

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* (חָנָף, "hypocrite") denotes a godless, profane person—one who may maintain religious appearance without genuine faith. The verb *batsa'* (בָּצַא, "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*, נֶשֶׁחַ). 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.

