

Job 29:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

When his candle shined upon my head, and when by his light I walked through darkness;

Analysis

When his candle shined upon my head—the Hebrew נֶר (ner, lamp/candle) represents God's presence and guidance. The verb הִלֵּל (hillel, shine/give light) suggests active illumination. God's "candle" shining on Job's head indicates divine favor, wisdom, and direction—the same imagery Proverbs uses: "The spirit of man is the candle of the LORD" (Proverbs 20:27). **By his light I walked through darkness** uses אור (or, light) with הָלַךְ (halakh, walk), depicting life as a journey. The darkness (חֹשֶׁךְ, choshek) represents trials, dangers, or uncertainty—yet God's light provided guidance.

Job remembers when divine guidance illuminated his path, enabling him to navigate life's difficulties confidently. This contrasts painfully with his present darkness, where God seems absent or hostile (23:8-9). The imagery anticipates both Psalm 119:105 ("Thy word is a lamp unto my feet") and Jesus's declaration: "I am the light of the world" (John 8:12). Job's testimony about walking by divine light in darkness speaks to every believer's experience of God's guidance.

Historical Context

In the ancient Near East, before electric lighting, lamps were essential for navigating darkness. A lamp going out meant danger, disorientation, and vulnerability. Biblical imagery frequently uses light/darkness to represent God's presence/absence, knowledge/ignorance, blessing/curse. Job lived before written Scripture, so "God's light" would have meant direct divine communication,

wisdom, or sense of God's favor—what later generations would receive through Scripture and ultimately through Christ, the true Light.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. How do we navigate seasons when God's "candle" seems dim or absent, unlike Job's earlier experience?
2. What practices help us walk by God's light even when circumstances seem dark?
3. How does Christ as "the light of the world" fulfill and expand Job's longing for divine illumination?

Interlinear Text

אָלֶךָ לְאוֹרֶתֶן רָאשִׁי עַלְיָהָן נָרְאָה בְּהַלְלָה
shined When his candle H1984 H5216 H5921 upon my head H7218 and when by his light H216 H1980

חֹשֶׁךְ:
through darkness
H2822

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 18:28 (Light): For thou wilt light my candle: the LORD my God will enlighten my darkness.

Job 18:6 (Light): The light shall be dark in his tabernacle, and his candle shall be put out with him.

Ephesians 5:8 (Light): For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light:

John 8:12 (Light): Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

John 12:46 (Light): I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness.

Job 11:17 (Parallel theme): And thine age shall be clearer than the noonday; thou shalt shine forth, thou shalt be as the morning.

Job 22:28 (Light): Thou shalt also decree a thing, and it shall be established unto thee: and the light shall shine upon thy ways.

Psalms 84:11 (Parallel theme): For the LORD God is a sun and shield: the LORD will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.

Proverbs 24:20 (Parallel theme): For there shall be no reward to the evil man; the candle of the wicked shall be put out.

Isaiah 2:4 (Parallel theme): And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.