

Job 3:21

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Which long for death, but it cometh not; and dig for it more than for hid treasures;

Analysis

Job describes those who 'long for death, but it cometh not; and dig for it more than for hid treasures.' The imagery of digging for death as for treasure inverts normal values—usually people seek life and treasure; the sufferer seeks death. The Hebrew 'chakah' (long for/wait) suggests sustained anticipation. Job expresses the paradox that despite desiring death, he cannot achieve it—God sustains his life for purposes Job doesn't yet understand.

Historical Context

The imagery of digging for hidden treasures reflects ancient mining practices and treasure hunting. Job's inversion—seeking death with such vigor—emphasizes the intensity of his suffering.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. How do you respond when God sustains your life through suffering you wish would end?

2. What might God's purpose be in preserving life when death seems preferable?

Interlinear Text

הַמָּחֶכֶּ יִם	לָמָּ יָת	וְאֵינָּ נֹ	וְלֹחֶפֶּ הוּ
Which long	for death	H369	but it cometh not and dig
H2442	H4194		H2658

מִמֶּטְמוּנִים:

for it more than for hid treasures

H4301

Additional Cross-References

Revelation 9:6 (Parallel theme): And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them.

Proverbs 2:4 (Parallel theme): If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures;