

Job 29:20

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

My glory was fresh in me, and my bow was renewed in my hand.

Analysis

My glory was fresh in me (כְּבוֹדִי חֲדָשׁ עִמָּדִי, kevodi chadash immadi)—Job recalls when his kavod (honor, weightiness, glory) remained perpetually chadash (new, fresh, unwithered). Unlike fading human reputation, Job's dignity was constantly renewed like the morning dew.

My bow was renewed in my hand (וְקִשְׁתִּי בְיָדִי תַחֲלִיף, vekashti beyadi tachalif)—The qeshet (bow) symbolizes strength and capability in battle (Genesis 49:24, Psalm 18:34). The verb chalaph means to pass on, renew, or grow fresh again. Job's strength didn't diminish but was continually restored, anticipating Isaiah's promise that those who wait on the Lord shall 'renew their strength' (Isaiah 40:31, same Hebrew root). This sustained vigor contrasts sharply with Job's current weakness, intensifying his lament.

Historical Context

In ancient Near Eastern culture, the bow represented both military prowess and judicial authority. A warrior's bow losing its elasticity was a metaphor for declining power. Job served as both judge and defender of his city (Job 29:7-17), so the bow symbolized his dual role. His 'glory' (kavod) reflected the honor-shame culture where public reputation determined social standing.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. How does Job's past experience of continual renewal challenge the assumption that decline is inevitable with age?
2. What 'bow' (area of strength) in your life needs God's renewing power rather than human effort?
3. How does Job's loss of both glory and strength prepare him to meet God without relying on his own righteousness?

Interlinear Text

תַּחֲלִיף:	בְּיָדִי	וְקִשְׁתִּי	עִמָּדִי	חַדָּשׁ	כְּבוֹדִי
was renewed	in my hand	and my bow	in me	was fresh	My glory
H2498	H3027	H7198	H5978	H2319	H3519

Additional Cross-References

Genesis 49:24 (Parallel theme): But his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob; (from thence is the shepherd, the stone of Israel:)

Isaiah 40:31 (Parallel theme): But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.

Psalms 18:34 (Parallel theme): He teacheth my hands to war, so that a bow of steel is broken by mine arms.

Psalms 103:5 (Parallel theme): Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's.

Psalms 3:3 (Glory): But thou, O LORD, art a shield for me; my glory, and the lifter up of mine head.

2 Corinthians 4:16 (Parallel theme): For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.

Genesis 45:13 (Glory): And ye shall tell my father of all my glory in Egypt, and of all that ye have seen; and ye shall haste and bring down my father hither.

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