

Job 30:13

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

They mar my path, they set forward my calamity, they have no helper.

Analysis

They mar my path (נָתַחַסוּ נְתִיבָתִי)—The verb *nathats* (נָתַחַס) means to tear down, break down, or destroy; *netivah* (נְתִיבָה) means pathway or track. Job's enemies don't just block his way—they demolish the road entirely, ensuring no escape or recovery. This continues the military siege metaphor: cutting off all supply lines and escape routes.

They set forward my calamity (יַעֲלִילוּ לְהָרָה)—The verb *ya'al* (יַעֲלִי) means to profit, avail, or promote; *havvah* (הָרָה) means ruin, calamity, or destruction. They actively advance his destruction, working to ensure his complete collapse. **They have no helper** (לֹא עֹזֵר לִמּוֹ)—Either Job has no one to help him against them, or ironically, they need no assistance to destroy him—he's so weakened they accomplish it alone. The Hebrew ambiguity intensifies the pathos: total isolation meets effortless destruction.

Historical Context

The path-marring imagery reflects ancient travel along established routes marked by stone cairns or beaten tracks. Destroying these markers left travelers lost in wilderness. Job's enemies don't merely oppose him—they ensure he cannot recover or find his way back to honor. Ancient wisdom literature speaks of the 'path of the righteous' (Proverbs 4:18); Job's opponents obliterate his road entirely. This verse captures the experience of those who've lost everything: not just present suffering but demolished hope of restoration.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. Have you experienced times when recovery seemed impossible because all paths forward were destroyed? How did you persevere?
2. What does it mean to help rebuild someone's 'path' after calamity has destroyed their way forward?
3. How does Job's description of enemies who need no help to destroy him reflect the experience of depression or despair?

Interlinear Text

וְנָתַסּוּ	וְנִתְּיָבָהּ יִ	לְקָהֳתִי	יָעִ יָלוּ	לֹא	עֵינֵי רֵ
They mar	my path	my calamity	they set forward	H3808	they have no helper
H5420	H5410	H1942	H3276		H5826

לְמוֹ:
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