypocrisy and worldly success apart from genuine faith.

Historical Context

Ancient societies measured success by visible prosperity—wealth, offspring, longevity. Job challenges this calculus by introducing the eschatological dimension: what does earthly gain mean at death? This question would become central to later Jewish theology (Ecclesiastes, intertestamental wisdom literature) and finds its answer in Christ's teaching on eternal life. The concept anticipated the Pharisaic-Sadducean debates about afterlife and resurrection.

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. How does Job's question expose the difference between professing faith and possessing it?
2. What does this verse teach about the relationship between earthly prosperity and eternal security?
3. How should the certainty of death and divine judgment shape our daily priorities and pursuits?

Interlinear Text

מַה	תַּקְלִין	בַּנְּשָׁ	עַ			
H3588	H4100	H8615	H2611	H3588	H1214	H3588
For what is the hope	of the hypocrite	though he hath gained				
נִשְׁאֵן	אֵל	בַּ	לְ			
taketh away	when God	his soul				
H7953	H433	H5315				

Additional Cross-References

Matthew 16:26 (Parallel theme): For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

Job 8:13 (Hope): So are the paths of all that forget God; and the hypocrite's hope shall perish:

Job 11:20 (Hope): But the eyes of the wicked shall fail, and they shall not escape, and their hope shall be as the giving up of the ghost.

